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"Imitators of God" *The Present Truth* 15, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

"Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children." Eph. v. 1.

If God Himself had not commanded us to do this we might think that the requirement was a manifest impossibility, but since it is God Himself who bids us to be like Him, to say that it is impossible is to charge God with light and foolish talking. Impossible instructions only bring ridicule upon the person who issues them.

God's ambition for men is only limited by the length and breadth of His own life, and as this is infinite, so is His mercy towards the children of men. "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him." Ps. ciii. 11.

God is love, and love cannot be content with bestowing less than its all upon the loved one. God loved His Son, and to Christ was given all the fulness of the Godhead, the very brightness of the Father's glory. But the same love was extended to us, and so the Saviour says, "The glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given unto them, . . . that the world may know that Thou. . . lovedst them, even as Thou lovest Me." John xvii. 22, 23.

It is as beloved children that we are to be imitators of God. A father counts nothing too good for his children. They inherit his life and physical characteristics, and in addition, all the means and advantages that he is able to bestow. If we are children of God, we are heirs, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." The servants of a king may by faithful service rise to high rank, but they never earn the throne. That is reserved for one who never did anything to attain to it, for the child who was born to the privilege. So also no one becomes the child of God by virtue of his own efforts or sacrifices. He is born to the position, and then that right to the kingdom and free share in all his father's glory, which he never could hope to win as a servant, are his birthright.

To how many is this wonderful privilege given? The word "therefore" connects with the preceding sentence, so that we read, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you. Be ye therefore

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imitators of God." The children do not become so by reason of their spotless character. They have stood in sore need of a free forgiveness. They are not beloved children because they are so lovable. It is in Christ that God forgives them. "God commendeth His own love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8.

Since, then, not a single soul becomes a beloved child by his own deserving, it is evident that the way is as open for anyone to have his sins forgiven and

become a child and an imitator of God, as it can possibly be for any other one. If a single soul obtains the salvation, it will condemn every other one who does not, for the way is equally open to all, and the fact that one can be saved shows that all may if they will. Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.

Remember that the imitating of God is to be done "as dear children." We are to walk in love as Christ also hath loved us. The son does not work for what he receives from his father. The greater the wealth and power of the father, the better it is to be born his son. So, as God's holiness and ways are seen to be infinite, the children will not gaze with despair at the awful distance that separates God from them, but instead will rejoice in the riches of the glory of the inheritance. The ever-deepening thankfulness at the remembrance of His holiness. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John iii. 1.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Col. ii. 6. He is received as a free, undeserved gift, and all that pertains to life and godliness comes in the same way. Many think that it is a very simple matter to get their sins forgiven, but a very complicated and difficult matter to live a Christian's life, such as God commands. This is because they think they must rely upon themselves in part to complete the good work which Christ has begun in them. It is as easy for God to keep us from falling and present us faultless at last, as it is for Him to lift us out of the miry clay in the first place. He does both by imparting Himself, "and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Rom. viii. 10.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Great Case at Law" *The Present Truth* 15, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. 1. 10-20, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

10. "Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye princes of
Sodom!

Give ear to the law of our God, yet people of
Gomorrah!

11. What have I to do with the multitude of your
sacrifices? saith Jehovah;

I am cloyed with the burnt-offerings of rams,
and the fat of fed beasts;

And in the blood of bullocks, and of lambs,
and of goats, I have no delight.

12. When you come to appear before Me,
Who hath required this at your hands?

13. Tread My courts no more; bring no more
vain oblation;

Incense! It is an abomination unto Me.

The new moon, and the Sabbath, and the assembly proclaimed.

I cannot endure; the fast, and the fast, and the day of restraint.

14. Your months and your solemnities, My soul hateth;
They are a burthen upon Me; I am weary of hearing them.

15. When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you;
Even when ye multiply prayer; I will not hear;
For your hands are full of blood.

16. Wash ye, make ye clean; remove ye far away The evil of your doings from before Mine eyes;

17. Cease to do evil; learn to do well;
Seek judgment; amend that which is corrupted;
Do justice to the fatherless; defend the cause of the widow.

18. Come on now, and let us plead together, saith Jehovah;
Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;
Though they be red like crimson, they shall be like wool.

19. If ye shall be willing and obedient,
Ye shall feed on the good of the land;

20. But if ye refuse, and be rebellious,
Ye shall be food for the sword of the enemy;
For the mouth of Jehovah hath pronounced it."

Whoever would get the full benefit of these verses must not fail to read them in connection with the verses that precede, which were quoted in the last week's lesson. In studying these it will be necessary to make frequent reference to them.

The Remnant .-"Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." They were utterly destroyed. But "though the number of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." Rom. ix. 27. Because it is written, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," or, as the words really signify, "lest I come and smite the earth with utter destruction." Mal. iv. 5, 6. Thus we see that this prophecy of Isaiah, which we are studying, has special reference to the last days. The remnant is the last, and the

words describe the condition just before the coming of the Lord, when iniquity will abound, and the love of many will wax cold (Matt. xxiv. 12), when faith will be so scarce in the earth that one must enquire for it (Luke xviii. 8), and when even the professed church will be very like the heathen. Compare 2 Tim. iii. 1-5 and Rom. i. 28-32. So full of wickedness does the church become, that the Lord addresses it as Sodom and Gomorrah. Isa. i. 10. Let the reader pay special heed to this fact, for it is not cited for the purpose of accusation, but of emphasising the mercy of God, of which we come to speak.

Vain Worship .-Compare Isa. i. 11-15 with Amos v. 21-24. Although we are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, religion does not by any means consist in going to meeting. There are times when all religious services are an abomination to the Lord. Singing is called noise, and prayer is disgusting to Him. Yet let no one think that this means that there is ever a time when the Lord refuses to listen to a sinner's plea for pardon, on the ground that he is too sinful to be forgiven. Far from it; this portion of Scripture which we are studying teaches us exactly the opposite. But the Lord cannot be deceived with honied phrases that mean nothing. Flattery does not tickle His ear. The double-minded

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man-who does not know his own mind, but the one who wants the evil even while asking the good-receives nothing from the Lord. Hypocrisy is detestable. The self-righteous Pharisees, whose lives were outwardly models of propriety, but who were hypocrites, were objects of the Lord's most scathing rebukes, while He most tenderly drew to Himself the publicans and harlots, whose lives were one mass of guilt, and who sincerely longed for something better.

Useless Prayers .-"When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear." What a terrible statement that is! Yet it need not discourage a single soul. Not one who asks pardon of the Lord will ever be turned away. The Lord calls all to come, and He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." But the Lord does not like to look upon blood, that is, upon bloody deeds; and when men stretch out their bloody hands to Him, offering Him wickedness as if it were righteousness, He cannot but turn away His eyes. That is not real praying, but simply the making of prayers. To "say a prayer" is vastly different from praying. One man may say a prayer that somebody else has prepared for him, and put into his mouth, or which he himself has devised and learned so that he can repeat it from memory, but that is not praying. Nobody in the world is so ignorant that he does not know how to pray acceptably to the Lord. The man who depends upon somebody else to make a prayer for him, would not be praying if he should repeat it a thousand times a day. Prayer is simply the asking for what one wants. Prayer to God must of course be the asking for goodness, since He has nothing else to give. Now if a person wants a thing, he knows that he wants it, and then it is as simple a thing to ask for it, as it is for a child to ask for a piece of bread when it is hungry. No one who is hungry needs to have somebody tell him how to ask for something to eat; even so whoever hungers and thirsts after righteousness knows how to ask for it

successfully better than anybody can tell him. No true parent ever refuses to give his child food when it is hungry; but there is not another in the world who would not very often let a child's request for food go unheeded if it were in the habit of coming to her many times a day, regardless of whether it were hungry or not, and formally reciting to her a request for something to eat. She would regard the condition of its stomach, rather than its words.

Verse 12 is thus rendered in the Danish and Swedish: "When ye come to be seen before My face, who has required this of you, that ye should trample upon My courts?" The last part of the thirteenth verse is by these and other versions rendered, "I cannot endure unrighteousness and a festival." Thus does the Lord make emphatic His desire for sincerity. The man who would cover his sins with a cloak of piety, multiplying religious forms in order to divert attention from his wicked deeds is loathsome to the Lord, while the vilest sinner who desires freedom from his wicked ways, is the object of the Lord's tenderest love.

Sacrifices of Righteousness .-"Bring no more vain oblations." Vanity is emptiness. A vain oblation is an offering which contains nothing. Here we learn that the Lord has no delight in empty forms and ceremonies. In the true worship of God there is no place for the doing of a thing merely to represent something else. God desires the thing itself. When David had committed a grievous sin, he knew that an offering would not please the Lord. "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt offering." "To obey is better than sacrifice." When a man has sinned, God does not wish him to come before Him with something as a substitute for righteousness, but with righteousness itself. "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord." Ps. iv. 5. Put your trust in the Lord, who provides the righteousness which we need, so that none need come before Him empty. "Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness."

"WASH AND BE CLEAN"

To whom is this said?-To those who are as bad as they can be. To a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters. It is spoken to those who are so full of the loathsome leprosy of sin, that from the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing in them but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores. Even such may be "as white as snow."

Of the reality of this cleansing we have ample evidence in the Scriptures. Naaman the Syrian was a leper. He went to the prophet Elisha, who, as the servant of the Lord, spoke the word of the Lord to him, saying, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." 2 Kings v. 10. He said, in short, just what we have in the text we are studying, "Wash, and be clean." 2 Kings v. 13. Naaman, after a little sulking, did as he was commanded, "and his flesh came again as the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." Verse 14. Was it the water of the Jordan that effected the cure? Was it true that the water of the Jordan was so much better than the waters of the rivers of Damascus?-Certainly not; that which cleansed him was the word of the Lord, which he listened to. The prophet did not tell him to cleanse

himself, nor did he expect him to, but he gave him the word of the Lord, and that made the leper clean. In that case we see the cleansing power of the word of the Lord.

But the case is not yet complete. There came a man "full of leprosy" and said to Jesus, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Jesus instantly said, "I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Matt. viii. 2, 3. The same thing was done for this man that was done for Naaman, only in this case no visible means was used. If we had only the story of Naaman, then we might think that the water was what did the cleansing; and if we had only the case of the man who came to Jesus, then we should lose the impressive lesson taught in the first instance. But the two taken together teach us that the Lord cleanses us by "a water bath in the word," for so Eph. v. 26 is properly translated in many versions. "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John xv. 3.

We are full of the uncleanness of sin, and the Lord says to us, just as He did to the man full of the uncleanness of leprosy, "Be clean." Did the Lord expect that the leper was to go away and cure himself?—Certainly not; He knew that it was impossible. What had the man to do?—Only to accept the word of the Lord. In his case the faith was already present, while the proud officer Naaman was required to give evidence that he did accept the word in humility; but both were cleansed in exactly the same way—by the word of the Lord. The word of the Lord is healing medicine. The words of the Lord "are life unto those that find them,

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and medicine to all their flesh." Prov. iv. 22, margin.

"His commandment is life everlasting." John xii. 50. God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass;" "and it was so." He said "Be light;" and instantly light was. Jesus said to the leper, "Be clean;" and immediately he was clean. So He says to us, "Wash you; make you clean;" and if we are not too proud to accept the word, we are instantly clean. It matters not how sinful we are; the greater our need, the greater our recommendation to the mercy of the Lord. He pardons our iniquity just because it is great. Ps. xxv. 11.

A CASE IN COURT

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." Isa. i. 18. Pay particular attention to this verse as it is given in the translation at the head of this study: "Come on now, and let us plead together, saith Jehovah." This is the language of the courts, and is in harmony with the German, Swedish, and Danish translations, which have it, "Come now, and let us go into court together, saith the Lord." This is a strictly literal rendering of the Hebrew. The expression is the same as in Job xxiii. 7, where we have unmistakably a court scene. Read verses 3-7. In no place in the Bible is the Hebrew word that occurs here used in the sense that is ordinarily conveyed by the word "reason," and in no other place than this is it so rendered in our version. It occurs in Gen. xxxi. 37, "Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both," where the idea of a decision of a case at law is clearly indicated.

The idea that a trial in court is in progress is indicated in the very first verse of the prophecy: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth." The call is for "Silence in the court;" for a great case is on, which involves the whole universe. This thought, introduced in the very beginning of the prophecy of Isaiah is very prominent throughout, and we shall have frequent occasion to refer to it, so that it is worthy while to give it a little special study now. When we have once grasped the thought, we shall see that it appears throughout the whole Bible.

Two texts set the whole matter briefly before us. In Psalm li. 4 we read "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight; that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest." Turn now to Rom. iii. 4, where we have this verse quoted thus: "Let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged." In the first instance we have God as the Judge, and in the second we have Him as the one judged, yet winning His case. The same Spirit that inspired the words in the first place, also inspired the quotation, so that both expressions must mean the same thing. Therefore we learn that when God judges the world, He is at the same time judged. That is to say, The Judgment is simply the summing up of a case that has been pending since sin entered the universe of God. God has been declared to be unjust, not only by Satan, but by every one who has committed sin. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Therefore every one who justifieth himself, thereby declares that God is wrong; and whoever refuses to acknowledge himself to be a sinner, thereby justifies himself. But every man is unlike God. Therefore if men were right, that would prove God to be in the wrong. Everybody who refuses to confess his sins, by that very refusal charges God with being unjust. And the same thing is done by those who acknowledge themselves to be sinners, but who doubt God's willingness to forgive.

It is evident that if God could be convicted of one act of injustice, He could not judge the world. In order that rebellion shall be put down for ever, never more to have any possibility of arising, every creature in the universe must see and acknowledge the righteousness of God. Few of the inhabitants of this world do that now; but the Judgment is to make it plain. The great Judgment is not for the purpose of enabling God to judge of the character of men, but to cause all men to see the true character of God. Men are now taking sides for and against Him. The time will come when every secret thing will be brought to light. Then all will see that God has always been true and good. Every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess. But it will be too late for those who have waited until then; they have taken sides against the Lord, and when He wins His case, they necessarily lose. On the other hand, those who now put themselves on the side of the Lord, declaring that His way is right, which means that theirs is wrong, and who maintain their loyalty to Him against opposition, and even when they cannot explain some of His acts, will of course share in His triumph. The details of this great case, the matter of witnesses, etc., will come in later on in our study; what we wish to keep before our minds is that the great question at issue is the character of God. He has infinitely more at stake than any man can possibly have.

This is our strong consolation. God's righteousness is revealed in the forgiveness of sin. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John i. 9. Whoever declares that God will not forgive sins, no matter whose, charges Him with being unjust. He forgives by His righteousness, His justice, and when we confess our sins, we become partakers of His righteousness. This assures our standing in the Judgment. Now God challenges us to try the case in court, and calls upon heaven and earth to act as jury, to see if there is a single case of acknowledged sin that He does not forgive. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow." This is His case. He stakes His life upon that. That is the thing upon which He bases His claim to righteousness, and His right to judge the world. If God is willing to risk His case upon that claim, cannot we? Our life stands with His if we do. We will trust Him, believing that His character will stand every test. Indeed, that is the only sensible thing to do; for if it were possible that we could prove Him unjust, we should gain nothing, since that would mean the end of His Government, so with that would go our lives and the life of all creatures. So we see that it is the height of folly to try to pick flaws in God's character. It is like a man trying to saw off the limb upon which he is sitting over an abyss. But no fault can be found in God. "There is no unrighteousness in Him." "Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

This call to come and be forgiven is to those who are as bad as they can possibly be. Every sin has produced its sore, and the result is that there is not a sound spot in the whole body. There is not a spot on which a stroke of correction could be laid, if sin were to be increased. To such ones He calls, in order that all may have hope, and may come with confidence. With what boldness we may come! How it enlarges our view of the Gospel, and lifts

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the whole subject to a plane infinitely beyond the mere selfish inquiry. Is it possible for me to be saved? It is God's case, not ours. He must forgive, or lose His life; for He gave His life for the express purpose of cleansing sins, and if He should not do it the life would be thrown away. Let us then come boldly to the throne of grace, fully assured that we shall obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

"Studies in the Gospel of John. Revealing the Glory" *The Present Truth* 15, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

There were three different occasions when Jesus on earth is said to have manifested His glory. The first was at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee; the second was when He took Peter, James and John into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; and the third was at the grave of Lazarus. These are to show us that it is not merely when we go apart from the world, that the glory of God may appear to us, and be manifested in us, but when we are engaged in the most common affairs of life. Since the earth is full of His glory, it is

most fitting that it should at all times be revealed. Even so it is to all and in all who believe.

Jesus was about thirty years of age when He began His public ministry. Before that time we have only one glimpse of Him, for a single day when He was twelve years old, and as a son of the synagogue was allowed to engage in the temple worship. Then follow eighteen years of work at the carpenter's bench, entirely lost to public view. A mighty work was committed to Him, and from earliest childhood He knew that He must be about His Father's business, yet He seems to have made no haste to appear in public. Shall we say that he was not doing His Father's business all the time? Not by any means. What a lesson to us, who are so prone to think that we are not doing any active service for the Master unless we are engaged in some public service. And then note how often in the very short time He had for public labour, we find Him attending some feast or other. He never seems to have been in a hurry. Why not? The reason is that He dwelt in eternity, and laboured in its strength. He who has all eternity, need never be hurried; even so with Him who labours with the power of an endless life. But whether attending a wedding feast or preaching to the multitudes, Jesus was about His Father's business. The glory of God was always revealed, whether He ate or drank or preached.

The wine gave out, but what mattered that when the true wine was present? The element of time does not count in any of the Lord's works. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years. Then how easy for Him to accelerate the process of the production of wine by the grape vine, and do the work of a year in a minute. The thing which Jesus did—turning water into wine—is what He does every year. The rain falls from heaven, the earth receives it, and the rootlets of the vine drink it up. Then by the warmth and sunlight it is drawn up and deposited in the clusters and transformed into delicious wine. Do not forget that "the new wine is found in the cluster." Isa. lxxv. 8. It is wine while it is yet sealed up in the skin of the grape. Just as the fruit, if it is bruised and broken and exposed to the air, soon decays, and becomes unfit for food, so does the wine, when taken from its original flash, in which it is hermetically sealed, and exposed to the air so that it ferments, become unfit for human consumption.

Suppose any man should be asked to take a glass of water, and turn it into wine; the request would be in vain. Well, do not ask him to do it instantly; give him a year in which to perform the task. That is no better; at the close of the year he would be no nearer the completion of his task than at the beginning. Let him have ten years, a hundred years; the result is the same—nothing. Moreover, he cannot tell how it is done. Thus we see that the miracle does not consist in the fact that the water was turned into wine instantly, but in the fact that it was done at all. The miracle that is performed every year by what is called "natural growth" is as great as the miracle at Cana of Galilee. That was done in a way to call attention to the fact that it is Jesus who produces the fruits of the earth. In taking the pure "blood of the grape," as well as of any

other fruit, we are taking the life of Christ. The blood is the life, and when Jesus took the cup at the last supper, He said, "This is My blood."

It is not an infrequent thing to hear or read of some reformed drunkard who has had the old taste revived by the wine used at the communion service, and has relapsed into the old habits; and others dare not partake for fear of the consequences. Shall we say that it was the blood of Christ that caused him to fall? Impossible! His blood does not lead into sin, but cleanses from all sin. No; that was not "the Lord's Supper." Nobody ever gets drunk or tempted to drunkenness at the Lord's table. The fermented wine that is by some thought to be absolutely essential to the observance of the Lord's Supper, has nothing whatever in common with "the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" by which we are redeemed. The cup that could by any possibility make the tenderest child or the most delicate woman intoxicated, or that can arouse slumbering passions in any man, is not the communion of the blood of Christ, but "the cup of devils." It is not the cup of blessing, but the cup of cursing. It is a terrible thing thus to misrepresent Christ. He provides only that which gives life and peace.

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested for His glory; and His disciples believed on Him." There was no transfiguration scene here. The person of Jesus did not shine; there was nothing about Him that anybody could see any more than with the other guests at the feast. Yes He manifested forth His glory. So we see that power-the power of God, which works miracles-is glory. Power and glory are synonymous in God's vocabulary. In Eph. i. 17-20 we read of the working of God's mighty power, by which He raised Jesus from the dead. In Rom. vi. 4 we are told that "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." Thus we see that God's power is His glory. We are to be "strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory." Col. i. 11. "According to the riches of His glory" we are to be "strengthened with might by His Spirit." Eph. iii. 16.

"There is no power but of God." There is but one force in the universe, and that is the life of the Lord; but there are an infinite variety of manifestations of it. We ourselves are daily witnesses of the fact that glory-visible glory, light-is power. The huge steamship with its hundreds of passengers, and thousands of tons of freight, is driven across the ocean by engines that are fed with coal that in a few days gives off the accumulated sunlight of centuries. The forest trees had for centuries absorbed the sunlight, and now they give it forth in one great blaze which is seen to be power. God's people are "trees of righteousness," growing by the light of "the Sun of Righteousness." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be" any more than the trunk of the oak shows the careless passer-by the glory that is stored up within; but when the Lord comes the glory will be revealed, for "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. viii. 43. But in the meantime their glory is manifested forth in good works which God does by them. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The mother of Jesus said to the servants: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." We do not know their names, yet they had an active part in the performance of the miracle. They brought the water and filled the vessels, and they drew out the wine. If we are His servants, ready to do His bidding, He will use us in the

performance of many mighty works. When the thousands of hungry people were in the desert, Jesus said to His disciples, "Give ye them to eat," and so they did. All the vast multitudes received food at the hands of the twelve; but they received it from the Lord of life and glory. To us comes the command, "Hear Him!" Whatsoever He saith unto you do it, without asking any questions. If the servants of that house in Cana had refused to fill the water pots with water, because they could not see how any good could come from it, the miracle would have been disgraced. Let us beware of losing our opportunity through doubt and hesitation, and the glory of His wondrous deeds will at the last be shared with us.

"For the Children. 'Snow Like Wool'" *The Present Truth* 15, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

As we were talking last week about the purity and beauty of the snow, let us now think for a little while of its *usefulness*.

The Word of God tells us that "He giveth snow like wool." Think of the ways in which the snow is "like wool." In its *appearance*; you will say, so soft and white, and fleecy; it *looks* like wool. Yes, but did you know that the snow is "like wool" also in its *warmth*?

In the cold winter weather we clothe our bodies with woollen garments, and put thick woollen blankets on our beds to keep us warm. The wool has no warmth in itself, as you can tell by putting your hand on it.

But if you keep your hand there for a little while the wool begins to feel warm. The warmth does not come from the wool, but from your hand, and the wool keeps us warm because it comes in the warmth that comes from our bodies and keeps it from escaping into the air.

And so it is with the snowy garment that the Lord spreads over the earth. It holds in the warmth that is coming from the earth and keeps it warm just as our woollen garments keep us warm, and as the woolly fleece of the sheep, which grows so thick in the winter, keeps it warm.

Think, dear children; how wonderful and beautiful are the ways of our God, and how all things in His great universe are "working together for good." The cold which makes the earth need this warm covering is the very thing that God uses to provide it; for this same cold freezes the water into little snow-flakes, which do not sink into the earth, but lie upon the ground to keep it warm.

In warm countries, or in mild winters, when the earth does not need this protection, there is very little if any snow. But the colder the weather, the more snow falls, and the thicker and warmer is the covering.

Where the snow is blown away from any spot in the very cold weather, the ground gets frozen quite deep down, and the seeds and roots of plants that are buried in it are destroyed, while the ground that has been covered with snow is quite uninjured.

And then when the warmer weather makes the snow covering no longer necessary for the ground, it becomes useful to it in another way. As it melts it runs into the soil to moisten and soften it, and make it ready for the seeds and

plants. "The rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud."

But it is not only in the winter that the earth is watered with "the snow from heaven." As we go higher and higher above the earth the air gets colder and colder, until on the tops of high mountains, above what is called "the snowline," it is so cold that the snow never melts, but falls continually all the year round.

The fresh snow falling on the mountain, presses down that which is underneath it, and it runs down the sides of the mountain in frozen streams called "glaciers" or ice-rivers. When it gets down into the warmer air, the glacier melts and forms a river.

This river, which you will see gets its supply of water from the snow falling on the top of the mountain, runs through the land to "water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud." And so in sending "the snow from heaven," the Lord is providing a constant supply of water for the land, even in the hottest summer. All these "great things which we cannot comprehend," God is doing for us when "He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth." Job xxxvii. 5, 6.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

-The expedition which has been searching Northern Siberia for traces of Andrea's balloon has returned home without finding anything.

-A heavy gale was experienced last Tuesday which did enormous damage in all parts of London. Some deaths were caused by falling buildings.

-A newspaper correspondent reports that King Leopold clears a million sterling per annum by the rubber and ivory business in the Congo State.

-It has been decided to extend to Hawaii the American customs and excise laws. British and other foreign imports will, therefore, pay the Dingley rates.

-It is reported that cases of bubonic plague have occurred at Delagoa Bay, and the Transvaal Government is taking every precaution to prevent the importation of the disease into the Republic.

-More than half the Lord Chancellors of England during the past fifty years were the sons of poor men. One of them was the son of a country barber, and the father of another was a Newcastle coal-heaver.

-Iloilo was evacuated by the Spaniards on the 24th, and the insurgents took possession on the 26th, Aguinaldo's flag being hoisted. It is feared that this will lead to serious complications between the American forces and the insurgents.

-Early in 1899, both the French and German forces will be armed throughout with quick-firing artillery, which in the case of France, will mean an expenditure of about ?10,000,000. This change will triple the destructive power of an army.

-It has been finally arranged that the secret dossier in the Dreyfus case shall be presented to the Court of Cassation, and an official has been told off to take it from the War Office as often as it may be required, and to give necessary explanations.

-Mrs. Stephen Matthews, who has travelled considerably in Palestine, gave an address at Horsham on "The Wines of the Bible." All strict Jews, she said,

would know that fermented wine was never used at marriages; and she considered it nothing short of blasphemy to assert that Saviour would have created that which is the cause of much evil and suffering. It was quite evident from the study of the Bible that the wine used at the Last Supper was not alcoholic. During Passover week all strict Jews would have everything fermented removed from their houses.

-A newspaper report from Rome states that the progress of events in the Soudan has been followed with great attention by the Pope, who counts upon the material and moral support of the Egyptian Government to aid in giving a fresh impulse to the spread of Catholicism in the interior of Africa.

-A noteworthy innovation is reported from Peking, the Dowager Empress of China baring given a reception to the wives of the foreign ambassadors. The effect of this on the public mind is expected to be very greet, the Chinese regarding such a departure from ancient usage as more significant than any political change.

-Reports from Germany speak of a widespread and increasing dissatisfaction among the people, due to the laws which are intended to prevent strikes and suppress seditious speeches. The new military measure to increase the peace footing of the army by 30,000 men is also very unpopular, as are also the expulsion of Danes and Bohemians, and the numerous actions against the press for speaking slightly of the Kaiser.

-The movement for the wholesale conversion to Protestantism among the German population of Northern Bohemia, is announced to be constantly increasing. It is intended that the sots of conversion shall take place with much ostentation on January 18, which is the day of the foundation at Versailles of the German Empire. The leader of the German Nationalists in Austria reckons that 200,000 conversions will take place among his following this year.

-In Sobleswig-Holstein the German authorities are bringing considerable pressure to bear upon the inhabitants to withdraw their children from Danish schools, The children of those who do not conform to the edict will be taken from them and planed under the control of Prussian official guardians. Germany is also expelling Russian and Austrian subjects from her territory, and it is thought that these two Governments may retaliate by the expulsion of Germans.

-At the port of London during the month of November there were seized and destroyed as unfit for human consumption, 104 carcasses of mutton, 459 sides of bacon, 121 crates of rabbits and hares, 900 cases of tinned melt and fruit, 1,205 crates of bananas, 716 barrels of grapes, 9 cases of pine-apples, 11 cases of frozen lobsters, and 267 cases of condensed milk. The item of condensed milk is significant for it has recently been stated that this can be utilised for various forms of confectionery, whatever its condition may be, and will at all times command a ready sale among a certain class of manufacturers.

-The *Daily Chronicle* writes as follows on Christmas Eve: "We celebrate the carnival of peace and domesticity. If the word carnival really is derived from the devouring of flesh, it suits our Christmas festival very well. We still commemorate the Manger of Bethlehem by consuming vest amounts of animal food. From Islington and Smithfield the hecatombs go up to the sacrifice. All the shops,

especially the butchers' and poulterers', are crammed to overflowing with things to eat, till one wonders at last how the human frame can stand this sudden and extraordinary expansion, its busy season of overwork and overtime. During the next two days it cannot be an exaggeration to say that the majority of the English people will devour ten times as much as in any other two days of the year." Going on to speak of the provision for the aged poor, it expresses the conviction that enough money would be wasted in eating and drinking to ensure that "every workhouse might be swept from the face of the land, and some decent and honourable provision made for the workers who had grown old in the service of our country, and of necessity fallen out of the ranks. We believe we could well pay the price out of less than this one week's needless excess in the struggle for happiness."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

Too often, when God's promises to men are seen in a new and beautiful light; the only response given by professing Christians is a sighing acknowledgment that "we do not half live up to our privileges." And at this confession many are, content to stop, as though in making it, they had done all that was, required of them.

To some it seems impossible that they can ever live up to their privileges, for the reason that these are so great. They take too much "living up to." This is because the privileges are not seen, in their true light. Their value consists in the fact that they can be enjoyed to the full. Privileges which are not available are not privileges at all.

The greatness of the privileges which God bestows upon us consists in the fact that they enable us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. He does not ask us to "live up" to anything; because in ourselves we cannot. The idea that we can do so reveals ignorance of God's way, which is as much higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. It would be as easy for the natural man to live up to his privileges as it would be for him, by taking thought, to increase his stature until his head reached to the stars.

There is one thing needful for the man who would live out his privileges, that is, live a perfect Christian life. That one thing is a Christian life. It takes a life to live, and it pleads the life of Christ lives His privileges. He does not have to live up to them, because they are His life. The man in whom Christ dwells will also live out his privileges, for he receives them in Christ. In taking Him, we take all things that pertain to life and godliness. "Of His fulness have all we received."

Christ is the life of men. "In Him we live." The mystery of the Gospel is "Christ in you." The privilege thus bestowed upon men is an inconceivable one, but the problem of how to "live it out" is solved by the fact that it is given to us as a life. Whoever does not receive it as a life does not receive it as a life does not have it at all. Those who do so receive it find that it works in them mightily and, instead of sighing over the difficulty of living up to their privileges, they rejoice evermore

over the great things that God has done for them in the unspeakable gift of His Son.

If a poor man should ask us for bread and we should offer him a plentiful supply of food, we would expect him to eat and be filled. If he simply looked over the food, and when pressed to fall to should reply sadly that it was very kind of us to take so much trouble, but he was afraid he did not half live up to his privileges, most of us would conclude that it might do him good to go without for a while. How must the Lord feel when, after He has at an infinite cost to Himself, provided a perfect salvation for all, some treat His gifts with so little appreciation? He offers eternal life, with all that it means, in His only begotten Son, but men judge themselves unworthy of it, as did the Jews to whom Paul preached. Every one to whom the Lord reveals light must accept or refuse it. It does not palliate the refusal to excuse it by confessing that we do not live up to our privileges. When the judgment sits and some are found unworthy of a place in the Saviour's Kingdom, it will simply be a confirmation of the judgment that they passed upon themselves when the Lord offered Himself to them in all His fulness, and they for any cause judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life.

Dr. Forbes Winslow, the well-known specialist in mental diseases, has just published a book in which he demonstrates that insanity is steadily increasing in England. At the present time there are no fewer than 102,000 persons living in England and Wales who have been adjudged of unsound mind, and this figure is higher by 2,607 than was that of the previous year. Whereas in 1859 there were only 1867 lunatics to every ten thousand of the population, to-day the corresponding figure is 3248.

Dr. Winslow says:-

I have clearly shown that much of this increase is due to that terrible vice, indulgence in alcohol, and the facts, as placed before my readers, and the cases illustrative of this point, I consider to be conclusive.

Cigarette smoking among the young is also a prominent factor in the increase of mental disorders.

I think that this (cigarette smoking) is one of the curses of our age and is responsible for the mental degeneration of our youths. Experiments were made some time ago, and it was discovered that leeches were killed instantly by the blood of smokers. So suddenly did this take place that they dropped off dead when first applied.

The author states his conviction that "there is a gradual degeneration going on in the human race."

Men may flatter themselves that the world is growing better, but to do this, they must close their eyes to the fact that the world is departing more and more from the simplicity of life designed for mankind by the Creator. In proportion as this is true, men are separating themselves from the one source of life, and degeneration, physical and mental, is the natural consequence.

The Rome Correspondent of the *Catholic Times* points with pride to the way in which the Papacy is extending its influence everywhere. He writes:-

Its influence throughout the world is continually growing. From various countries come reports of improved relations with the Vatican. For many years

the Holy Father has been engaged in efforts to improve the position of the Catholics in Russia and Poland, and now it would appear that these efforts are being attended with considerable success. As the outcome, a representative of the Holy See will be appointed at St. Petersburg. Of course the Czar will endeavour to get something in return for this concession, and it is said that he has made a strong appeal to the Holy Father to support his peace crusade. News has been received here by telegraph that President McKinley proposes to despatch Archbishop Ireland to represent the United States at the Peace Conference, for he knows that there is no Prelate in the Church who can more effectively give expression to the sentiments of Catholics. Another proof of the growing influence of the Vatican is to be found in the *poiurparlers* which have commenced between the Porte and the Sovereign Pontiff with a view to the appointment of a duly accredited Ottoman Envoy at the Vatican, and yet another indication of the same kind is afforded in the fact that his Holiness has accepted the office of arbitrator in the frontier dispute between Hayti and San Domingo at the pressing instances of both countries.

There is every encouragement to call upon God in prayer, to pray without ceasing, and to ask largely. When we are not very certain that God hears us, and do not know whether our prayer is going to be answered or not, it does not take much to discourage us, but when we know that we are not asking in vain we will take full advantage of the permission to make our wants known and have them supplied. When Jesus says, "If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it;" it is for us to say, "Verily God hath heard me; He hath attended to the voice of my prayer." Ps. lxvi. 19.

January 12, 1899

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Regeneration or Destruction" *The Present Truth* 15, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. I. 10-20, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

21. "How is the faithful city become a harlot!
She that was full of judgment, righteousness
dwelled in her;
But now murderers!

22. Thy silver is become dross; thy wine is mixed
with water.

23. Thy princes are rebellious, associates of rob-
bers;
Every one of them loveth a gift, and seeketh
rewards;
To the fatherless they administer not justice;
And the cause of the widow cometh not be-
fore them.

24. Wherefore saith the Lord Jehovah, God of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel;
Aha! I will be eased of Mine adversaries;
I will be avenged of Mine enemies.

25. And I will bring again Mine hand over thee,
And I will purge in the furnace thy dross;
And I will remove all thine alloy.

26. And I will restore thy judges, as at the first;
And thy counsellors, as at the beginning;
And after this thy name shall be called
The city of righteousness, the faithful metropolis.

27. Sion shall be redeemed in judgment
And her captives in righteousness;

28. But destruction shall fall at once on the revolvers and sinners;
And they that forsake Jehovah shall be consumed.

29. For ye shall be ashamed of the flexes, which ye have desired,
And ye shall blush for the gardens which ye have chosen

30. When ye shall be as an ilex, whose leaves are blasted;
And as a garden, wherein is no water.

31. And the strong shall become low, and his work a spark of fire;
And they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them."

Study the two sections of the first chapter, which we have already studied, in connection with this one, and see how the whole chapter overflows with rich, Gospel truth. There is no half-way dealing; the condition of the people addressed is the worst possible, and the salvation offered is full and complete.

One caution should be given here, which it will be well to observe in all Bible study. It is this: Don't waste time over what you do not understand. You will never learn anything by arguing and questioning and speculating over obscure or difficult texts. Some may think that this is strange; but it is true. No man can by searching find out God. He must reveal Himself, and He will do it as fast as we are able to see Him. The Bible must make itself clear. So we must always arrive at the meaning of that which is hidden, through that which at once reveals itself to our gaze. Never guess; never speculate. We believe, not argue nor theorise, our way to an understanding of God's Word. Meditate upon, but do not talk about, what you do not understand. So in the study of this chapter, and this book, do not take precious time from the consideration of clearly revealed Gospel truths, for empty wondering and guesses as to the meaning of something that is obscure. It is all good, but you can profit only by what you understand. There are

truths enough that lie near the surface of the prophecy of Isaiah to keep us employed for many months. When we have gathered up these, we shall find that many of the things that were before concealed were simply second layer, and are brought to light by taking up the first.

The Blessing of Conviction .-Verses 4-7 should always be read in connection with verses 16-18. Perhaps no portion of Scripture is quoted oftener than verse 18,

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"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;" yet emphatic and comprehensive as it is, much of the force of it is lost because the fact is not considered that these words are addressed to the very same people that are described in verses 4-7 as so full of the sores of sin that there is not room for any more. What a blessed thing it is that the Lord so strongly sets forth the heinousness of our sins! If He did not set our case before us in its very worst phase, we might think that the offer of salvation did not reach us; but when He expressly makes it known that His salvation is for people who are as bad as they possibly can be, there is no room for doubt or discouragement.

The Cause of Destruction .-Read verses 6-9, and think how accurately they describe the condition of men and of the earth after probation has closed, and the plagues of God's wrath are poured out. Compare them with Rev. xvi. 1, 2; Zeph. i. 2-18; Joel i. 15-20. Mind, the statement is not made that Isa. i. 6-9 is a description of that time of trouble, but that the condition described is very similar. Now the closing of probation does not make any change in the characters of men. The character of the wicked will not be different after that time from what it has been before. He that is unjust and filthy remains so, that is all. Rev. xxii. 11. The only difference is that at the close of probation their choice of evil is irrevocably fixed. That is what makes their probation end-they will not longer listen to the Gospel. They could be saved if they were willing to be saved. "If ye be willing," etc. So we see that men who are as bad as the wickedest men who will be destroyed when the Lord comes, may be saved. The reason, and the only reason, why any will be lost, is not that they are too wicked to be forgiven and saved, but that they do not wish to be saved. It is not the guilt of sin, but the love of sin, that shuts men out of the Kingdom; for if men will cease to love sin, the guilt of it, however deep, will be taken away.

A Question of Eating .-If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be eaten by the sword. The force of this is weakened in our version by the rendering "devour" in the second instance, although the word is the same in both verses. Eat or be eaten. Eat what?-"Eat ye that which is good." And what is good?-"O taste and see that the Lord is good." "Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." "For My flesh is true meat, and My blood is true drink." John vi. 35, 55. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." If one eats only the body of Christ, he eats to live; but whoever eats that which is not the body of Christ (and it can be eaten only by faith), that which he eats consumes him, instead of

building him up. He is devoured by that which he feeds upon. "He that doubteth is damned if he eat because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. xiv. 23. Here is the alternative: Eat the flesh of Christ, and abide for ever; or eat that which is not bread, and be consumed by it.

Degeneration and Regeneration .-Verses 21-23 present a picture of degeneration. Adultery is the one word that covers the whole. Everything has become adulterated. Faithfulness and purity have been crowded out. The one sin that God's people commit is adultery. The Lord is the husband of His people. Jer. iii. 14; xxxi. 32; Rom. vii. 4; 2 Cor. xi. 2; Eph. v. 31, 32. His people are one flesh in Him. Departure from Him to any degree is adultery; so that whatever sin anyone commits, it is adultery-the allowing of another to take the place that should be filled with Christ. This adulteration-the substitution of the false for the true may go on until the faithful city becomes a harlot, and that which once was pure metal, only dross.

But there is a remedy for all this. "God hath not cast off His people which He foreknew." Nay, "for the Lord will not cast off for ever." Lam. iii. 31. Never will He turn away. "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful." 2 Tim. ii. 13. So He says: "Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed My voice, saith the Lord." Jer. iii. 12, 13. Only confess the sin, and it is forgiven, purged, for "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." "My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory." Phil. iv. 19. The Lord regenerates us by supplying that which we lack. His own righteousness and faithfulness are given to redeem us from sin.

Practical Piety .-Notice that one of the gravest charges against the wicked is that "they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them." Also in the exhortation to put away evil, the only things specified under the head of well-doing are, "relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Christianity is not a mere sentiment or emotion; it consists in deeds. Not that by any among of deeds we can earn the favour of God, but that these good deeds are the manifestation of the life of Christ within. He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." Acts x. 38. Kindness is the characteristic of God, for "God is love." "Every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John iv. 7. And remember that it is not sermons about doing good, but the actual doing, that constitutes Christianity.

Complete Restoration .-When God made man in the beginning, he, as well as everything else, was "very good." Christ is the Beginning, and all who are in Him find restoration. The adulteration will be removed, and the fine gold will be restored. We are "made full" in Him. "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me." Ps. cxix. 73. We have greatly degenerated from the original model; but God has promised to bring His hand upon us again, so that we may be new creatures, bearing again the impress of God.

Utter Destruction .-Just as surely as there will be complete restoration, will there be utter destruction. Indeed, the promise of the restoration of the original perfection necessarily includes the destruction of those who cling to the evil. Mercy rejected means wrath. It cannot be otherwise. So none should presume upon the mercy of God, to continue in sin, that grace may abound. The greater the mercy offered, the greater the disaster that follows its rejection. Thus it is that men will suffer the wrath of God, whose "mercy endureth for ever."

The destruction of the wicked is simply the natural fruit of their own ways. There is nothing forced or arbitrary about it.

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"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." When the plagues begin to appear at the close of probation, in the form of grievous sores in the bodies of men, it is only the breaking out of the corruption within. When men eat and drink death,-and they do this when they do not feed on Christ, the life,-it is but natural that the poison should permeate them, until they become bodies of death. And the fact that the first plague for sin is disease, emphasises the fact that righteousness is health. The keeping of God's law means physical health as well as moral purity.

See how strongly the destruction of the wicked is put in verses 30, 31. "Ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water." Such a condition is but a preparation for fire. But that is not all. "The strong shall become tow, and his work a spark of fire." Every one knows how inflammable a substance tow is; let fire come near it, and it is gone in a flash. Now think of tow which generates fire?-What hope of salvation is there for it?-Absolutely none. The wicked prepare their own destruction; their own works consume them. The destruction is certain, and God is clear; for bear in mind that this is only the fate of those that forsake the Lord. They only will be consumed. Whoever hearkens to the Lord "shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." Prov. i. 33.

"Studies in the Gospel of John. The New Birth" *The Present Truth* 15, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." John iii. 1, 2.

It is well when those who have the truth of God have such power with them that men cannot fail to see that God is with them. God has promised that it shall be so, and that means that He expects it to be so. He says to His people, concerning the men of earth: "They shall fall down unto thee, and make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely, God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God." Isa. xlv. 14. When the Jewish Sanhedrim talked with Peter and John, they gave the credit of their boldness to the Lord. Acts iv. 13. So when a great miracle was wrought by the agency of Peter, "all that lived at Lydda and Saron saw him and turned to the Lord." Acts ix. 35, 42. The true servant of

Jehovah, no matter how great the work he does, always leads the people to think of his Master. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven." Matt. v. 16.

In the address of Nicodemus, however, we can see an intended compliment to the Man Jesus, such as most people feel it their duty to give to the minister. "I like that sermon; it expressed just what I have always believed." "There is no doubt but that you are doing a grand work here; your preaching is having a great influence on the people." Now while it is always right to encourage a man, the best way in the world to encourage a servant of Christ is to give personal heed to what he says, and let the fruits be seen in the life. Too many think that their duty is fully discharged if they assent to what is said, having no thought that it means that they must make any change in their lives. How often this Scripture is fulfilled. "And as for thee, son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." Eze. xxxiii. 30-32. They praise the singer and the song, but they do not have any thought that it is more than a thing merely to listen to.

Jesus cut short the compliment of Nicodemus. All that Nicodemus said was true, and we may believe that he was sincere in saying it; but Jesus did not care to talk about Himself or His work. Very abrupt and ungracious His words doubtless seemed to Nicodemus, in response to his polite greeting. The ruler had praised Jesus, and had not the slightest idea but that Jesus would feel gratified on account of his attention, for he had no thought that he was anything but a model; but Jesus instantly responded: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

What! a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews one who from his youth up had been trained in the law, and who always exercised himself to preserve a conscience void of offence toward men and towards God; must such an one be wholly made new before he can be saved? "Verily

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verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus knew that the Lord meant him, and he knew that the sentence meant a complete transformation of life, and the implied rebuke nettled him, so that he affected not to understand it, and began to quibble. Notice that Jesus did not pay any attention to his question. "How can a man be born when he is old?" except to repeat the statement. He did not attempt any explanation in answer to the question, "How can these things be?" but simply assured the mystery of the natural birth; why then should anyone stumble over the mystery of the new birth?

The statement is sweeping: Nobody can enter the kingdom of heaven except by a new birth. The birth that brings us into the kingdom of men, does not introduce us into the kingdom of God. Nobody is born a Christian. No matter how godly a person's ancestry may have been, nor into how pious a home he may be born, he must be born again, or he cannot be saved. Pious parents are a blessing, and a wonderful help in the way of life; but there is a work that must be accomplished in every individual soul by the Holy Spirit alone. The child who has truly God-fearing parents must grow up to be a Christian, and should become one very young; but nobody is born a Christian. He may have learned Scripture language as a matter of course, from hearing so much, and may never have heard words of scoffing or profanity. He may have been trained from earliest infancy to read the Bible and to engage in family and public religious exercises. All this is good, but nothing that anybody can get from human beings from first to last, no matter how closely related or how good, can take the place of the personal work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. As great a blessing as pious training is, if it is depended on as being sufficient, the individual is in a worse condition than the one who has never known religious associations, and who knows that he is a worthless sinner.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again," or "from above." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The wind bloweth where it will, and yet it has no will of itself; it comes from God and returns to God, according to His will; so in every one that is born of the Spirit. He maketh His angels winds. In these words of Christ we have not merely the mystery of the process of new birth set forth, but we have a suggestion of the wondrous power to be manifested in those born of the Spirit. Don't try to explain, and don't reason from your own past experience, nor even from anything that you have seen. Do you not know that by trying to understand how these things can be, before we accept them, we limit the amount of blessing that we are to receive, to our own comprehension; or as God wishes to do for us, "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or a think"? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Yield to God's will, and you will know things that no human language can tell you.

Nothing is plainer in the Scriptures than that all the disabilities which we inherit by birth from our parents are counteracted and overcome by the birth from the Spirit. We inherit sinful dispositions. It is not the specific acts of sin that a man has committed, that will cause his everlasting destruction, so much as it is the evil nature that is in him, even if it has not manifested itself in any way that is noticeable by men. We have the evil in us, and always with us, and again and again we have said, "It's no use; I cannot possibly overcome this sin; it is a part of my very being," and have felt almost in despair, or else we have apologised for the hateful thing by saying, "Oh, it's only my way; I don't mean anything bad by it; but I simply can't help it; and God will not hold me responsible for what I am not

to blame for. I had this way from birth." Now read: "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." Rom. v. 18, 19.

We are not responsible for having been born sinners. Since all our ancestors were sinners, it was inevitable that we should be born sinners if born at all; and we had no voice in the matter of our birth; therefore God does not hold us responsible. But that does not mean that He excuses the sin, and holds our being sinners as a light thing. No, He does not hold us responsible for the sin; for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." 2 Cor. v. 19. And this reconciliation is effected by undoing all the evil that was entailed on us by our first birth. Because God does not hold us responsible for the sin that is born in us, He provides for a new birth, direct from Himself, which will make us strong where we are weak by nature. We are "heirs of God," of His person and character, of all that He is and has. We cannot understand it, but the knowledge and belief of the fact makes us "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power."

Jesus spoke of Himself as "the Son of man, which is in heaven," yet He was at that very moment talking to Nicodemus. He was always "in the bosom of the Father," so that we may know that He is with us now that He has ascended to heaven; and more, that we may see the possibility of dwelling in the secret place of God. He who abides in God can speak of heavenly things as of that which he knows and understands. There is no uncertainty in his testimony.

Everybody who is saved must believe many things that he cannot explain to anybody, not even to himself. Often the Bible teacher is met with the challenge or request to "harmonise" two statements in the Bible. "How can these things be?" is asked again and again. Now if he sets about trying to explain every *seeming* contradiction, and should refuse to accept the truth or take a step forward until he can reconcile it with everything else, he will land in total darkness. "By faith we understand." "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." Faith is not contrary to reason, but the things with which it deals are so infinitely above and beyond the range of human thought that one must have the mind of God in order to comprehend them. So it is useless to spend time arguing with an unbeliever or a questioner. Such time is wasted. Tell him the truth with all authority, and with such positiveness as can come only from close, personal knowledge, and which must

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carry conviction. If the man once believes, he will know for himself why you could not explain everything to him. If he will not believe, it makes no difference what he thinks of you or your ability.

"The Fate of Turkey" *The Present Truth* 15, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

A writer in the New York *Independent* sets forth, as given in the following extract, the history of Turkey's dwindling empire during the present century. In view of the political situation in Europe, everyone can see how easily

circumstances might arise which would carry the process of spoliation a step further, and leave the Turk without a foothold in Europe.

It is written in the prophecy of Daniel that the king of the north, the title therein given to the power occupying the territory which is at present known as Turkey, "shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Nor will the arrival of that fatal hour affect only the Turkish empire. "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time, and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan. xii. 1.

Now remembering what takes place when the Turkish empire comes to its end, read this account of what has been accomplished during the past hundred years towards its extinction. Remember too, as you note from this time toward the steps by which the Turkish empire is marching to its certain doom, that to that same step the nations of earth are marching on to the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.

It is time to make sure that our names are not blotted out of the book of life, but that when the end is reached, as it must soon be, we shall be delivered among those who are written in the book. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels." Rev. iii. 5.

"The loss of Crete is one more stage in the disintegration of the Turkish Empire. We are impatient at the long survival of the worst government on earth, but if one could look at events through the telescope of history instead of through the slow turning kaleidoscope of a single life's current events, one should find that the changes of this single century have been very momentous.

"In 1812 Bessarabia was ceded to Russia, as a result of a long war between the two nations, and the river Pruth became the new boundary. The Servians had long been in rebellion, and they refused to accept the amnesty allowed them by the treaty of Bucharest and continued their fight until they gained their autonomy in 1817 with no help from Russia. A rebellion in Epirus, beginning in 1820, which finally involved the great Egyptian Ibrahim Pasha and in aid of Turkey, and Russia in aid of the rebels, was concluded in 1828 by the independence of Greece, transferred to Russia the eastern coast of the Black Sea, with the ports of Anapa and Poti. On the western and northern shore of the Black Sea, Bessarabia and Roumania were deprived of all Turkish garrisons as far as the Danube and put under the protection of Russia, to which the former was later annexed. In 1860 Roumania became independent, and Servia got rid of its Turkish garrisons. In 1878, by the treaty of San Stefano, modified by a European Congress, the province of Dobrudja, south of the Danube, was lost to Turkey and came to Roumania; eastern Roumelia was given autonomy, Bosnia and Herzegovina went to Austria, Montenegro was enlarged, Servia became independent, Janina and Thessaly went to Greece, Cyprus to England, and Russia took the province about Kars and Batoum, southeast of the Black Sea.

"Meanwhile slower changes had greatly reduced, or utterly destroyed, the power of the Sultan in other great provinces. The massacres in Syria occasioned the intervention of the European Powers for the protection of the Christian population. Egypt has become an English possession, and English influence extends over a considerable portion of the coast of Arabia, while Algiers is no more Turk than is Algiers or Morocco.

"We then see, during this century, the Turkish empire reduced on every side. The Turk is nearly driven out of Europe. He has lost Greece and the Balkan provinces, which make up Bosnia, Servia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Roumania, leaving him only the strip of Roumelia behind Constantinople. He has been driven quite out of Africa, and he has lost all that region to the northeast out of which Russia has built her coal oil industry. Of the islands of the Mediterranean the chief are lost, Cyprus and Crete, and only the small islands along the coast remain. Palestine and Syria are protected against misgovernment, and Arabia is semi-independent. Practically the mighty Turkish Empire, which once threatened Europe, is now shut up to Asia Minor and the valley of the Euphrates, and here she remains by sufferance of the Powers. Another outbreak of violence, or a new European war, may end what never can be mended. The next Russian advance is likely to be a tremendous one; and yet before the time for

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it comes Germany may have assumed to teach the Sultan how to rule Asia Minor. It is the incidence of the Chinese problem which gives respite to Turkey."

"Cleanliness" *The Present Truth* 15, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

Cleanliness is of the utmost importance in preserving the health of the children as well as of older people. Some children seem to have a natural aversion to the wash-basin. The cause of this in many cases lies in the hurried, needlessly vigorous and unsympathetic manner in which the operation is performed. The child does not want a lot of soap in his eyes, for it makes them smart. He likes to have his ears tenderly dealt with, not pulled this way and that, and jerked about with a coarse towel. Deal gently with him and he will learn to enjoy his bath.

"Little Folks. 'The House of the Lord'" *The Present Truth* 15, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

Read what King David, the "sweet singer of Israel", said in one of his songs of praise to God: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple."

"The house of the Lord" is the place where God dwells. But He tells us that "He fills heaven and earth," and "the whole earth is full of His glory." So the whole world is "the house of the Lord," and we can see His beauty everywhere for "the beauty of all created things is but a gleam from the shining of His glory."

And so since the whole earth is the temple of God, we may enquire of Him wherever we are. He dwells by His Holy Spirit in all the things that He has made, and so as we study His works we may "enquire in His temple." He says, "Ask of Me, and I will show thee great and mighty things that thou knowest not."

How simple! How wonderful! May we really go to Jesus Himself, and ask Him all we want to know about the works of His hands? Yes; He delights to have us do this; He calls us to come; He says, "Ask of Me, and *I will show thee.*"

What! even little children? Oh, yes; for He says that He has "hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them *unto babes.*"

Why is it that He has hid these things from "the wise and prudent"? It is not because He does not want them to know, for He invites them all to come to Him and learn. It is only because they will not come to *ask* of Him, and that is the only way that they can ever really learn anything.

They think they are so wise that they can find out for themselves all that they want to know, and they will not go to His Word and ask Him for His Holy Spirit to teach them. So they are "ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," while little children, and all those who are simple and childlike, will come to Jesus to learn and be taught of Him the truth that none of the wise men of this world can find out.

Do not forget this, dear children, but ask Jesus every day to give you His Holy Spirit to "guide you into all truth." Study His precious Word, and as you behold His works, "enquire in His temple" just what lesson He has for you in them all.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

-Alarm has been caused in Paris by an extensive landslip, due to the overflowing of a subterranean river.

-The site for the new Gordon Memorial College has already been chosen, and operations have been commenced.

-It is estimated that two-thirds of the male population of the world use tobacco in some shape or form.

-The weather has continued very stormy during the past week, and many wrecks are reported, with much loss of life.

-The Khalifs has been heard from at Dulim, where he is raiding the Arabs. An expedition has been despatched against him.

-The Baptist Union have decided to recommend the raising of a fund of ? 250,000 to extend their work in England, and erect a Baptist Church House.

-If steel grates, fire-irons, knives, etc., be lightly rubbed over with vaccine, they may be left without fear of rust during the holidays or for any length of time.

-The revenue returns of the United Kingdom continue to increase. The nine months ending December 31 show an advance of nearly ?1,000,000 on the same term of the previous year.

-Spiders are a serious plague in Japan. They spin their webs on the telegraph wires, and are so numerous as to cause a serious loss of insulation. Sweeping the wire does little good, as the spiders begin all over again.

-A high Russian official is reported to have said that "at no distant date China would be an integral part of the Russian Empire." Whether this be the intention or not present circumstances certainly point in that direction.

-The situation continues unchanged at Iloilo. The Americans are anxious not to precipitate a war with the insurgents, and General Otis is instructed to proceed with extreme caution. The Filipinos are fortifying the place.

-Anglo-Russian complications are reported from Hankow, where the Chinese Government have granted to Russia a concession which includes property owned by British subjects. These refuse to give up possession of their land.

-Glass is now frequently fashioned by machine pressure instead of being moulded by blowing. In the pressed glass the articles are either made by hand or machine pressure, and this innovation has done much towards making glass articles cheaper than formerly.

-A naval expert states that the French naval budget for 1899 will exceed the last one by over seventeen million francs. During the year there will be ninety-one warships on the stocks, so that France does not intend to be left behind in any increase of naval strength.

-The greatest corporation on earth is said to be the London and North-Western Railway. This company has a capital of ?119,000,000, and a revenue of over ?1,800 an hour; its 2,800 engines travel over 41,000,000 miles in the year; it employs over 60,000 men, and carries over 156,000 passengers a day.

-The Pope is of opinion that the best means of guaranteeing European peace would be the establishment of a permanent Committee of Arbitration. It is stated at the Vatican that Russia is favourable to this idea, and that the establishment of such a committee will figure on the programme of the Conference.

-A semi-official German organ forecasts a decisive struggle between the State and Social Democracy during the present year. It declares that the organisation of the latter is becoming perfect, and that the organisation must be broken. Socialists see in the article a warning that the Government is determined upon their immediate annihilation.

-A scientific writer says that night is the time which Nature utilises for the growth of plants and animals; children, too, grow more rapidly during the night. In the daytime the system is kept busy disposing of the waste consequent on activity, but while asleep the system is free to extend its operations beyond the mere replacing of worn-out particles.

-One of the grandest engineering works in the network of railways in Central and Western Siberia is undoubtedly the bridge over the Yenisei. It will cost 2,279,360 roubles, and will be the largest railway bridge in the world. It will be opened for traffic next May, a year before the date originally fixed. The material employed in the construction is stone and iron.

-All the Chicago tramway companies have combined and are seeking a fifty years monopoly of the streets. The mayor of the city says the prospects of profits are so enormous that the companies can afford to pay ?1,500,000 in bribing aldermen to get the scheme passed. At present it looks as if the aldermen would succumb, and ?50,000 was the current price for a vote, according to recently received Chicago papers.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 10. It is true of all men that they are the handiwork of God. "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." Ps. c. 3. It is also true of all that they are created in Christ Jesus. "In Him were all things created." Col. i. 16. The fact that men have denied that they are in Christ Jesus does not alter the truth. If every one should disbelieve it, God would abide faithful. He cannot deny Himself. Therefore that which was true at our creation remains true to-day, and every man who is alive at all is in Christ Jesus. Paul said to the heathen, "In Him we live and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28.

Since we were created in Christ, it follows that we must share His experiences and He ours, for there is but one life between us. Jesus says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." John xiv. 19. The evil we have brought upon ourselves by disobedience have inflicted upon Christ: So it is written, "In all their affliction He was afflicted." Is. lxiii. 9.

But this is not the only aspect of the situation. Because Christ is one with men, a wonderful way of escape is made for the sinner. "*Where* we sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. v. 20. Let every soul who is weary of the burden of sin, and groaning for deliverance from its accursed power, rejoice, for where the sin abounds, even in his heart and life, grace is as much more present, as Christ is stronger than evil. It remains true, that he is "created in Christ Jesus."

So not only does Christ share our experiences, bearing the sins of the whole world; Himself bearing our sicknesses and carrying our sorrows, but we also share His. He died unto sin once, and we are "crucified with Christ." Therefore, acknowledging it to be true that we are created in Him, we know also that we are "dead indeed unto sin."

But Christ was raised from the dead, "by the glory of the Father," and in this resurrection we too have a part. "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead." Rom. vi. 18. When Jesus rose again, it was as "the Man Christ Jesus," and although He ascended up far above all heavens, God "hath raised us up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*." Eph. ii. 6.

But some one will say, "If this is all true, and all men are created in Christ Jesus, why will not all men be saved?" That is what the Lord wants to know He says, "Judge, I pray you, betwixt Me and My vineyard. What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" Isa. v. 3, 4. You, for whose sake God spared not His only begotten Son, but gave Him freely, can you tell why you are not saved? There is no reason why, and the judgment will not reveal any. The unsaved will then be without excuse, because there is none that can be offered.

The National Council of Free Churches has just issued a Free Church Catechism, which is said to set forth the unanimous belief of the different denominations represented. Two years have been spent in preparing the Catechism, and revising it to meet the views of those concerned in its production, and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes states in the preface that, "in view of the distressing controversies of our fore-fathers, it is profoundly significant and gladdening to be able to add that every question and every answer in this Catechism has been finally adopted without a dissentient vote." He says further:-

The theologians who have prepared this Catechism represent, directly, or indirectly, the beliefs of not less, and probably many more, than sixty millions of avowed Christians in all parts of the world. Students of history will be aware that no such combined statement of interdenominational belief has ever previously been attempted, much less achieved, since the lamentable day when Martin Luther contended with Huldreich Zwingli.

It is undoubtedly a fact that at the present time there is a great tendency among the different Nonconformist bodies to unite their forces along certain lines, but whether this is a good thing or not must be determined by the ground of their union. Christ is anxious that His people shall be one, but when all are united to Him, the union amongst each other will take care of itself. It will be established on a firm basis. But the union which comes by ignoring differences among the different denominations is no union at all.

The word of God is the foundation and the life of His church. When this has its proper place all will bow to its authority, and the unity of the faith will be maintained. When men feel themselves at liberty to criticise and judge this Word, they exalt themselves above it, and have no standard but their own imaginations. This is why there are so many sects. The new Catechism contains an illustration of the way professed servants of God treat His Word. In answer to the question, "What does the Fourth Commandment teach us?" the answer is given,-

That we ought to be diligent in our calling during six days of the week, but keep one day hallowed for rest and worship; and because Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, Christians observe that day, calling it the Lord's Day

The Fourth Commandment definitely states that the seventh day, on which God rested from His work, is to be kept holy, but the Catechism ignores this and then proceeds to state how Christians have improved on the commandment of Jehovah for a reason of their own. They prefer to honour the first day rather than the seventh, and do not see the impious audacity of calling their own day "the Lord's Day." Thus they exalt themselves above God and presume to change His day for Him. Men have grown so accustomed to the idea that it is right for them to alter God's ordinance at their own will that they fail to realise the true character of this rebellious act. Let all such read the Catechism's definition of sin:-

Sin is any thought or feeling, word, or act, which either is contrary to God's holy law, or falls short of what it requires.

In these days when God is calling men to return to the observance of the true Sabbath, what spirit is it that has led to this unprecedented "statement of inter-denominational belief," which will influence "sixty millions of avowed Christians"

to continue in their disregard of the Fourth Commandment, strengthened by the unanimous vote of so many of their leading men?

January 19, 1899

"As Little Children" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

"Verily I say unto you, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xviii. 3.

It is written in the prophecy of Malachi, "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers." Mal. iv. 5, 6.

From Luke i. 17 we learn that the object of this work of Elijah the prophet is to prepare people for the appearing of Christ. Of John the Baptist it was said, "He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

To make ready a people prepared for the Lord is to cause them to become as little children, for only such can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Therefore to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children is to put in the fathers the heart of a little child. As a result of this work done in the spirit and power of Elias, the fathers and children will become one in spirit.

It is for the lack of this child-like spirit that so many parents have had to grieve over the rebellious dispositions of their children. It takes a humble, child-like spirit on the part of the parent to deal successfully with the soul of the little one, and only as parents themselves become as little children can they have a saving influence over the young.

Children are very precious to the Lord. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Jesus says, "Take heed, that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven." "Whoso shall offend [cause to stumble, R.V.] one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." Matt. xviii.

It is not the Lord's fault the children are so often a cause of trouble and anxiety to their parents. Some feel that it is almost hopeless to expect to see their children converted, but if they would only become as little children themselves, it would open the way for the Lord to work mightily in their behalf. He earnestly desires to save the children, and often all that hinders Him is the unwillingness of the parents to co-operate with Him, and reveal in their own lives the beauty and attractiveness which would win the children.

Let us notice one or two of the promises which the Lord makes to parents, when they allow themselves to be made like little children by the message of Elias, which is to prepare people for the Lord. From these promises parents may

learn what the Lord is willing to do now for their children, if they themselves will cease to hinder His working.

"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring." The result is seen in conversions on every hand, "And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." Isa. xlv. 3-5.

When a person receives the Spirit of God its influence does not cease with himself. It extends to his children and beyond. Out of him flow rivers of living water. John vii. 38, 39. When their own backsliding is healed, the promise is given to God's people, "They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine." Hosea xiii. 4, 7.

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The receiving of God's fulness is the safeguard against backsliding. While a place is reserved in the heart for the world it will always assert itself and be master. When God is allowed to fill the life, He will keep that which is committed to Him. And just as He can do this for those who trust in Him with all their heart and lean not to their own understanding, so He can and will do it for their children. Parents may be sure of the continued salvation of their children by knowing for themselves what it is to be kept from falling.

This is not a speculation. God has sworn to it. His covenant with Abraham that He would write His law in his heart was "between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generation for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Gen. xvii. 7. "For I have known him, to the end that He may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Gen. xviii. 19.

In Isa. lix. 20, 21, we learn what this covenant would do for the seed of all "them that turn from transgression in Jacob." "As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."

"Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 1. Be yourselves a channel for the Divine blessing and it will nourish your children, so that they will grow up in the Christ. They will have to meet with temptations just as their parents do, but the promise is to both, "I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." Isa. xlix. 25.

"The Gospel of Isaiah" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

It has already been pointed out that the Gospel as given through the prophet Isaiah was for the people who lived in the time of the promise, a time when the work of the Gospel could be closed up and the King of glory come, if the people would only receive the message. So it is emphatically a message for the present

time when "the great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly." It is also clear that in this first chapter of Isaiah a complete view of the Gospel work is presented, reaching to the full restoration through judgment and righteousness, in the experience of those who accept it, or the destruction of those who reject it, and thus "forsake the Lord." So the work to be done just before the Lord comes will be set forth in this chapter, and the people who are doing the closing work will be carrying out the principles which are here laid down. Let us therefore study some of these principles.

A Question of Food. -The Lord calls upon heaven and earth to listen while He presents His case concerning His children. He says that He has nourished them, but they have turned against Him. Even the beasts of burden recognise their owner and expect to serve those who feed them, but His children do not so. It is no mere accident that the food question is mentioned here. It was through yielding to the temptation of Satan over this very question that sin came into the world in the first place. It was over this same matter that the children of Israel murmured in the wilderness. "And they tempted God in their hearts by asking meat for their lust. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" Ps. lxxviii. 18, 19. Satan attempted to overthrow Jesus in the wilderness on this same question. Matt. iv. 3, 4. We may therefore be sure that in the closing work of the Gospel God's people will be tested to show that the victory which was gained over this question by Jesus has been fully appropriated through faith by His followers. Study anew the question of healthful living, of eating what the Lord has given for food with a constant recognition of what He gives in such food, and see that it is not a matter of chance that it is now coming into such prominence. Observe that the closing message must deal with this matter. Compare Rev. xiv. 6, 7 with Acts xiv. 15-17 and xvii. 24, 25, and note what is involved in the recognition of God as the Creator. Read 1 Cor. x. 1-11; these things "are written for our admonition," because the same test will be experienced by those "upon whom the ends of the world are come."

The Snare of Ritualism. -From verses 10-15 we learn that in the very time of the promise the professed people of God were depending upon the forms of worship to commend them to God while their lives were full of evil. This is but one phase of the same old effort to put self in the place of God. The Lord's rebuke upon such mockery is intended to save the people from depending upon that which will fail them when the test comes. Read Jer. xvii. 5-8. There is nothing arbitrary in these statements. The simple consequences of man's own choice are presented. Every offering, every form of service, in which the righteousness of Christ is lacking, is a vain oblation, and empty form. It is no more acceptable than was the offering of Cain. But these principles must be emphasised in the closing work. The falling away and the mystery of iniquity reach their climax in the final struggle of the great controversy when the professed church and the world have united against God and His truth. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." The warning against the worship of the beast and his image (Rev. xiv. 9, 10) is just as much a part of the closing message as is the instruction to worship God. It is again the time of the promise, and so now we see a professed religion of forms and ceremonies substituted for the reality of the life that cleanses from sin. But this is

not a question simply of some church. It is a matter of individual experience, and the only safeguard against it is in an individual acceptance of the life of God in Christ: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

Christian Help Work .-The spirit of the Gospel is to help the poor and the unfortunate. This is shown in the whole work of Christ for us. Those who are "

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wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" are the very ones whom He came to help. He came to a fatherless family to be "the Everlasting Father" to them, the second Adam. He "gave Himself for us." The spirit of Satan and of the world is selfish, to think only of oneself. In the closing days this spirit will be most fully revealed by those who have refused the blessings of the Gospel, and this will open the way and create a demand as it were for helping those who are thus brought into distress. So in the closing work of the Gospel, just before the people of God are to hear the invitation, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom," they will call "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," to share with them in things temporal and things spiritual. And so the instruction to "relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" will be carried out by those who are giving the last message of mercy, and by this work it will be shown that it is a message of mercy. Note that the definition of religion given in James i. 27 shows that it is not an abstract quality, but a principle which manifests itself in life, and determines our relationship to the unfortunate. That the poor, who are really the children of God, can do Christian Help Work is shown from the fact that Jesus helped others, although He had not where to lay His head. And giving from their scanty funds was so common that this came to the mind of the disciples as the probable reason why Judas left them on the night of the betrayal. John xiii. 27-29. Peter had no money, but he bestowed an inestimable gift upon the lame man. Acts iii. God makes believers sufficient to be ministers of His own life. 1 Cor. iii. 4-6.

"A Gospel Epitome" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

In our study of the first chapter of Isaiah it has been necessary to divide into three lessons what is really one connected lesson, and so it will be profitable to consider the whole chapter together. As the whole text has already been printed, as translated by Lowth, we shall for the sake of the space omit it here and refer the reader to the three preceding numbers of this paper, or to his Bible, or better still to his own knowledge of the chapter from a previous study.

Of course the only thing to be studied in the Scripture is the Gospel of Christ the Saviour, the Gospel of abundant life (John x. 10), imparted to us through our faith (John xx. 30-31). But the character of God is inseparable from the power of His life, and so the Gospel is the Gospel of His character, freely given to man in the gift of His Son Jesus, "the Lord our Righteousness." And the need of such a Gospel arises from the fact of man's unlikeness to God, even though originally made in His image, for all now lack His glory (character) through sin (Rom. iii. 23); and so the picture is complete only when we see man's lost and pitiable condition through his rebellion against God the Father, his utter inability to save

himself by his own works, God's power and willingness to save even the vilest, and the results of accepting or rejecting this offered salvation. Such a complete picture is presented in this first chapter of Isaiah.

The Lord's own description of the condition of every man who has departed from Him is given in verses 4-6, and what a pitiable condition is here presented! There is absolutely no soundness, nothing from which goodness can ever be developed. It is a case entirely without hope, unless a restoring power can be found outside of itself. The cause of this distressing experience is found in verse 2. It is rebellion; and the rebellion of children against a Father who has nourished and brought them up. And here it is shown that man, who was created in the image of God, to have dominion "over the cattle," has through his sin lost his place of power and become more brutish than the beast of the field. For children treat their Father with less consideration than the ox and ass treat their owner. Thus has the head become the tail, and thus is God's glory trailed in the very dust before the face of all the universe.

And how clearly it appears that this course of rebellion against God has brought in its train the most terrible misery to man and a destroying curse upon the earth. Wounds, bruises and sores cover the man from head to foot, while his country is desolate, his cities are burned, and strangers devour his land. The foes within and the foes without have both gained a complete victory over him, and were it not for the wonderful mercy of the long-suffering, though powerful "Lord of hosts," powerful to save, not even a remnant could be saved from such depths of woe. How wondrously are the mercy and the saving grace of God revealed in His own statement of the consequences of man's rebellion! How tender and strong is the love which comes to the rescue of the lost one whose condition is so repulsive! But "God is love," and man's need is his strongest plea, and the life which heals and saves is freely given by the Great Physician "who gave Himself for our sins."

The deceitfulness of sin and the perversity of the human heart are revealed in the way in which the Lord's provision to save us from sin is turned, by the suggestion of Satan, into an excuse for continuing in sin with the utmost complacency. Repentance for sin and faith in the efficacy of His blood (life) who has "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," shown by offerings made with "a broken and a contrite heart," which thus become "the sacrifices of righteousness," will bring pardon and cleansing from the sin, which means salvation from sinning. But a multitude of sacrifices, which are mere "vain oblations," and many prayers made with outstretched hands which are "full of blood," are simply sin added to sin under the guise of religion, as are all our efforts at saving ourselves apart from the grace of Christ. This is only to add to the burden which we have already brought upon the Lord's life, and so He becomes "weary to bear them." Thus is again emphasised how great is our need of Divine deliverance, as it appears that even the forms of worship provided by the Lord Himself become an expression of deeper degradation when attempted by us as works of righteousness. Satan, who desired power for selfish purposes, God's power without His character, often seeks to satisfy our sins of need by a multiplication of forms without the life, which when present will find expression for

itself. Where sin abounded, there grace did much more abound, but not that we should continue in sin. God's salvation is *from* sin, not *in* sin. The blood upon the hands shows the need, not making many pharisaical prayers, but of applying to the heart the blood that cleanseth from all sin.

And so we come to the central thought of the chapter, God's willingness and ability to cleanse from the deepest stains of sin. But this He does by virtue of what He Himself is, by the power of His own character. And so in every commandment of His, which the saved sinner knows as "life everlasting," He is simply offering to us the assurance of His own character through His "exceeding great and precious promises." For when He tells us to "relieve the oppressed, Judge the fatherless, plead the cause of the widow," He is holding out to us the gift of His own life, that

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life which finds expression in doing the same things for us. For is it not His delight to let the oppressed go free? And "a father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in His holy habitation. All that God is He desires to share with His children, and the most wonderful thing about the inheritance is that we may become "heirs of God" Himself, temples for His own indwelling. And although the temple has become defiled, yea even "a den of thieves," yet "shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Hear the Lord's Word: "I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Father, I have wandered from Thee,
Often has my heart gone astray;
Crimson do my sins seem to me-
Water cannot wash them away.
Jesus, to the fountain of Thine,
Leaning on Thy promise I go;
Cleanse me by Thy washing divine,
And I shall be whiter than snow."

And so complete is the cleansing and the restoration that even though the faithful city had become an harlot, and its princes rebellious and the companions of thieves, wholly given up to the work of the thief (John x. 10), yet shall it again be called "The city of righteousness, the faithful city." Thus are we encouraged to believe that there is forgiveness with the Lord that He may be feared, and that there is help for every one of us. He redeems by His own righteousness, a free gift to be received through faith. There is no sin so heinous from which we may not be justified by faith, that faith which works by love, the only faith there is. The unpardonable sin is the sin which refuses to be pardoned. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This is the glorious result of accepting the Gospel of Life, the Gospel of the gift of God's own character through faith in Christ!

And now the chapter closes by stating the inevitable result of refusing the same Gospel life. "They that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "An oak whose leaf fadeth," and "a garden that hath no water" are the types of the man who refuses the water of life. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters. . . . Her leaf shall be green." "The ungodly are not so." And so the dry oak and the parched garden are ready for the great conflagration when "the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." But this is "the day of the Lord," when He "will come as a thief in the night." And so this chapter takes us from the first cause of sin, through its most loathsome manifestation, through the offers of Divine mercy, to the sure results of the acceptance or rejection of the Gospel of God's own life through Christ. And thus is the Gospel preached and to us as well as unto them.

"Studies in the Gospel of John. The Water of Life. John 4:5-15" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

In the account of Christ's interview with the woman of Samaria, we have a striking example of His faithfulness to the mission entrusted to Him. He was hungry and weary with His journey, and as He rested by Jacob's well at noonday, His disciples having gone into Sychar to buy food, the woman came to draw water. His request that she would give Him some to drink was met by an expression of surprise on the part of the woman that He, being a Jew, should ask any favour from a Samaritan. Not a very encouraging opening, but beneath the exterior of superstition and ignorance, Christ recognised the spiritual need and longed to open to this benighted soul the treasure of the Father's love.

He did not ask her to come again when He would be feeling rested and refreshed, or suggest that, if she could get together a sufficient congregation to make it worth while, He would speak to them on some very important truths, but to this single individual He proceeded to make known His work and character. She did not seem a very hopeful subject, living in sin, her mind set on temporal advantages, only seeking the water of life if it would save her the trouble of coming to the well to draw water, and so far as one could judge from her trivial, irrelevant interruptions, entirely unresponsive to the deep spiritual truths which Jesus was unfolding to her.

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Yet this woman was among the very few to whom Christ explicitly stated that He was the Messiah. His words at last reached her heart. Spiritual things prevailed; she recognised in Christ the One whom she needed, and now, leaving her waterpot, she sought to bring her neighbours and friends into contact with the Saviour.

The woman of Samaria is representative of the great majority to whom the word of the Lord comes. Earthly things engross the mind to the exclusion of the

things which belong to our peace. The Lord is anxious to reveal Himself to us, but any trifle suffices to turn us away from listening to His voice. Yet He does not become discouraged. If the Lord had nothing of special value for us, He might be tempted to abandon the effort to gain our attention, but because that which He offers is beyond price, more than has entered into the heart of man to conceive, He cannot, for our sakes, withdraw the gift. If only we knew its worth, there would not be another moment's hesitation on our part to enter into the enjoyment of it.

Christ said to the woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink: thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Notice how Christ speaks of these steps as a matter of course, admitting of no question. If the woman knew what the gift of God was, she would of course, ask for it. Everyone can believe that. But it is just as much a matter of course that He should grant her request. Let us remember, as we study what the living water is, and desire to drink deeply of it for ourselves, that the Lord reckons on our asking for it, and says that just as surely as we do, we shall have it. It is as natural on His part to give the water of life as it is for us to desire it, and even more so, for He gives more, exceeding abundantly more, than we can ask or even think. Eph. iii. 20.

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Here is perfect satisfaction, fulness of life, and unending rejoicing, and everlasting salvation. How little we have appreciated what Christ wants to do for His followers, the wonderful life that He desires them to live. It is not His will that there shall be any unsatisfied longings among His people, or vain hungering and thirsting after the unattainable blessings. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, *for they shall be filled.*" Matt. v. 6. The blessing that Moses pronounced upon Naphtali is to be the experience of all God's children, "satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." Deut. xxxiii. 23. Jesus says, "I am the bread of life, he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and He that believeth on Me shall never thirst." John vi. 35.

In the earth made new there will be "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev. xxii. 1. This flows from God's own being for He is "the Fountain of living waters." The tree of life, which is on either side of the river, derives its exhaustless vitality from the river of life. It will be a good thing to drink of that river. Poets have sung of it, and wherever the thought of it has found an entrance into human hearts, it has awakened a thirsting which nothing else can satisfy. Whoever drinks of that stream shall find freedom from all evil, fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. There are none who would refuse to quench their thirst with its crystal waters if they only had the chance. It is the outpouring of God's own life, and eternity and heaven are in its flow. It is written of the redeemed, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; . . . For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 17.

We are not told of these things that we may decide to strive to win them. So far as they lie beyond the utmost stretch of imagination, do they rise beyond the compass of human effort. Not as dazzling

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glimpses of an uncertain future, but as present realities, to be received and enjoy it, they are made known to us. "For all things are yours. . . things present or things to come." 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. "The heavenly gifts" is something to be tasted now, and "the powers of the world to come" are for the present life. Heb. vi. 4, 5. "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17. To men living on this earth, even to us, Jesus says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink."

To drink of the living water is to drink of God's own life. What a wonderful possibility for men! It is our privilege to be filled with God's life, and to receive it as easily and naturally as we receive water when we are thirsty. His life is in all His gifts, so that as we quench our bodily thirst with pure water, we are drinking in His life. But there are so many other things for which we thirst, besides that which satisfies our physical appetites. All longing desire, ambition, discontent, lawful and unlawful, are the thirst of the soul, and nothing will quench this thirst but Christ. "He that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

Do not think that because you are unworthy it would be presumptuous on your part to come and drink. The presumption consists in not drinking. It is that of which the Lord complains. Therefore do not hesitate to accept the invitation to take of the water of life freely. "Be astonished, O ye heavens at this. . . saith the Lord. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Jer. ii. 12, 13.

We need never be afraid that any privilege which the Scriptures set forth is too good for us, being reserved for some more deserving class. God's ambition for each of us is a boundless one, and He thirsts to see it realised. He is not content that men shall live far from Him, where only the little, trickling streamlets of His blessing reach them. He wants them to live at the Fountain head, where there is always abundance. It was to secure this object that Christ came to this earth. Men had wandered away from God, every one to his own way, and Christ came to show us what it meant to live at the Fountain. "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." He Himself drank of the Fountain of life; it was the Father's life alone that was revealed in Him, and having thus shown us how desirable it is, He invites us to receive it also.

"But we are sinful and far from God," we say. That is no obstacle. "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph. ii. 13. The Fountain that has been opened is for sin and for all uncleanness. Zech. ii. 13. The sin was in forsaking the Fountain. "In returning and rest shall ye be saved." There is salvation in returning to God because He Himself is our salvation. There is nothing incomplete or ineffective about the salvation. It is as perfect as God Himself, for it is Himself. Therefore God's gift to us is Himself. We draw our supplies from His being. When that stream is exhausted we may come to want,

but not before. His resources are our resources. God is the strength of our life. He is our song. He is "the deep, sweet well of love." Therefore with joy will we draw water out of the wells of salvation. Isa. xi. 2, 3. There is more than enough for us, and for everyone we desire to help. We may draw and draw, and always with joy, because there is no disappointment with the Lord. "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

"And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." Isa. lviii. 11. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life." Ps. xxxvi. 8, 9. Only those who drink of Christ now, and find cleansing from sin in the fountain of His life, will be able to drink of the river that proceeds from the throne. Those who have no desire to drink of it now, will not care to do so then. It is God's presence that constitutes the glory and the attraction of heaven, and Christ is the brightness of His glory. That glory is given freely to us in Christ (John xvii. 22), and so, receiving Him, we are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The powers of the world to come work in us, and make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Col. i. 12, 13. Unless we thus drink of Christ now, and find Him good, we should be out of harmony with the spirit and surroundings of heaven. We have the privilege now of testing the joys of the redeemed, and deciding whether we will share them or not. Those who reject them in this light do so for ever. Men will not be able to accuse the Lord of unfair treatment in concealing from them how desirable heaven was. None will be able to say, "Had we known how pleasant it is, we would have chosen very differently," for that which makes heaven desirable is offered to men on earth in Jesus Christ. Even here they may know what it is to thirst no more.

"He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." John vii. 38, 39. God imparts Himself by His Spirit, and by it dwells in mortal flesh. Those whose inner man is strengthened with it, receive Christ into their hearts and are filled with all the fulness of God. Eph. iii. 16-19. Thus the Fountain of life is in them and flows forth in streams of blessing, rivers of living water. Christ was filled with the Spirit, and the rivers of living water flowed from Him in heaven. Thus He caused the woman of Samaria to drink of the water of life, that she might thirst no more.

There is a lesson for all who labour with Christ in His experience on this occasion. No one can allow living waters to flow through him for the salvation of others without being refreshed and strengthened himself. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. xi. 25. This was true in Christ's case. When He began to talk to the woman He was hungry and weary, but in ministering to her need, He was refreshed and strengthened, so that when His disciples returned and urged Him, "Master, eat." He could say, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." They supposed that some one must have brought Him food, but it was His meat to do His Father's will. God does not call men to exhaust themselves and

His service, but to drink of the Fountain of life, and glorify Him by letting the life-giving stream flow through them, watering their own souls and making fat their bones, in lives of blessing and willing service for others.

"The November Meteors" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

The November Meteors .-The unfavourable atmospheric conditions which last year rendered the observation of the November meteor so generally unsatisfactory has suggested the idea of sending up observers in balloons. Let the cloud-screen be ever so thick if they once get above it the view will be clear. It is proposed to arrange for at least three ascents this year, one in Europe, one in America, and a third in Central Siberia.

"Little Folks. Ice" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

Suppose you had always lived in a hot country, where you never saw any ice, do you not think you would be very much surprised, and perhaps find it hard to believe, if you were told that the water which you had always seen flowing so freely could be changed into a perfect solid; is hard as glass, upon which you could run, and play, and jump, just the same as on the dry land?

This wonderful transformation of the water is made by God for His own wise, loving purposes. In the Book of Job we are told that it is "by the breath of the Lord frost is given."

You may have noticed that everything contracts, or gets smaller, with cold, and expands, or swells and grows larger, with heat. Perhaps you have seen this even in your own bodies.

Did you ever notice that your hands get larger if they are very hot, so that your gloves become tight? Then too if there is a pan quite full of water on the stove, the water expands as it gets hot and runs over the sides of the pan; and in many other ways you can notice the same thing.

So it is what men call "a law of nature," that things contract with cold and expand with heat. But "the laws of nature" are simply the ways of God,-His way of doing His wonderful works.

We know that God can work in any way that He pleases; but men notice His usual ways of working, and call these "the laws of nature."

But in forming the ice, God works in exactly the opposite to His usual way, and I think we shall see something of His loving purpose in doing this.

Until it reaches a certain temperature, water, like everything else, contracts and grows heavier with the cold. But when it gets near what is called the freezing point, it suddenly changes and begins to, do just the opposite,-to expand and lighten. Because of this the ice floats and stays on top of the water instead of sinking to the bottom as it would do if it were not for this change.

You will see that in this way a covering is made for the water underneath, which is kept warm enough for fish and water animals to live in. "The *waters are hidden* as with stone, and the face of the deep is frozen." Job xxxviii. 30.

Of course if *all* the water were to freeze up, as it would do but for this wonderful change from God's usual way of working, all the creatures that live in the waters would die, and the water would become a mass of solid ice that the summer sun could never melt.

Then when the weather is warmer, so that the waters do not need this protection any longer, God, who made this icy sheet for their covering, "sendeth out His word and melteth them; He causeth His wind to blow, and the waters flow."

"The fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee; who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Job xii. 8, 9. "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and *all deeps*; fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind *fulfilling His word*."

As you think of these things, and see more and more of God's love and goodness, you too will want to join this song of praise to God that is going up to Him continually from all His works; for "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O God; and Thy saints shall bless Thee." "Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord!"

"Cleanliness and the Gospel" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

The vicar of Little Marlow, Bucks, recently made an interesting announcement.

Speaking at the Wyombe Board of Guardians, he said that he was so profoundly interested in sanitary work that he had decided to soon surrender his cure in order to devote himself solely to the sanitary needs of the district. He regarded social work of that kind quite as holy and necessary as that of the clergyman. His experience had brought him, he said, face to face with the deepest needs of the people, and they were sanitary improvements.

Doubtless the change will be one for the better, and it is more than likely that the vicar understands sanitary improvements better than he does the Gospel. If it were not so, he would not have concluded that the deepest needs of the people could be met by improvements in the drainage of their houses.

When the Gospel is received as it is presented in the Word of God, it will soon put men right on these matters. For one thing it will correct the greatest sanitary evil of all, the disposition of men to

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make a cesspool of their own bodies. When the body is recognised as what God declares it to be, the holy temple of the Holy Ghost, men will see the unfitness of defiling it with portions of dead bodies, cooked or uncooked. Decaying substances, and those which, like alcoholic liquors, are the products of decay, will be disposed of in some more hygienic fashion than by filtering them through the human system.

It is the lack of true Gospel that results in so many insanitary evils. Where it is faithfully searched and preached, men will know that God sanctifies body, soul and spirit. His promises provide for the cleansing of His people from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and it is only as men are delivered from the power of

darkness that they can begin to understand the malignity of Satan's purposes in binding men with the fetters of unclean habits. Let us have sanitary reform by all means, but let it come by the Gospel, for only so will there be power in it to help men out of the bondage of sins that make their lives unhealthful.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

-The Government has decided to erect an astronomical observatory at Cairo.

-Father Chiniquy, author of "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome," is dying at Montreal.

-Victoria Station is to be enlarged to double its present capacity at a cost of about a million and a half.

-Another vessel, loaded with 500 barrels of naphtha has exploded off the Nore. All the crew escaped.

-Another battle is reported with the dervishes under Ahmed Fedil, in which 500 were killed and 1,500 taken prisoners.

-Colonel San Martin, who surrendered Porto Rico to the Americans, has been sentenced to imprisonment for life.

-Since the institution of the penny postage rate Canadian correspondents with England has more than doubled.

-A remarkably cold wave is travelling eastward through Canada; at Montreal the mercury fell to 19 degrees below zero.

-For the first time steel has been sold to England from Austria, a considerable order having been received at Pilsen, Bohemia.

-Brussels has a tower-clock which has never been wound up by human hands. By an ingenious arrangement the wind keeps it wound up.

-Venetian coins of 1570 and 1577, bearing the name of one of the doges, have been found in Mashonaland, in the interior of South Africa.

-The situation in the Philippines has become serious. The natives intend to fight rather than allow America to take possession. Manila is surrounded and Iloilo has been saturated with petroleum, so that a bombardment by the American fleet would destroy the European quarter. It is believed that Aguinaldo is receiving encouragement from Germany.

-Venice is built on eighty islands, and has 400 bridges, which are very steep and have many steps. The circumference of the city is about eight miles.

-The King of Italy signed a decree granting a free pardon to 2,700 persons sentenced to terms of imprisonment in connection with the disturbances of last spring.

-The American Government have placed an order with an English firm for the supply of ten million cartridges. These are being turned out at the rate of a million a week.

-Lord Cromer has proclaimed that the Soudan will in future be governed by the Queen of England and the Khedive of Egypt, of whom Lord Kitchener will be the sole representative.

-Cool a sick-room by wetting a sheet and hanging it in the room (but out of the patient's sight). The influence of the moisture upon the temperature will be considerable.

-An omnibus propelled by compressed air is about to be placed on the streets of London as an experiment. The cylinder of compressed air will be sufficient for a seven mile trip.

-Fresh trouble is brewing in the Balkan states, where it is thought Macedonia will shortly declare itself independent of Turkey, with the result that Russia will intervene for the protection of her own interests.

-Experiments are being made with a view to establishing a system of wireless telegraphy between the South Foreland lighthouse and the Goodwin Sands. The points of communication are about three miles apart.

-Two thousand workmen employed in quarries near Waterloo have struck work. Among the grievances formulated was the new regulation forbidding men to take a nip of gin during the forenoon, according to time-honoured custom.

-The Czar, on the occasion of the new year, has for the first time addressed a long and touching telegram to the Pope thanking him for his support of the Conference for reducing armaments, and begging him to do what he can to ensure its success.

-The Vatican having arranged to send missionaries to the Soudan, the English Government has opposed it for the moment, informing the Vatican that England wishes first of all to organise on a solid basis the administration of the new territories before introducing missionaries to the country.

-Lord Kitchener has been known in the past as an interested student of archaeology, and he has made arrangements for investigating the antiquities of the region over which he rules. As the northern Soudan is the site of the ancient Kingdom of Ethiopia, it is hoped that the search will throw light on its history.

-At a temperance lecture given at Lye, near Stourbridge, the lecturer stated that he had visited fifty public-houses in Southampton inside of fifty minutes. A gentlemen present declared this to be impossible, and the matter was put to the test in Lye the following day, when it was found possible to visit twenty-six public-houses in seventeen minutes. The evil has fastened itself more firmly upon the life of the country than many people realise.

-A Blue Book has been issued by the English Government which contains the correspondence addressed to France on the subject of her violation of promises not to injure British trade in Madagascar. The matter of the French occupation of a part of Newfoundland is also being brought up, and it is believed in France that England intends to take advantage of her present overwhelming superiority in naval strength to demand a settlement of these and other matters in dispute on her own terms.

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E. J. Waggoner

When God bestows His Spirit upon any it comes as a reprover of sin. John xvi. 8. The Spirit poured out upon the day of Pentecost was never withdrawn

from the church, but as the church lost its first love reproof became distasteful and was unheeded. Men prefer to continue in sin undisturbed. Thus the Spirit was prevented from manifesting itself, and this is why the fruits or the gifts of the Spirit are not more largely seen among professing Christians.

Many are praying for the Spirit in the expectation that it will come as a spiritual enthusiasm, giving them power to do mighty works in a way that will immediately exalt them to a high place in the public esteem, and cause them to be much sought after. When their prayers are answered and the Spirit comes, convincing of sin in the form of some rebuke for transgression on their part, they often take offence at the manner in which the rebuke is conveyed to them. If the channel of reproof is one that warns their self-esteem, they promptly close their ears to its message, and refuse to receive anything from such a source, but in doing this they are rejecting the Spirit and making void their own prayers. "Turn you at My reproof, behold I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My words unto you." Prov. i. 23.

"The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way." Ps. xxv. 9. When Christ came to His own, His own received Him not. The teachers and religious leaders of His day were offended at His sayings. They had desired the coming of the Messiah, but their one thought had been of the personal exaltation that would accrue to themselves when the King of Israel should be revealed. Had Christ been prepared to gratify these selfish ambitions they would have been among His warm adherents. But although He came to do for them an infinitely greater thing, because this involved the humbling of their pride, they rejected Him.

The same test is applied to the men of this generation by the offer to them of God's Spirit. It brings all power and blessing, the fulness of the Divine life, but because it gives no occasion to the flesh to glory, it is rejected even by some who claim to desire it above everything else. Those who hate to be reproofed for their sins, hate the Holy Spirit, for it is the Comforter that convicts of sin, and if Christ were to come to them, they would reject Him also for the same reason. The Spirit does not speak of itself. "Whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak." "He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." John xvi. 13, 14. It is still possible for men to deny the Holy One and desire a murderer to be granted unto them.

Lord Salisbury has replied to the Czar's invitation to join in a Peace Conference, expressing warm sympathy with the proposal, but calling attention to the fact that the universal expressions of approval are not in harmony with the course pursued by the different nations.

It is unfortunately true that while the desire for the maintenance of peace is generally professed, and while, in fact, serious and successful efforts have on more than one recent occasion been made with that object by the Great Powers, there has been a constant tendency on the part of almost every nation to increase its armed force, and to add to an already vast expenditure on the appliances of war.

Russia herself, from whom the peace proposals and emanate, is in no wise behind in this tendency to increase armaments, and when the Pacific utterances

of the nations are attended by a constant increase of warlike preparations, who can expect that their precepts will prove more potent than their example.

In the German Reichstag, while a Bill for the increase of the army was being discussed, one of the members was called to order for saying that it was a mockery to express to the Russian Government sympathy with the Czar's Manifesto and at the same time to introduce this Bill. The member may not have been in order but he was certainly talking common sense.

The most disastrous storm of recent years visited the British Isles last Thursday. Fatal accidents are reported from all directions, and many lives have been lost at sea. Among the signs which declare to the world the nearness of Christ's return, there shall be "upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring." As these things come more and more frequently, and with growing severity, we are to be warned and know what they point to. "When those things *begin* come to pass, then looked up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke xxi. 28.

The fury of the elements has no terror for those who see in it the promise that their redemption is approaching. While the world views with increasing terror the destruction of their property, and the dangers that on every hand threaten their very existence, those who fear God and commit themselves into His hand will not fear though the mountains be removed. God is to them a very present help, and destructive cyclones and raging tempests are but "stormy wind fulfilling His word."

The United States is certainly receiving warning of enough of the perils that beset the path of imperialism, and a large number of her citizens are strongly opposed to the departure from Republican principles which is involved in the assumption of sovereignty over subject races. The issue will shortly be decided. The Filipinos are preparing to resist a landing at Iloilo, and refuse all dealings with the Americans, who find it impossible to obtain supplies of vegetables and fruits. Meantime business is suspended and the native warehouses full of rotting sugar. As no planting has been done and the season is advancing, the prospects for the next crop are not hopeful. The situation is regarded in the States as very critical.

The Lord says, "Ye have sold yourselves for naught." When we have wasted the time and strength received from Him, getting in return only a burden of sin and disease, it would seem indeed as though we had sacrificed everything for sins and were without hope. For are not the sins worse than useless, securing only death to their possessor?

Yet, thank the Lord, even our sins have an enormous purchasing power. Whoever is willing to spend them can buy the Lord and all that is His. He "gave Himself for our sins." Gal. i. 4. So that although they are worthless to us we may exchange them for all that we have lost by our sins. Does not God deal bountifully with us?

He does not say to the sinner, "You have had your chance and wasted it. Now you've got to bear the consequences." But He says, "How much longer must you prove that the way of transgressors is hard, before you will drop it and take My way? Return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee."

January 25, 1899

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Downfall of Pride. Isa. xlvii. 1-15" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

"Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones, and grind meal; remove thy veil, strip off the train, uncover the leg, pass through the rivers. Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen; I will take vengeance, and will accept no man. Our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is His name, the Holy one of Israel. Sit thee silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called the Lady of kingdoms. I was wroth with My people, I profaned Mine inheritance, and gave them into thine hand; thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancients hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke. And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever; so thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst thou remember the latter end thereof.

"Now therefore hear this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and there is none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children; but these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children and widowhood; in their full measure shall they come upon thee, despite of the multitude of thy sorceries, and the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; thou hast said, None seeth Me; thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and there is none else beside me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee, thou shalt not know the dawning thereof; and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it away; and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou knewest not. Stand thou with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels; let now the astrologers, and stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from the things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame; it shall not be a coal to warm at, nor a fire to sit before. Thus shall the things be unto thee wherein thou hast laboured; they that have trafficked with thee from thy youth shall wander every one to his quarter; there shall be none to save thee." Isa. xlvii. 1-15.

TO WHOM IS THIS SPOKEN

Of what interest is all this to us? How does it concern us to know that such things were prophesied of Babylon, and that they were fulfilled more than twenty-five centuries ago? Is it to us anything more than a mere matter of curiosity such

as that with which we read any other record of the past? Or if it be more than a matter of curiosity, has the record any more than an historical interest for us, proving the truthfulness of God's word? Why were these things placed in the Bible for us to read, and why do we read them?

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. xvi. 4. Not unto themselves, but unto us, did the prophets minister the things which are now reported unto us by them that have preached the Gospel by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. 1 Peter i. 11, 12. The things written in this chapter concern us in this age, at this present time, more than they have ever concerned any other people on this earth. We live very much nearer the fulfillment of these things than did Isaiah or the Jews who were carried captive to Babylon.

ISAIAH AND REVELATION

Compare this chapter with the eighteenth of Revelation, and you cannot fail to see that both prophets are speaking of the very same thing. Indeed, they use exactly the same expressions, so that the higher critic would doubtless say that John copied from Isaiah. But when God has an important message, He is able to send it by more than one messenger, and to give the message to each one of them independently. Rev. xviii. 7, 8, is identical with Isa. xlvii. 8, 9. In the last verse of Isa. xlvii. we have summed up all that is contained in Rev. xviii. 9-18. In Rev. xvii. 5, 6 we have the parallel to Isa. xlvii. 6, 7. Now just as surely as the prophecy concerning Babylon, in the Revelation, has not yet been fulfilled, so surely does the prophecy in Isaiah yet await its fulfillment.

A RIVAL TO GOD

Note that this Babylon is represented both in Isaiah and Revelation as being opposed to God and His people. She is opposed to them, not as an atheistic power, but as a power professing to be above God. God says, "There is none beside Me" (Isa. xlv. 6, 18, 21, 22; xlvii. 9); and Babylon says, "I am, and none else beside me." Isa. xlvii. 10. So we see that she sets herself up as the rival of God, claiming to be all that He is.

This was the position of ancient Babylon. In the fourth chapter of Daniel we have an account of a test as to whether Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, or God, was supreme. Although Nebuchadnezzar had learned of the true God, and had been told that "the heavens do rule," and that the God of heaven had given him his kingdom and power and strength and glory, he said, as he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" Dan. iv. 30. Then the judgment of God came upon him, until he learned and acknowledged that the God of heaven "liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of

the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" "and those that walk in pride He is able to abase." Dan. iv. 34, 35, 37.

BABYLON'S BLASPHEMOUS PRIDE

But that did not settle the question with Babylon, for although Nebuchadnezzar doubtless went to his grave in the faith of this confession, Belshazzar, who knew all these things did not profit by them, but in his insolent impiety, in the midst of the heathen revel, "brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." Dan. v. 2-4. See also verses 17-23. Daniel recalled to Belshazzar the pride and humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar, and said, "And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the god of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified."

THE SAME SPIRIT STILL ALIVE

In 2 Thess. ii. 3-8 we have a description of a power identical with this, which is to exist and work even till the coming of the Lord to Judgment. It is called the "man of sin," "the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." Compare this with what we have just been reading about Babylon, and it will appear that the cases are identical. Babylon was the rival of God, yet its greatest king acknowledged God at the last; but the lesson was not learned, and Babylon perished in its proud boasting of supremacy over the God of all the earth.

TRANSMITTED TO THE SUCCESSORS

The Medo-Persian kingdom immediately took the place in the world, that had been occupied by Babylon, and although Cyrus publicly acknowledged the true God, the most of the kings of Persia received honours themselves as gods, instead of according the honour to God. They, like Belshazzar of Babylon, were weighed in the balances and found wanting.

The same spirit was prominent throughout the Grecian supremacy; and when Rome took its place as mistress of the world, the spirit of idolatrous pride reached a pitch never before dreamed of. To that power, more than to any other ever known on earth, applies the title, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth;" and in her are fulfilled these words: "I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the

martyrs of Jesus." Rev. xvii. 5, 6. Thus we see the very same power described in the prophecy of Isaiah exists unchanged until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not that in ancient Babylon we have a type of that which is described in the Revelation, but that it is one and the same power in each case; and the people of God have never been fully out of Babylon since the days of Nebuchadnezzar.

SUDDEN DESTRUCTION

But deliverance is sure. Babylon is to be utterly destroyed, and the call of God is, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. xviii. 4. How quickly utter destruction may follow the greatest seeming prosperity, is seen in the case of Belshazzar. When the kingdom of Babylon had reached the height of its glory, and her kings were most self-complacent, destruction came. That, however, was but the beginning of the end. It was a warning. Just as surely as the ancient city of Babylon fell at the height of its pride and splendour, when she said, "I shall be a lady for ever," so surely will the judgments of God come on the whole earth, when religion, no matter by what name it is called, has reached the place where it is identified with and controls the destinies of the nations. At the time when "the church" is universally acknowledged, so that men begin to say, "Peace, and safety," then will "sudden destruction" come upon them. 1 Thess. v. 3. "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. xxiv. 38, 39.

PRIDE THE RELIGION OF HUMAN NATURE

It is a sad mistake for anyone to apply all these prophecies to some specific organisation, and some special "system of religion." While they undoubtedly have their most complete fulfilment in certain ecclesiastical bodies, the principle is that of human nature, instilled into all men by "the god of this world," the "spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," who is himself called the king of Babylon. Isa. xiv. 4-27. "Thy wisdom and thy knowledge it hath perverted thee." This was what caused the fall of Lucifer. Eze. xxviii. 12-18. Wisdom and knowledge are not to be despised, but the only wisdom and knowledge that are of any real worth, are "the wisdom that comes from above," and the knowledge of God, which is life eternal. The wisdom that puffs one up with pride, that is connected with strife and vainglory, is "earthly, sensual, devilish" (James iii. 14, 15); but the wisdom from above is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits," even the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ. Complete renunciation of self, and absolute dependence upon God, deliver souls from Babylon, and from her plagues.

"How to Prevent a Cold" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

This is the season of colds and influenza and thousands are suffering from them. Indeed, it seems to be expected that at this time of year everybody will have a cold. One friend greets another, and asks after his health. "Only a slight cold," or, "I am suffering somewhat from a cold," is the reply. "Oh, yes; everybody has a cold now," is the rejoinder, as though having a cold were a necessity. And really, very few people have any idea that a cold may be prevented.

A cold is not so slight a matter as many people think. It is often the beginning of a severe case of influenza; and it is certain that if one does not catch a cold, he will never have influenza. So when we have learned how to keep from catching cold, we have saved ourselves from one of the greatest scourges of this time, a scourge so great that it almost amounts to a plague. Many a death from consumption also may be traced to a cold, which at first was so slight as to occasion no uneasiness.

Nobody ever takes cold except as the result of carelessness. It is for the most part ignorant carelessness, but lack of care, nevertheless. Nothing is more certain than that it is not at all necessary for people to be continually having colds, and that they would not have them if they knew how to take care of themselves, and cared enough for health to make the effort. No other animal ever has a cold, except certain domestic animals, and they never do when left to themselves. They are often made to suffer from man's ill-use of them; but no wild animal ever takes cold, yet these animals are continually exposed to the conditions that are popularly supposed to be the cause of colds in human beings. It is not that these animals are so differently constituted from man, that they cannot take cold; for they do suffer from colds when in captivity; the only reason why they do not take colds when free is that they do not live the artificial lives that men do.

It is often the case that when one has a severe cold he cannot be freed from it without some help, from others; but the following principles which, if heeded, will ward off colds, are simple enough to be applied by anybody who would not rather have a cold than to make a little extra exertion. In many cases, especially if the cold is but slight, or just beginning, the practice of them will drive it away. That is to say, if any reader who already has a cold will at once begin to put these principles into practice, he will find his cold much reduced, if not entirely dissipated; and he who makes them the rules of his life will never have a cold fixed upon him. The order in which they are given does not necessarily indicate their relative importance; they are all important, and must all be practised simultaneously.

FOOD

We live by eating, and therefore it follows that our habits of eating have very much to do with the life that we live, whether perfect or impaired. Very few people have any idea that the cold from which they suffer has any connection whatever

with what or how they have eaten; yet it is safe to say that in nine cases out of ten, a cold is the direct result of some error in diet, which can easily be avoided. It is safe to say that every one who reads this article has at some time in his life eaten to rep. . . or, to be plain, has eaten so much that he could not well eat any more. It is a humiliating thought, when one puts it that way, and yet many people honestly think that they must eat until they are "full" and can eat no more. Now if this is only an occasional thing with you, you will be able to remember that after such a meal you had many of the symptoms of a cold: you had difficulty in breathing you felt your head somewhat congested, and perhaps had a rawness in your throat. Some or all of these symptoms, and perhaps others, you are familiar with. Possibly you recovered without further ill-feeling; but if at that time you were exposed to conditions favourable to a cold, you certainly took it.

We will not now speak of any particular kinds of food which make it easy for one to take cold, but only of the matter of eating more than the system can appropriate. It is possible to do this even on the best of food. There is a certain amount of food necessary to repair the waste of the body, and to build it up. If more be taken than is needed, the surplus is a clog to the system. It produces congestion, and that is just what a cold is. This is the reason that simply abstaining from eating for a time will often be found sufficient to drive a beginning cold away. Do not think that this means starvation. Nothing of the kind. The body must be regularly supplied with sufficient good, nourishing food; but there are in thin country more people who die of starvation from having eaten too much food, than from insufficiency. If you never eat any more than the system actually needs, and can appropriate, you will never need to fast as a hygienic measure. If the digestive organs are active, and are not overcrowded, a cold will seldom stay long even if one has taken it by some other means.

DRINK

This is closely allied with eating, but should never be done at the same time. The idea that people must have something to "wash down" their food, is responsible for much of the clogging of the system. Those who drink at their meals are almost certain to overeat, or if they do not eat more than they need, they hinder the digestion of that which they do eat, and thus have all the ill-effects of overeating.

Free drinking of water, the only drink ever designed for men, at proper times, goes a long way toward keeping the system clean, and promoting a free circulation of the blood; and when there is good circulation, there cannot be a cold. Early morning, at night, before going to bed, and from two to four hours after meals, are proper times for drinking.

It is a mistaken notion that hot drinks are necessary in winter in order to fortify one against the cold. The effect is just the opposite. One can make few better preparations for taking cold than to take a hot drink before going out into the cold. By it the system is relaxed, and the effect is the same as when one goes out into the cold after a hot bath. Cold water is one of the very best safeguards against cold. It may be said that by taking so much cold water into the stomach it will

become too chilled to perform its duties well. This can be guarded against by drinking slowly, taking small sips, and holding each one in the mouth a moment, until it is warmed to the temperature of the body, before swallowing it. A glass or two taken in this way will warm the whole body, clear the head, and make the breathing full and easy. This alone is often sufficient to clear away so incipient cold.

AIR

We live by breathing, and fresh air in abundance is one of the best preventives of cold. The open-air treatment of consumption is receiving much attention at the present time, and is remarkably successful, even in this climate. The report of the working of the Victoria Hospital for Consumption, Craigleith, Edinburgh, by Dr. R. W. Philip, is most interesting and instructive.

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We quote a few sentences: "Each room has at least one large window, which is constantly open, day and night, and the larger rooms have three windows, which afford free ventilation by a constant current of fresh air." "The windows have never been shut, day or night, since the hospital was opened." Much more of a similar character is given, and the Doctor says, "It is right to emphasise that during prolonged experience of this treatment I have not witnessed one untoward incident resulting therefrom. During the years that have elapsed since the hospital was opened, there has not been a single day on which some of the patients have not been outside, and on most days almost all have been able to be out for a time. Rain and snow have not been allowed to form a contra-indication." Under this treatment, of which the sentences given afford only a hint, "night sweats disappear almost at once," "the cough quickly lessens, and finally disappears," and "the body weight, too, and general condition show corresponding improvement." With this testimony, it is evident that the value of fresh air in preventing colds cannot be overestimated.

There is a common idea, almost amounting to a superstition, that draughts are very dangerous. It would seem as though people think that the Lord made a mistake in causing the wind to blow. Now it is true that a draught will cause one to take cold, if one is not accustomed to it; but it is also true that if a person shuts himself up closely in the house, relaxing his system over a hot fire, he will take cold on going out doors; but it will hardly be claimed that people should never go out doors lest they take cold. On the contrary, all should accustom themselves to the open air as much as possible. Fresh air is one of God's best gifts to man; it is life; and the more we can get of it at all times and in every way, the better it will be for us. A little care will be necessary at first in accustoming oneself to draughts of fresh air; but those who make the trial will soon find that a draught, instead of being dangerous, is one of the most refreshing and invigorating things in the world. The man who is afraid of a draught is like a horse that is afraid of a haystack. A good way to become accustomed to it, is to wash the neck, especially the back of the neck, with cold water, applying the water freely every time the face is washed. The child that is taught to do this, will have no more fear

of a draught of fresh air than of his dinner; and when other people are complaining that "that open window lets a draught come on the back of my neck," he will not be conscious that there is any draught. Of course it is understood that one must not sit in a damp, cold room, or in any place where he is cold; but a room where the air is dead is much more favourable to colds than one where the air is in full circulation.

BATHING

To those who are accustomed to it, the cool bath in the morning is not only refreshing and invigorating, but one of the best preventives of cold. It should not be prolonged, -only a momentary dip, and then a brisk rub, with vigorous exercise, to keep up the circulation. It should not be taken if there is not sufficient vitality to react from the shock, so that it is a pleasure. It is a mistaken idea that the body can be hardened by punishing it. Very weak people, however, can with care soon become used to the cold bath, so that it will be expected and depended upon as much as the breakfast, for which it is an excellent preparation. Nothing is better for hardening the skin, and strengthening the heart and nerves.

If one is not used to cold bathing, or is too bloodless to respond to it readily at once, the next best thing, which should also always accompany cold bathing, is the air bath. The naked body should be exposed to the cold air for several minutes each day, brisk rubbing and vigorous exercise being maintained all the while. Do not get the idea that you must hereby become accustomed to being chilled; quite the contrary. The point is to get the body used to the cold air without being chilled. The rubbing should be so brisk, and the movements so active, that the absence of clothing should not be felt. The value of this treatment can be vouched for from experience.

In this connection, another thing should be attended to, which properly comes under the preceding heading, and that is, deep breathing. While you are taking your air bath, stop your other exercise for a moment, and slowly inflate the lungs to their utmost capacity, holding the air as long as you can do so easily, and then exhale it, but not too rapidly. Do this several times, and you will be surprised to see what a feeling of warmth it gives.

Special breathing exercises should be taken several times a day. If at any moment as you are about your work, or walking along the street, your attention is called to the matter, you will find that you are only partially breathing. Few people really know how to breathe, but this must be dealt with another time. Air provides both food and exercise for the lungs, and indeed for the whole body. If, as you are walking on the street, you will practise taking long, full breaths, measuring the breaths by your steps, so many steps to inspiration, and so many to expiration, you will find it highly beneficial.

EXERCISE

This is by no means a minor matter. Abundant exercise in the open air should be taken every day, regardless of the weather. Just as truly as "he that regardeth

the clouds shall not sow," shall he also not be free from colds. If one has no manual labour that can be performed out of doors, then walking and cycling are the best things. One should walk rapidly, until the whole body is in a delightful glow. Deep regular breathing should be kept up during the exercise. In many cases influenza may be kept off by vigorous exercise just as it is coming on, if one has the will to resist the disinclination to move, which is one of the first symptoms. Sweating from bodily exercise is much better than sweating artificially produced. Often a busy person will say, "I have not time to take exercise." Nobody has any right to be so busy. To take all the precautions necessary to keep the body in a healthful condition, is a religious duty.

CLOTHING

This should of course be suitable to the season; but the less weight of clothing one can have, and still be comfortable, the better. To as great a degree as possible, one should make exercise take the place of extra clothing and of all artificial heat. Particular attention should be paid to the feet. There is no danger whatever in getting them wet while exercising out of doors, provided they are dried afterwards, and well rubbed. Dry them by rubbing, and not before the fire. At night the stockings should be turned wrong side out, and hung where they can be thoroughly dried from all dampness that has accumulated during the day. A better plan still is to have two pairs in constant use, wearing one pair one day, and the other the next.

Follow these directions carefully and conscientiously, as well as other things that good sense will suggest in the same line, and you may live free from fear of colds, influenza, and consumption.

"For Little Ones. Joseph in Egypt" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

We left Joseph on the way down into Egypt, where he was carried by the Ishmaelites, to whom his brothers sold him. Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officers, the captain of the guard, bought him of the Ishmaelites, and he was taken into the house of his new master.

We may be sure that Joseph was very sad at being separated from his father without a word of farewell, and with no opportunity to send him any message, even to let him know that he was still alive.

But he did not waste his time in mourning; he remembered that "God was with him," and this gave him hope and courage to do the new duties that now came to him in Potiphar's house. He did his work so well and faithfully that Potiphar "made him overseer over all his house, and all that he had he put into his hand."

It might have seemed to Joseph that he was now on the way to the high position that his dreams had led him to expect. But even here he had enemies, and Satan was working to try to hinder God's purpose.

His enemy in Potiphar's house was his master's own wife, a wicked woman who hated Joseph because of his faithfulness to God. She told lies to her

husband about Joseph, which made Potiphar so angry that he put him in the prison where the king's prisoners were bound.

This was another bitter trial for Joseph. Writing about it long after, the psalmist said: "His feet they hurt with fetters; he was laid in irons." But he still remembered that it was God who was trying him, and that His hand would work out His own will in spite of everything.

So again, instead of being wrapped up in his own sorrows, he looked about him for something to do, and did with his might all that his hand found. The result of this was that the keeper of the prison soon put as much trust in him as Potiphar had done, and left everything in his charge. "Whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it."

Joseph had the charge of all the prisoners, and among them were the chief butler and chief baker of Pharaoh's household. When Joseph went into their cell one morning, he noticed that both of these men looked very unhappy. His own troubles had made him kind and sympathetic, and he asked them kindly, "Why look ye so sadly to-day?"

They told him: "We have dreamed a dream, but there is no interpreter of it." Joseph then asked them to tell him their dreams, and he explained to them the meaning. Read the dreams and the interpretation in the 40th chapter of Genesis. The chief butler was to be restored to the king's favour, and to his place as cupbearer, but the baker was to be hanged. Joseph asked the butler to remember him when it should be well with him, and to speak to Pharaoh about him, so that he might be brought up out of the prison. But when the dreams came to pass just as Joseph had foretold, "yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him," until something happened which brought Joseph again to his mind.

For two full years after the butler left, Joseph was forgotten and left in the prison; but at the end of that time Pharaoh himself dreamed two strange dreams in one night which greatly troubled and perplexed him, and none of the magicians or wise men of Egypt could tell the king the meaning of his dreams.

Then the chief butler remembered Joseph, and he was brought out of the prison in haste to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. He showed the king that it was God who had sent him these dreams to warn him of a time of famine that was coming over the whole world. (See Genesis xli.)

Before the seven years of famine there were to be seven years of great plenty. So Joseph advised Pharaoh to appoint someone to gather up a great store of food during the seven plenteous years, and keep it for the years of famine.

Pharaoh could not think of anyone so well suited for this work as Joseph himself, to whom God had given the wisdom to interpret his dreams, and to give him such good advice. So he made Joseph the Chief Ruler of the land of Egypt, like himself in everything except that he did not sit on the throne. "And he made him to ride in the second chariot that he had, and they cried before him, bow the knee."

Now you see to what Joseph's hard and trying experiences, when he was sent down into Egypt, and again when he was cast into prison, were really

leading him,-to be made the governor of Egypt. The work of his brothers and Potiphar's wife against him only helped him on to the place God had appointed for him.

Besides this, his work in Potiphar's house and in the prison, where everything had been left in his charge, was the best preparation that he could have had for the important and responsible position to which God had now brought him. Joseph had been faithful in doing the little duties that came to him day by day, and now he could be trusted with great responsibilities.

Remember that God has a plan for the life of each one of His children, for you

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just as much as He had for Joseph. And all the little duties and trials, and experiences that each day brings are to fit you for your part in His plan, and to bring you to the place that He has appointed for you.

Another time we will tell you more about Joseph's brothers, and how they came to see him in Egypt.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

-The patents brought out by Edison are said to number seven hundred and forty.

-An alarming increase of rabbits has lately taken place In several districts of New South Wales.

-Measles are reported to have broken out in 80 per cent. of the houses at Broadbottom, near Manchester.

-The Nile cataracts are soon to be used to generate electricity, for lighting the city of Cairo, 400 miles away.

-The rice crops of Burma available for export is announced as 2,020,881 tons, as compared with 1,486,000 tons last year.

-Mr. Carnegie's gifts of money to building and maintaining public libraries for ten years past amount to more than ?1,800,000.

-Twenty thousand Austrian miners in the districts of Kiadno and Gateau have struck for an eight-hour day and an increase of wages.

-Many wrecks of sailing and other vessels have been reported in the English Channel during the past two weeks, and over one hundred lives have been lost.

-Thirteen children have been frozen to death at Munichschalg, in South Bohemia. They were caught, in returning from school, in a heavy snowstorm.

-Probably the sum devoted annually by England to provide drugs for the adulteration of its own beer would have founded lovely little museums and perfect libraries in every village.-*Ruskin*.

-The average term of life in India is twenty-six years. Fifty millions of her people have only one meal a day. The average population per square mile is 184. America has only 18 to the square mile.

-The "Lyddite shells," now being used by the English Army in the Transvaal, are expensive things. Each shell represents about ?60. But the expense is not the only point about them-they are destructive as well.

-The mortality in Bombay has reached an exceedingly high figure, jumping in one day from 282 to 870 (the normal rate is 75). Plague accounts for the larger part of the increase, but diseases of other kinds are very rife.

-The death rate has been so high in London from the epidemic of influenza, that one of the leading undertakers of the city reports that he is sending out on an average 200 horses a day for funerals, while in ordinary times the demand does not exceed half that number.

-The great Krupp Manufacturing Company have been officially notified by the German Government that the firm must cease to supply either England or the Transvaal with weapons, cannon, munitions, or other war material, as to do so would be inconsistent with German neutrality.

-It is reported that the United States Government is now constructing a gun which will throw a shell weighing 2,870 pounds a distance of twenty-one miles. In order to strike at this distance, the shell must rise a distance of 80,000 feet. Hitherto the longest range on record is said to be that of a Krupp gun fired at Meppen in 1892, which threw a shell twelve and one-half miles in seventy seconds.

-The *Germania*, of the White Star Line, on its last trip from New York, reports having passed an iceberg in lat. 45.22, long. 48.33, which measured 325 feet high.

-The whole shipbuilding output of 1899 in the United Kingdom broke all previous records; 761 vessels of 1,585,381 tons were launched. Of these thirty-five were warships of 168,590 tons displacement, and twelve only were sailing ships.

-England has now under construction fifty warships, thirty-six at private yards, and the remainder at the Royal Dock Yards. Thirteen of these are first class battleships, ten first class armoured cruisers, and seventeen torpedo boat destroyers.

-In the little village of Hinstock, near Newport (Shropshire) there lived an old man whom, from his reticent demeanour, the neighbours thought to be destitute, and out of pure pity for him, kindly assisted in various ways. He died the other day, leaving a will in which ?2,005 is distributed amongst those who succoured him.

-It has been determined that the Government will ask for a further credit of ? 20,000,000 immediately after the reassembling of Parliament, for the expenses of the war. Over ?2,000,000 have already been sent on transportation alone, and over three times this amount for war material, food, and the equipment for the troops, mules, and horses.

-The pink eye, of the most virulent form, has broken out among the horses in Liverpool. The losses are reported as being very heavy, and business is seriously interfered with in consequence. So grave is the situation, that a London bacteriologist has been called to consult with the local veterinary surgeons as to the best means of coping with the outbreak.

-At Stettin, on the 10th inst., in the presence of the Kaiser and other German dignitaries, the *Deutschland* was launched. This vessel is second only in capacity to the *Oceanic*, and is expected to be the fastest liner in the world. She is a ship

of 23,000 tons displacement, and 16,000 tons burden, is 687 feet long, and will carry a crew of 550 men. Count Von Bulow performed the christening ceremony.

-The daily press reports a singular case where a Roman Catholic lady in Australia seems to have fallen victim to a female Spiritualist medium. Alleging instructions from the Virgin Mary, the medium procured from the lady all manner of clothes, jewels, and furniture. Then thinking that travel was desirable, she acquired from the same source tickets for a circular tour through England, America, and the Holy Land. At that point the situation of affairs became known, the police interfered, and the lady awoke to the fact that she was being victimised.

-January 10th marked the sixtieth anniversary of the Penny Post in England. Rowland Hill introduced the system, and through his energetic efforts the then novel idea of prepaying letter postage was inaugurated. Soon the adhesive stamp was introduced. When the penny post was first introduced, in the late thirties, the number of letters carried was less than 10,000,000 a year, or about one for each inhabitant. Now the Post Office transmits about one hundred times as much correspondence as was transmitted then. The latest figures show that the people of Great Britain write 2,186,000,000 letters a year, or more than fifty-four for each man, woman, and child in the country. This is exclusive of the gross totals for postcards, newspapers, circulars, book packets and parcels, to say nothing of the telegrams, money orders, etc. The business is now carried on by a staff of nearly 160,000 persons, of whom 32,000 are women and girls. In London alone 2,622 inland mails are despatched every day, and 2,380 received.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

When humility is so prominent that it is obtrusive, so that you are continually reminded of it, and can see nothing else about the individual, it is the worst sort of pride. Beware of ostentatious humility.

Twenty-two million persons in British territory in India, and twenty-seven millions in native territory, are affected by the famine, and nearly three and a quarter millions are receiving relief. Lord Curzon says that the famine-stricken area has expanded to a degree surpassing the worst fears.

The council which is superintending the construction of the large telescope which is to be a great feature of the Paris Exhibition, say that they hope for such a magnifying power that the surface of the moon will be seen as if it were only sixty-seven kilometres (a little more than four miles) away from us.

The *Daily Mail's* correspondent at Capetown says in a cablegram, January 15:-

Lord Roberts has visited the huge sanitarium at Claremont, of the Seventh-Day Adventists, which is a branch of the famous institution at Battle Creek, Michigan, U.S.A. He expressed himself delighted with the appointments and accommodation.

A large number of wounded British officers are now quartered in the institution, undergoing treatment.

The *Daily Chronicle* publishes the report that the Vatican is

"giving serious consideration to a suggestion which, if carried out, may ultimately lead to a very important change in the Roman Catholic Church. It is that priests in South America shall be permitted to marry, as proposed by their bishops at the recent Synod in Rome, on account of the extraordinary difficulty found in procuring eligible candidates for the priesthood. It is rumoured that this concession may, under restrictions, not improbably be made."

That which stands only on human authority may of course consistently be abolished by human authority. A religion of expediency and policy is always subject to change.

The *Christian* says that Dr. Stalker "has made the life of our Saviour an almost special study." That is good; but every man who, professes to be a Christian, whether he be Doctor of Divinity or ditcher, ought to make the life of Christ not only almost, but altogether, a special study. "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and, let us run with patience, the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." "For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

When John saw Jesus walking by the Jordan, he said to those about him: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Many people lose the force of this statement, by not reading the more literal rendering in the margin, namely, "beareth." Even at that time, unknown to the public, because He had not begun His public ministry, Jesus was bearing the sins of the world. The sins of the world were upon Him, "in His own body," yet the Father was well pleased with Him. Why? -Because although He bore the sin, it was never allowed to manifest itself. He swallowed it up, and annihilated it by His life. That is our hope to-day. Jesus still lives, the same to-day that He was then, and if we allow Him to live in us, He bears our sins so effectually that none will be seen upon us. Let Him live according to His own will.

"Angels or Demons" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

Angels or Demons? -Here is a paragraph from a report of the recent assault on Ladysmith:-

The men on both sides are reported to have fought like demons, the horror and bewilderment of the scene presenting a picture without parallel in the experience of those who took part in the encounter.

The expression used, "fought like demons," is a well-known one in the description of battles. It is very appropriate, too; but if, as we are continually assured, war is consistent with Christianity, and is even at times a part of Christianity, why do we not sometimes hear of men "fighting like angels"? Surely this ought to be the case when two "Christian nations" engage in war. Ah,

everybody knows that there is nothing angelic about war, and it is only Jesuitical casuistry that enables anybody to reconcile it with Christianity.

"Sound Advice" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

Zimmerman, who was once the world's champion bicycle rider, gives the following advice to cyclists:-

"Don't smoke, it depresses the heart and shortens the wind. Don't drink; drink never wine races. I have trophies at home which would have belonged to others if they had left liquor alone."

No one scoffs at such advice to an athlete; but as soon as the Gospel minister begins to talk about how to preserve the body in the best condition, he is told that he ought to keep to his business. As if the Gospel did not include the redemption of the body. "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Christians ought to be as much more alive to the matter of health than ordinary athletes are, as an incorruptible crown is more valuable than a corruptible.

"A Change for the Worse" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

Under the heading of "How Times Have Changed," the *Cigarette World* has the following paragraph, which is very striking from whichever side one views it:-

The Iron Duke would have looked with horror at the quantities of tobacco and pipes which tire being sent out to the troops with the full approval of the War Office. The duke's opinion of smoking may be found in the general order which he issued a few years before he ceased to be Commander-in-Chief:-"The Commander-in-Chief has been informed that the practice of smoking, by the use of pipes, cigars, or cheroots, has become prevalent among the officers of the Army, which is not only in itself a species of Intoxication occasioned by the fumes of tobacco, but undoubtedly occasions drinking and tippling by those who acquire the habit; and he entreats the officers commanding regiments to prevent smoking in the mess-rooms of their several regiments, and in the adjoining apartments, and to discourage the practice among the officers of junior rank in their regiments."

The *Cigarette World* would of course regard the Duke's order as a relic of old-fogeyism; but the disinterested, candid, scientific observer must regard it as an evidence of the great commander's sound sense, and the present consumption of tobacco by the army as a sign of degeneracy.

January 26, 1899

"The Gospel of Isaiah. God Alone Is Great" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. II. 6-22, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

6. Verily Thou hast abandoned Thy people, the
house of Jacob;
Because they are filled with diviners from the
East,
And with soothsayers like the Philistines;
And they multiply a spurious brood of strange
children.

7. And his land is filled with silver and gold;
And there is no end to his treasures;
And his land is filled with horses;
Neither is there any end to his chariots.

8. And his land is filled with idols;
He boweth himself down to the work of his
hands,
To that which his fingers have made;

9. Therefore shall the mean man be bowed
down, and the mighty man shall be humbled;
And thou wilt not forgive them.

10. Go into the rock, and hide thyself in the dust;
From the fear of Jehovah, and from the glory
of His majesty,
When He ariseth to strike the world with
terror.

11. The lofty eyes of men shall be humbled;
The height of mortals shall bow down;
And Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that
day.

12. For the day of Jehovah God of hosts is
against everything that is great and lofty;
And against everything that is lofty, and it
shall be humbled.

13. Even against all the cedars of Lebanon, the
high and the exalted;
And against all the oaks of Bashan;

14. And against all the mountains, the high ones;
And against all the hills, the exalted ones;

15. And against every tower, high raised;
And against every mount, strongly fortified.

16. And against all the ships of Tarshish;
And against every lovely work of art.

17. And the pride of man shall bow down;
And the height of mortals shall be humbled;
And Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that
day:

18. And the idols shall totally disappear.

19. And they shall go into caverns of rocks, and
into holes of the dust;
From the fear of Jehovah and from the glory
of His majesty.
When He ariseth to strike the earth with
terror.

20. In that day shall a man cast away his idols
of silver,
And his idols of gold, which they have made
to worship,
To the moles and to the bats;

21. To go into the caves of the rocks, and into the
clefts of the craggy rocks;
From the fear of Jehovah, and from the glory
of His majesty,
When he ariseth to strike the earth with
terror.

22. Trust ye no more in man, whose breath is in
his nostrils,
For of what account is he to be made?

In verse 6 there is nothing in the original text to indicate with what the people are filled from the East. The text, literally rendered, reads, "because they are filled from the East." This is indicated in the Revised Version, as well as in our common version. That with which they are filled is not limited to diviners or any other one thing. The idea is that whatever the people have comes from the East. The expression that is used, however, is the ordinary Hebrew idiom to express comparison, so that it might be read, "because they are filled more than the East," which is still more emphatic. In the East idolatry has been practised the longest of any place on earth.

"They are soothsayers, like the Philistines." The Philistines were people of Canaan, whom God commanded to be cast out for their abominations, among which was witchcraft-pretended communication with the dead. The word rendered "soothsayer" is from the word meaning "cloud," indicating that those who practise that art act secretly, under cover.

"They please themselves with the children of strangers." Literally, "they strike hands with the children of strangers." The people of Israel were forbidden to make any league with the people of the land. They were to be separate from all the people on earth. Ex. xxiii. 16. They were not to be reckoned among the nations, nor to be like them. Num. xxiii. 9. They were to depend on the Lord alone for defence, consequently they did not need any alliance with other people, however numerous. God's people must not enter into any covenant, except with

Him. To form any alliance in partnerships, or to be in any way whatever entangled or identified in interests with other people, is to be false to God. It is those who are "rich and increased with goods" (Rev. iii. 16, 17), who are spued out of the Lord's mouth. "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away." Luke i. 53.

Note the place whence real fulness comes. In Christ all fulness dwells (Col. i. 19), and we are "made full" in Him. Col. ii. 10, R.V. He says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." Ps. lxxxi. 10. But when the fulness that people have is not from Him, it is really nothing but emptiness; they are puffed up, not filled.

"Their land is also full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made." What a terrible fall from the high place for which God created man. "Thou hast made him but little lower than God, and crownedst him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet." Ps. viii. 5, 6, R.V. Yet "What is Man?" At his best state he is altogether vanity; of himself he is nothing at all; but with God dwelling in him in all His fulness, He is lord of the works of God's hands. And from this high estate men have fallen so low as to worship-acknowledge themselves inferior to-the works of their own hands. From having dominion over the work of God's fingers, they abase themselves before the works of their own fingers! Could fall ever be greater? That is what idolatry is.

But all idolaters do not set up images of wood or stone or some metal in a temple, and fall down before them. It is not necessary that one should do obeisance to a carved image, in order to be an idolater. All that is necessary to constitute one an idolater is that he worship his own works. Now people worship that in which they put their trust for salvation. Whoever therefore depends upon anything that he has done, as a means of salvation, is an idolater. Then have you never seen idolaters? Do you not know any? Would you need to go out of your own house to find one? Notice that just before the statement that their land is full of idols, we read: "Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures." Is there any land to which that would apply more truly than to this?

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Does it make any difference whether the silver and gold that men worship be made into an image, or simply bear the stamp of the Government? There is no land on earth that is not full of idols. Then let us say these words to the Lord: "Take away iniquity, and receive us graciously. Asshur shall not say to us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the wood of our hands, Ye are our gods; for in . . . the fatherless findeth mercy." Of all who thus acknowledge their sin, God says: "I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely." Hosea xiv. 2-4.

God is no respecter of persons; therefore "the mean man"-the man of low degree-and "the mighty man"-the hero in the world's estimation-shall alike be bowed down and humbled, if they persist in exalting themselves above God. "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and

the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." The Judgment will reveal everything just as it is, and then it will be seen that God alone is great. None of the men of the earth who claim to be great will be able to make their claim good in that day.

That will be a terrible day. "The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman" (Rev. vi. 15) "shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth," and shall say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Yet to behold that same face will be the reward and the highest delight of those who have been humble before God. Ps. xvii. 15; Rev. xxii. 4.

The Gospel is now seeking to prepare men for that great and terrible day. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high things that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. The Gospel does the very thing that the great day of God does, only it is better to submit to the process now, willingly, than to wait till then. God only is "high and lifted up." He has not exalted Himself at the expense of others, as men do; but He cannot be other than He is. The Creator is by the very nature of things infinitely greater than all created things. Only by His greatness can anything exist; and whoever gladly recognises and acknowledges that greatness, is by it exalted. When men exalt themselves, everything is reversed and in disorder. It is necessary that God's rightful place in the universe should be recognised; otherwise confusion would always reign. The Gospel is working to this end, and the great day of the Lord will complete the work, by the destruction of those whose high pretensions have made them ignore God. They will simply be left to the full trial of their claims, and as a consequence will "be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind, and as the smoke out of the chimney." Hosea xiii. 3. When put to the test of trying to exist separate from God, they will be "found wanting." Like the idols which they have made, they will simply "pass away," because when the support of God, which they have despised and rejected, is withdrawn, there is nothing left.

The conclusion of the matter is, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Jer. xvii. 5. This is not a curse put upon those who trust in men,-in themselves,-as a . . . It is not at all because they have offended the dignity of God: God is not a man, that He should feel offended because His rank is not recognised; He is meek and lowly in heart. The curse is simply a statement of fact. Suppose a man suspends himself over the bottomless pit, on nothing; what else but his utter destruction can result? Man is nothing, and whoever trusts in man, even in himself, must inevitably come to nothing. The Judgment will do nothing more

than reveal things as they are, and leave every man to the result of his own choice, and God will be clear from the blood of the wicked who are destroyed. Recall Isa. i. 31.

The lesson that we should not fail to learn, is the power of the Gospel. Its power is equal to the power manifested in the great and terrible day of the Lord. God's power to save-to make something for eternity out of men who are nothing-is the mighty power that will shake the heavens and the earth. When the Lord comes, it is to save His people. The prophet Habakkuk saw a vision of God going forth for the salvation of His people, and "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise, and His brightness was as the light; He had bright beams coming out of His side; and there was the hiding of His power. Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet. He stood, and measured the earth; He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow. . . the sun and moon stood still in their habitation." All that power is even now exerted to save people, and will save them, if they but trust it. Only two things are necessary for anybody to know, namely, that man is nothing, and God everything. He who has learned this, has eternity with all its riches and wisdom in his grasp.

Thinking twice will often save us acting twice.

"Studies in the Gospel of John. Healing the Nobleman's Son. John iv. 43-54" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

To us who read in the Gospels the thrilling narrative of Christ's work on earth, it seems strange that any of those who knew Him in the flesh could have been so blind and deaf as to give rise to His complaint that "a prophet hath no honour in his own country." Yet in this respect Christ shared the experience of those who had in past ages given the Word of God to the people. It is true that the Jews in His day had a great respect for the prophets of bygone years. They believed that these were sent by God and that their fathers had done wrong in killing them. Said they, "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 when the message of God came to themselves they rejected One who was more than a prophet, and thereby showed that they were no better than their fathers.

The man in whose mouth God puts His own words always has a living message for the people, a present truth. He does not present issues which were vital in years past, but are now no longer so. His message fits the needs of the hour and calls, not for approval of something that was done a hundred years ago, but for present decision. This is why a prophet has no honour in his own country. When there is no longer any risk of endangering their interests, the multitude will endorse the message and honour the prophet. In so doing they flatter themselves that they are one with the heroic souls who jeopardised their lives by obeying the truth when it was unpopular. Satan is well content that man shall adopt truths which were vital in past generations, if he can thus obscure truth which has a special application at the present time.

In His words to the Jewish nobleman Christ struck at the difficulty which made it possible for His countrymen to reject Him. "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." Men do not see anything remarkable in that to which they are accustomed. The early years of Jesus had been largely spent at Nazareth, and there His blameless life had revealed the glory of God, yet His fellow townsmen saw nothing in Him to justify the assertion that He was anointed by God for a special work. "And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" as if that were of itself sufficient to overthrow His claim.

Jesus Himself was a most wonderful sign, but His neighbours saw nothing extraordinary in Him. They thought that if He would give them a sign such as Moses or Elijah gave, they would believe. Really, their thought was, Convince every one that you are the Messiah, and when we see everybody else recognising you, we will do so also. They did not wish to incur the odium of espousing an unpopular cause. They wanted Him first to get rid of the reproach, and since none of the mighty works which He wrought effected this, none of them answered the purpose of the sign which they desired.

For all whose hearts were open to receive light and truth Christ's own life was a sign, but it got Him no honour in His own country. It is an incomprehensible marvel that God speaks to us in His own Word, yet how many see any wonder in it? They say, If God would thunder His Word into our ears as He did at Sinai, we would believe it. It is a wonderful work that God does in providing us with food and drink, with air and light, by the unceasing exercise of His power and wisdom, yet men see nothing worthy of notice in it. They say that if God would rain bread from heaven as He did on Israel, or turn water into wine as He did at Cana of Galilee, they would no longer doubt Him. The miracles which God daily and hourly works in the sight of men get Him no honour among those who are accustomed to His working. "The ox knoweth His owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, My people do not consider."

The nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum, came to Jesus very much as the majority of people, when they desired to receive something from Him. He "besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death." His heart was full of an intense desire, and the reproof implied in the words of Jesus, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe," could not turn the father's thoughts from the boon that he sought so earnestly. His only response was, "Sir, come down ere my child die." This man did not come in strong faith, as did the centurion who asked only that the Word of healing might be spoken, but Jesus does not repulse the nobleman because of his lack of faith. He is touched with the feelings of our infirmity; and His own heart responded to the father's cry for help. So when burdened hearts pour out their longing to the Lord, He inclines His ear to them, even though they know but little of true faith.

But Jesus taught the nobleman how to believe. He said, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." And the man believed the Word and went his way. So many do not know what faith is. They think it is some quality possessed by themselves, of which some men have much and others little. Sometimes they say, "Yes, I believe what the Lord says, but I have not faith enough to do it." They think they can estimate the amount of faith they have, and that everything depends upon the amount.

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Faith is simply believing what God says. There is no question of how much you believe. The point is, Do you believe? What would you think if some one should say to you, "Yes, I believe what you say, but I don't believe you very much." You would conclude that the person did not believe you at all. Christ says that faith as a grain of mustard-seed will remove mountains. It is not your faith but the Word you believe that does such great things. God's Word is infinitely powerful, therefore whatever it

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says must be so and you believe it when it speaks. This is faith. If the Word makes a great promise, and you believe it, you have great faith. It was hearing the Word that gave the nobleman faith.

Would you like to be strong in faith? Then let the Word of God dwell in you richly. Receive it not as the Word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God; listen to it, meditate upon it, hide it in your heart, and you will be full of faith, for "faith cometh by hearing." If you listen to God speaking, the faith will come naturally, without effort on your part. When the dead hear the voice of the Son of God, they that hear shall live. Therefore, though you be dead in trespasses and sins, listen to God's Word and you will live, live by faith.

Too often when we kneel in prayer and pour out our heart before God, we rise from our knees and go our way as though nothing had been accomplished, beyond the natural relief that comes from telling our troubles. Jesus has said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." "Every one that asketh receiveth." "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that while I do." Every one may ask whatsoever he will in the name of Christ, and know that his request is granted, for the Lord has definitely said so. Then when we pray to the Lord, we are not to rise from our knees and go our way, still troubled and anxious, but know that, since God honours His own promise, our desires are granted. The Lord gives us blank cheques in which we may insert our own name, and whatsoever we desire. If a wealthy man should give us such an opportunity as this, we should not be slow to take advantage of it, but when we had taken the cheque to the bank, and handed it to the cashier, we should not go away feeling as poor and unsatisfied as ever. We would know that we are richer than we were by the full amount of the cheque, and we may know, just as certainly, by the Lord's oft-repeated guarantee, that we are enriched to the extent that we have asked for in our prayer. It was in this assurance that the nobleman took his way home, and he learned from the servants who came to meet him that at the very hour Jesus had said, "Thy son liveth," the fever left his child.

Jesus came to reveal the Father, not to obscure His character. If the miracles wrought by Jesus were not indicative of God's continual desire to help us, Christ's course in healing so many would simply draw a veil of mystery over His Father, and leave us in perplexing doubt as to what we might expect that He would do for us. When we realise that Christ was the expression of God's goodwill to men, all the circumstances of this miracle are encouraging; the reception of the father's petition, the way in which he was led to believe in the immediate

results that followed the healing Word, speak to us of the possibilities that await us in the Word of God when we believe it simply, and thus allow it to work.

There is a word which God has spoken to us all, which has as much of personal application and of wondering-working power, also of instantaneous performance, for us as the words spoken to the nobleman had for him and his son. The Lord says to us, "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes." Isa. i. 16. There seems to be so little of encouragement in these words that few will question their application to themselves. It is clear that no one can be in worse condition than the people described in the first chapter of Isaiah to whom these words are addressed, so that they take in every sinner. What is the force of the command, "Put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes?" When Christ bade the lepers be clean it was He who supplied that which was needed. The lepers did not feel discouraged at His asking them to do an impossible thing. It was for Him to look after the impossibility. Similarly, when He bade the lame to walk they rejoice, for He found the needed power. So too when He says to us, "Put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes," the more impossible thing sounds the more we are to rejoice at the great work which this word accomplishes in us. It needs Divine strength to accomplish such a task, but the strength is in the commandment. All that is needed is for us to hear and believe that the blessed command may be fulfilled in us just as the words "Come forth" were fulfilled in Lazarus.

Think how much is involved in this command. The Lord says, "Put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes." But there is nothing that is not naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Therefore to put anything out of His sight is to put it out of existence. That is, our doings are to be sinless in the Lord's eyes. We cannot possibly do this ourselves, because we have secret sins that we have not yet discovered in their true character. But these are in the sight of the Lord, and are therefore included in the command. "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." Ps. xc. 8. These hidden springs of evil that make hearts so desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things so that none can know it, the Lord has commanded us to remove from His sight. Shall we sigh and say it is impossible, or believe the Word and in its strength obey? It is God who gives the command, and when we believe His Word of power we may rejoice that it works effectually in us who believe. Of the people who thus by faith obey the Word of God, it is written, "the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jer. I. 20.

"Prayer" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

Prayer is the key of the morning and the lock of the night. Happy is the family whose day holds nothing which the one may not fitly open, and the other peacefully close.

"Little Folks. Wanted" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

All our talks together about the wonderful works of God, have shown us how "all things work together" for the good of all things. Nothing lives for itself alone, but each is a part of God's plan for blessing others.

In all of His *great* works God is thinking of the little things, and working for the good of the smallest. He works in the great and glorious sun to bring to life the little flowers, and to gladden the tiny insect.

"Thus sunbeams your alike their glorious tide
To light up worlds, or wake an insect's mirth."

We have seen, too, that in causing the tides of the mighty ocean and seas, God is thinking of and caring for those tiny creatures that need to live a part of their time in the water and a part on the land just met by the going which leaves them for the beach out of the water.

In His great work of drawing up the water from the earth, and causing it to float in great billowy clouds in "the spacious firmament on high," God is preparing to water the little flowers, to give drink to man and "to every beast of the field," and even "to cause it to rain on the earth where no man is; on the wilderness wherein there is no man; to satisfy the desolate and waste ground, and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth." Job. xxxviii. 26, 27.

In all these and many other ways we see what great works God is doing in His care for the very least of His creatures, using the great things to minister to the very smallest.

But we have found also that in all these little things, which may at first seem to us so unimportant, and to have no special use or meaning, God has some wonderful purpose, which we find when we enquire into them and seek them out. God's greatness is shown in the very smallest of His works. He has a purpose in everything that He does.

The least and most insignificant thing in the earth is "a part of God's great plan," and is needed just where He has placed it. "He weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance;" so even the tiny little grains that make up our world are considered by Him and placed just where He wants them. His *great* works are just as dependent on these little things, as the *little* things are on the great.

There is a little poem which tells of a discontented little buttercup who was fretful and unhappy because she "wished she were a daisy." And this is the advice given to her in the parable by a robin whom she asked to try to find "a nice white frill" for her, like the daisies wear:-

"You're nicer in your own bright gown,
The little children love you;
Be the best buttercup you can,
And think no flower above you.
"The swallows leave me out of sight,
We'd better keep our places;

Perhaps the world would all go wrong
With one too many daisies!

"Look bravely up into the sky,
And be content with knowing
That *God wished for a buttercup*
Just here where you are growing."

Are you not glad, little children, that God *wants* you in His world? He needs you, or He would not have put you here. And He has put you in just the place where He wants you, at the very time when He needs you there.

We are told of His Son Jesus, that "*when the fulness of time was come*, was come, God sent forth His Son." And this is true of every child of God. He thought of you long ages ago, and has been preparing a place and a work for you. And when His time came, just the right time for you to come into the world, He put you here in exactly the place where He wants you.

Though you may not know what God is doing, with you, you may be quite sure that, like every one of His works, you are a part of His plan. And if you give yourself to Him, doing day by day what you know He would have you, He is carrying out in your life some special purpose of good to the world that He could not do without you.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

-The growth of the motor industry in France is shown in the fact that the new occupation demands the employment of 200,000 hands.

-The eruption of Vesuvius on January 15 attained large proportions, the flow of lava being greater than any which has hitherto occurred.

-The trade of the free port of Hamburg has increased enormously; and the sum of one million pounds is to be spent in increasing the landing accommodation.

-The largest ship ever built has just been launched in Belfast. She is called the *Oceanic*, and belongs to the White Star Line. Her length of twenty eight feet, and her engines will develop 28,000 horse power.

-A large body of water near Guildford has burst its banks, owing to the recent heavy rains, and caused great damage. Hedges were swept away, houses flooded, and the highway from Guildford to Dorking greatly damaged.

-General Egan, having used strong language concerning the part played by General Miles in the late war, is to be tried by court-martial. It is expected that some very damaging revelations will be made if the case is allowed to proceed to trial.

-The agitation over Messrs. Bryant and May's matches does not seem to have greatly affected their financial standing. They have been able to declare a half-yearly dividend at the rate of 15 per cent. per annum-or 2 per cent. less than was paid last year.

-The deepest hole in the earth is near Ketchau, Germany. It is 5,785 feet in depth, and is for geological research only. The drilling was begun in 1880, and

stopped six years later because the engineers were unable with their instruments to go deeper.

-The National schools at Arundel having become inadequate to accommodate the pupils, the Education Department have required that they be enlarged, or a Board School will be built. The Duke of Norfolk has enlarged the Catholic schools to accommodate all the children in the place, and the Education Department has caused some consternation locally by suggesting that this will probably meet the needs of the case.

-Ahmed Fedil's entire force of 2,000 men has surrendered to the British. Ahmed Fedil himself succeeded in escaping.

-The first Brahmin widow remarriage in Berar has just been celebrated. The ceremony was witnessed by about 400 people.

-It is proposed to run a lightning express between Manchester and Liverpool on a single rail, at a speed of ninety miles an hour.

-During 1898, 802 vessels of 1,559,125 tons gross were launched in the United Kingdom. This output has surpassed all previous records.

-France has completed a torpedo boat which is said to travel on or under the water with equal ease. Eight similar boats are to be constructed.

-At last two places within the Arctic Circle have received the electric light. Hammerfest and Tromso are now lighted by electricity, so that they have an artificial daylight during the long winter darkness.

-The intention of sending a United States squadron to visit Europe has been abandoned. The Secretary of the Navy Department believes it absolutely essential to maintain the North Atlantic Squadron at its full strength, for reasons of international policy.

-Trade Unions include only a small fraction of the labour of this country. According to a Board of Trade report, just issued, the proportion is 21 per cent. of adult workmen and 12 per cent. of women, excluding from the latter all women not employed in factories and workshops.

-The Pope has just founded in Rome a college, "mainly for English Roman Catholic converts who purpose returning as missionaries to England, where, without any expense to themselves, they may have as opportunity of pursuing their ecclesiastical studies and acquiring the virtues necessary for the sacerdotal state."

-The Chinese department of the British Museum library contains a single work which occupies 5,020 volumes. This wonderful production of the Chinese press is one of only a small number of copies now in existence. It is an encyclopaedia of the literature of China, covering a period of twenty-eight centuries, from 1,100 B.C. to 1,700 A.D.

-The great pyramid of Cheops is the largest structure ever erected by the hand of man. Its original dimensions at the base were 764 feet square, and its perpendicular height in the highest point 448 feet. It covers four acres, one rood, and twenty-two rods of ground, and has been estimated by an eminent architect to have cost not less than ?33,000,000.

-A report from Rome states that the Holy See is actively continuing its efforts to be represented at the conference. The object of the Vatican is to prove to the

world and the Powers that the Pope still considers himself a temporal sovereign. The Italian semi-official organ of the Ministry says that Italy would have to decline the invitation to join the conference if the Pope be represented as a temporal sovereign. The Czar suggests that the conference be held in Brussels in April or May.

-Tesla has invented an electrical apparatus which he claims will destroy every germ in the human body and restore a sick man to perfect soundness. A Viennese professor says of the invention: "The Tesla currents are currents of immense tension, causing no pain to the human body. I have been working with those currents for ten months and have achieved splendid results in certain diseases, particularly gout and in certain skin affections. As for tuberculosis, I only know that Mr. Tesla in his laboratory has succeeded in destroying the consumption bacilli. It is an open question yet whether he can destroy them in the living body, but I have no reason to doubt it."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith the Lord." Isa. i. 11.

God had a purpose in the sacrifices which He commanded Israel to offer. The sacrifices themselves were not the end desired. They were only a means

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, . . . can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered; because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." Heb. x. 1, 2.

The fault of Israel was that they did not proceed from the shadow to the substance. The reason of their rejection of Christ, when He came among them in the flesh, was that they had not recognised Him in the sacrifices, commanded by God, which prefigured His work. Had they learned what the sacrifices were designed to teach them, they would have received the Saviour gladly when He appeared.

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they know Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him." Acts xiii. 27.

The eyes of Israel were blinded in the reading of the Old Testament. They thought that they were God's people, because they were so much better than the surrounding heathen, and that in offering sacrifices they were rendering the worship which God desired. But God did not wish them to stay for ever among the shadows. He wanted them to come to the substance and know by experience the fulness and power of the salvation from sin which was in Christ.

Since the shadows in themselves were worthless, it did no good to multiply them. No number of shadows, however great will suffice to make one substance. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin." So the Lord asks, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices?"

The object at which the Lord aimed was the taking away of sin, and the bringing in of righteousness, not only to cleanse the sinner and make him whiter than snow, but to keep him so. "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; . . . burnt offering and sin offering hast Thou not required." Ps. xi. 6. "Though ye offer Me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will, not accept them. . . . But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." Amos v. 24.

The same question is addressed to us, To what purpose is the multitude of your prayers and religious observances? Are these the end of our Christian experience? Are we, any more than was Israel, come to the substance of Christ's work for us, or do we, as they, have to offer continually, year after year, sacrifices that never take away sin? Are we delivered from the power of sin any more than were they?

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His, people from their sins." Matt. i. 21. "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me. Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

In proportion as Christ's sacrifice was more effectual than the blood of bulls and goats for the taking away of sin, so should the deliverance from sin of those who receive Christ differ from the experience of those who offered slain beasts. "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; . . . for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 11-14.

All that is needed to be done to keep men from falling and to present them faultless before the presence of God with exceeding joy, has been already completed in the sacrifice of Christ. Those who receive Him for all that He is may prove now the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe. This is the object of God in giving His Son to us. Until He is received as a perfect Saviour from sin, He is not known in His real character. His name is Jesus because He saves from sin, and no one can know Jesus who does not know a Saviour from sin. Until we thus know Him, even if professing faith in Him, we are only among the shadows of good things to come.

In giving Christ to us, God gives us deliverance from all the power of evil, and if we neglect to receive so great salvation, all our prayers and religious observances will be to no purpose. They will be no more acceptable to God than were the sacrifices offered by ancient Israel. But now that the reality of Christ's work for us is made known, we may leave the shadows of good things to come, and enjoy the good things themselves.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; . . . let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." Heb. x. 19-21.

Mr. Cecil Rhodes, in a published interview, gives a striking example of what might be accomplished with the enormous sums of money devoted to naval and-

military expenditure. He says that with the ?14,000,000 we shall spend in Great Britain on warships during the next five years, in addition to our present expenditure, he could complete his Cape to Cairo railway, and have ?4,000,000 left. It being pointed out to him that the Russian Government purposed spending ?40,000,000 this year on railways, he replied:-

The Russian Government is right. The construction of railways is the first necessity for a vast undeveloped country. No expenditure is more profitable, more indispensable. I am all for the construction of railways as against expenditure on armaments. Just think for a moment at the difference what the difference is. Fourteen millions for warships, all of which would be rusty iron in twenty years. Not one of them earning a penny. Every one of them needing the diversion from productive industry of hundreds of able-bodied men in the flower of their youth. That is one side of it. On the other, ?10,000,000 expended in completing the line from Cape to Cairo, and you have a whole continent opened up, a great highway of the nations driven through the heart of Africa, the shores of the vast inland seas rendered accessible to commerce, markets opened at every station, every man on the line employed in productive industry-that is the other side of it.

Sabbath-keeping bricklayers and labourers wanted at once. Apply, H. Spencer, York Road, Kettering.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Saved and Sent" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. VI. LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

"In the year in which King Uzziah died, I saw Jehovah sitting on a throne high and lofty; and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim; each of them had six wings; with two of them he covereth his face, with two of them he covereth his feet, and two of them he useth in flying. And they cried alternately, and said:-

Holy, holy, holy Jehovah God of Hosts!

The whole earth is filled with His glory.

And the pillars of the vestibule were shaken with the voice of their cry; and the temple was filled with smoke. And I said, Alas for me! I am struck dumb; for I am a man of polluted lips; and in the midst of a people of unclean lips do I dwell; for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah God of Hosts. And one of the seraphim came flying unto me; and in his hand was a burning coal, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said:-

Lo! this hath touched thy lips;

Thine iniquity is removed, and thy sin is expiated.

And I heard the voice of Jehovah, saying, Whom shall I send; and who will go for us? And I said, Behold, Here am I; send me. And He said:-

Go, and say thou to this people,

Hear ye indeed, but understand not;

See ye indeed, but perceive not;

Make gross the heart of this people;
Make their ears dull, and close up their eyes;
Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with
their ears.
And understand with their hearts, and be converted;
and I should heal them.
And I said: How long, Jehovah? And He said:-
Until cities be laid waste, so that there be no
inhabitant;
And houses, so that there be no man;
And the land be left utterly desolate.
Until Jehovah remove man far away;
And there be many a deserted woman in the
midst of the land.
And though there be a tenth part remaining
in it,
Even this shall undergo a repeated destruction;
Yet, as the ilex, and the oak, though cut
down, hath its stock remaining,
A holy seed shall be the stock of the nation.

"I saw Jehovah." Compare John xii. 37-41 with verses 9 and 10 of this chapter, and it will be seen that it was Christ whom Isaiah saw in His glory. From this we learn something of the wondrous glory of our Redeemer, and what He gave up for the sake of saving us. He is the effulgence of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. Heb. i. 1, 2. The glory which He had with the Father before the world began is His now (John xvii. 5), and He gives it to us, for we shall be "glorified together." Rom. viii. 17.

"His train filled the temple." The word rendered "train" is the same that in Jer. xiii. 22, 26, and other places is translated "skirts," and in Ex. xxviii. 33, 34; xxxix. 24, 25, 26, is translated "hem." The hem or skirt of His garment filled the temple.

What is this garment? Here is the answer: "O Lord my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain." Ps. civ. 1, 2. The light and glory of the Lord is His clothing; His train, that filled the temple, was His glory.

"The whole earth is full of Thy glory." That is, the garment with which the Lord covers Himself is the fulness of the earth. Not only the temple in heaven, but the whole earth is filled with the hem of His garment. Now remember that when Jesus was here in the flesh, all that was needed for the healing of a poor, afflicted woman was that she should "touch the hem of His garment." So wherever we are, we are to reach of the hem of that garment which brings life and health and salvation.

"The healing of the seamless drums
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again."

"The fulness of the whole earth is His glory." This, as may be seen from the margin of the Revision, is the literal rendering of the Hebrew. Wherever in the earth we see fulness, revealing itself in the multiplied forms of life, it is the glory of the Lord. Remembering now that in even the hem of His garment there is healing, what can this teach us except that God expects all to be healed, to be whole-holy. He has provided liberally to this end. All that is needed is that we come into conscious touch with Him by intelligent faith. Jesus Christ came that we might have life, and that we might have it in abundance. John x. 10. The life is the light of men. If we would but see the life, as it is all about us, and allow ourselves to be controlled by it, sickness would become a thing of the past, for eternal freshness is the characteristic of the life. To speak plainly, if we recognise that what are called "the laws of nature" are but the manifestations of the life of God, and let these laws rule in us, we shall find the life of Jesus manifested even in "our mortal flesh," and that will mean victory over disease as well as over sin.

"Above it stood the seraphim." Or, "above Him stood the seraphim." The Hebrew does not distinguish between masculine and neuter. In this case it amounts to the same thing, for above the throne would be above the Lord. The word "seraphim" means "burning ones." The difference, if any, between them and cherubim, is not revealed; but we read in Ezekiel xxviii. 14 about the "anointed cherub that covereth;" and on the cover to the ark in the tabernacle of Moses were figures of cherubim overshadowing the glory of the Lord.

Each seraph covered his face with two of his wings, as unable or unworthy to look directly upon God. Yet the redeemed saints "shall see His face." Rev. xxii. 4. Oh, marvellous privilege accorded to the sons of Adam! to be on such terms of intimacy with the God of hosts as is not permitted even to the highest of the unfallen angels. And to show the special favour granted to humble followers of Christ even now, He says, "in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven." Matt. xviii. 10. This shows that there is a difference, and that the angels who are specially commissioned to guard the faithful of earth, have access to the Father to a degree that others do not. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace." "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." Ps. xxvii. 4.

"Woe is me; for I am undone, cut off, struck dumb; because I, a man of unclean lips, have seen the King, and the Lord of hosts." It was the sight of the Lord that made Isaiah conscious of his own imperfection. Job said, "Now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself." Job xlii. 5, 6. The sight of the Lord makes known the presence of sin, and either removes the sin, or destroys the sinner, according to the circumstances under which He is seen.

"This hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." It is fire from the altar, which, when cast on the earth, works destruction. The same fire that cleanses those who confess their sins, consumes those who cling to them. The saints of God, having been tried in the fire, as gold, and having

had all the alloy of sin purged away by it, can dwell amid everlasting burnings which will consume the wicked like chaff. Read Mal. iii. 2, 3; Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15.

Mark how quickly Isaiah's sins were removed. All he did was to acknowledge that he was a sinner. As soon as he said, "I am a man of unclean lips," the angel touched him with the coal from God's altar, saying, "Thine iniquity is taken away." "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Only acknowledge your sin, and you may know that it is gone. Some sincere souls say: "I have confessed all the sins I know of, and I am resolved not to stop until I have discovered every sin in my character, and have confessed it; so that I may be forgiven." Why, you could not nearly enumerate all your sins in a lifetime. They are more than can be numbered. Isaiah did the whole thing at once: "I am a man of unclean lips," which meant that he was unclean in heart. The publican said: "God be merciful to me, a sinner," and went to his house justified. Be assured that if you acknowledge yourself to be a sinner, you are forgiven.

God saves men only for service. The object of our cleansing is not merely that we may escape destruction, but that we may be messengers of salvation. As soon as the Lord had cleansed Isaiah from sin, He called out, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" It was a general question, yet intended specially for the ears of Isaiah. And the prophet heard, and immediately responded, "Here am I; send me." God reconciles us to Himself by Christ, and puts the word of reconciliation in us, that we, in the place of Christ, may be agents for reconciling others. 2 Cor. v. 18-20. He says, "Come!" and then to all who heed the call, He says, "Go!"

The Lord has said that there will be but few saved. So He fortified Isaiah against discouragement, by letting him know at the outset what the result of his message would be. He was to carry a message whose effect would be to harden hearts, and make people blind and deaf to the truth.

Look at John xii. 37, and you will see what sort of a message it is that hardens men's hearts. "Though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him." Yet the miracles were done and recorded solely for the purpose of enabling people to believe on Jesus, and to obtain life through His name. John xx. 30, 31. And some did believe. Thus we see that it is the tender mercy of God that hardens men. "Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn uprightness." Isa. xxvi. 10. But God is clear. How can any soul hold God responsible for his unbelief, when it was the goodness of God, which leads men to repentance, that hardened him?

How long is this commission to Isaiah to be in force?-Until the end of the world. "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate." But Isaiah is long since dead. True, but the message is still to be given; for remember that the Lord made His call general, and not particularly to Isaiah. "Who will go for us?" He is waiting for agents, and is anxious to use every one who will allow his sin to be purged. We are to be "ready to every good work" (Titus iii. 1), and this readiness is gained through the cleansing power of God. God will use the instrument that is ready

to hand when His work is to be done. This chapter emphasises what was set forth in the article, "The Time of the Promise," at the beginning of this study in Isaiah, namely, that Isaiah's prophecy was especially for the last days. We do not need to make any interpretation, but simply take it as applying now. Although it was so long ago, the people who then heard his words were in the same condition and circumstances that the people of these days are. They did not profit by the message. Let us therefore give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, and fear lest, a promise having been left us, any of us should come short of it, and fall after the same example of unbelief.

Although destruction be determined upon all the land, a remnant shall be saved. "As a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth, when they are felled; so the holy seed is the stock thereof." The holy seed, the humble believers in Christ, are the seed that prevents the earth from total and irretrievable ruin. As a tree will sprout and grow again, although cut down, so although the earth be made desolate, the few men who are left-the righteous ones-will be the sprout that will spring up and cause the whole earth to be renewed. "Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Isa. xxvii. 6.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. God Our Only Refuge and Strength" *The Present Truth* 15, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. VIII. 9-22, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

9. Know ye this, O ye peoples, and be struck
with consternation;
And give ear to it, all ye of distant lands;
Gird yourselves, and be dismayed; gird your-
selves and be dismayed.

10. Take account together, and it shall come to
naught;
Speak the word, and it shall not stand;
For God is with us.

11. For thus said Jehovah unto me,
As taking me by the hand He instructed
me,
That I should not walk in the way of this
people, saying;

12. Say ye not, I is holy,
Of everything of which this people shall say,
It is holy;
And fear ye not the object of their fear, neither be ye terrified.

13. Jehovah God of Hosts, sanctify ye Him;
And let Him be your fear, and let Him be
your dread;

14. And He shall be unto you a sanctuary;
But a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence,
To the two houses of Israel;
A trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

15. And many among them shall stumble,
And shall fall, and be broken; and shall be ensnared, and caught.

16. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples.

17. I will therefore wait for Jehovah, He who hideth His face
From the house of Jacob; yet will I look for Him.

18. Behold, I, and the children,
Whom Jehovah hath given unto Me;
For signs and for wonders in Israel,
From Jehovah God of Hosts,
Who dwelleth in the mountain of Sion.

19. And when they shall say unto you;
Seek unto the neucromancers and the wizards;
To them that speak inwardly, and that mutter;
Should not a people seek unto their God?
Should they seek, instead of the living, unto the dead?

20. Unto the command, and unto the testimony,
let them seek;
If they will not speak according to this word,
In which there is no obscurity.

21. Every one of them shall pass though the land distressed and famished;
And when he shall be famished, and angry with himself.
He shall curse his king and his god.

22. And he shall cast his eyes upwards, and look down to the earth;
And lo! distress and darkness!
Gloom, tribulation, and accumulated darkness!

In studying this lesson, let each one use diligently both the King James and the Revised Versions, in connection with the translation that is given here. There is quite a variation in the wording, but to the thoughtful student this will be a help instead of a cause of confusion. The different renderings, when carefully and

thoughtfully compared, will only serve to give a broader view of the message of God. Different verbal renderings mean, not contradiction, but fulness.

The reading of verse 9 in the common version, or the Revision, is clearer and more in harmony with the text than that given by Lowth. The thought, as will be seen by comparison, is the same as that in the second Psalm. We can readily see how the rendering, "Make an uproar" is consistent with, "Associate yourselves." A crowd is likely to make an uproar. "The heathen rage."

Notice that the people are not commanded to associate themselves together, or to make an uproar. This will be seen from the context. Even though they associate themselves, and rage against the Lord and His people, they "shall be broken in pieces." It is "a vain thing" that the heathen imagine, when they set themselves against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Instead of breaking, they will be broken.

"There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." Rom. xiii. 1. This being the case, it is evident that no one can withstand God. "Our God is in the heavens. He hath done whatsoever He hath please." Ps. cxv. 3. He rules over the kingdoms of the heathen, and in His hand is power and might, so that none is able to withstand Him. 2 Chron. xx. 6. Therefore "fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper." 2 Chron. xiii. 12. God cannot be overthrown by His own power turned against Him.

This is the comfort of the people of God in times of persecution. Verse 10 reads in the French of Segond, "Form projects, and they shall come to nothing; give orders, and they shall come to nothing; give orders, and they shall be without effect; for God is with us." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. viii. 31. God is King of kings. He makes His servant His firstborn, "higher than the kings of the earth." Ps. lxxxix. 27. Read verses 17-27. This is spoken to the seed of David. Christ was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, but as His flesh is ours, we share His exaltation. He has been raised to sit at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion," and we are raised to sit with Him. Eph. i. 20, 21; ii. 1-6. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; that He may set him with princes, even with the princes of His people, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." Ps. cxiii. 7, 8; 1 Sam. ii. 8.

God's people, therefore, have nothing to fear from man, or from any combination of men. If they are indeed His, they have a position higher than that of any earthly

king. All nations may be arrayed against them, but they can accomplish no more against those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High than they can against the Almighty Himself. Read Ps. cxviii. 6-17. It is true that earthly rulers may put some of God's people to death, even as they crucified Christ, but even so they cannot prevail against them. Christ conquered when He went into the grave. One man who knows the Lord (and the only way we can know Him is to have Him dwelling in us), is stronger than all nations combined. His authority is

greater than theirs. This is the fact; unfortunately there are so many Christians who do not know their rightful place.

The fact that God's people have a place higher than the kings of the earth does not make them defiant. They are not to use their authority against men nor governments, but to help. Indeed, as soon as they assume a defiant, dictatorial attitude, they lose their power. Their strength is the strength of meekness. God clothes His people with His own kingly authority, in order that they may properly represent Him as ambassadors. Paul, brought before the Roman governors, preached the Gospel to them; and the man in chains caused the man on the throne to tremble.

People confederate for the purpose of maintaining or executing some project which they think is right. So the translation which we are following has in verse 12, "it is holy." We shall get the sense, however, better, if we follow the common or the Revised rendering, "a confederacy," or "a conspiracy." God would not have His people become bound up in any worldly compact. Ancient Israel were forbidden to make any league with the inhabitants of the land. Even so now they are not to be members of any human organisation whatever. The church of Christ, of which He is the direct Head, provides for every want. Benevolent associations, so-called, are not needed by Christians, for the church is that. A little reflection will enable anybody to see that these associations are selfish, and so opposed to the Gospel of Christ.

It is not because God would have His people exclusive, that He tells them to make no league with the people of earth, and not to unite with any worldly society whatever for protection or help. No; it is because He would have them save the world. When His people unite with the world in any organisation or society for mutual help or protection, they thereby disparage Him, who is the only real help. They give the world the impression that the church of Christ, nay, Christ Himself, does not afford sufficient protection and help. They put themselves in the position of dependents upon men, instead of occupying the position of benefactors, which God designs that they should hold. They are to give to the world, even to kings, and not to receive from them. A true child of God, poor and unknown, is better able to offer protection to an earthly ruler, than the Government is to protect him. This being so, how much more does it apply to all smaller combinations of men.

In ancient times anyone who acknowledged God could join His people. Even so it is now. The church is God's kingdom. All may come into it, who are willing to have Christ reign over and in them. And God's people, instead of being exclusive, must mingle with the people of the world, even going out into the highways and the lanes to find them, to do them good, and to invite them to come and share the blessings of God's house. But how dishonouring to the God whom they profess to serve, when they, finding that danger threatens, seek protection from those whom they are sent to deliver. There are many societies organised for the purpose of helping men temporally and spiritually,-of improving their physical and moral condition,-and they all do more or less good; but that is no reason why the Christian should join them. He must not oppose them, but let them do all the good they can; but he must know that he, as a member of Christ's body, has a field of operation, and a power for good, infinitely greater than they have, so that

to join them would narrow his efforts. The glorious Gospel is the sovereign remedy for all human ills; therefore lift the standard high, and do not let it be confused with anything else.

"Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary." Compare 1 Peter iii. 14, 15: "If ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." The only place of safety for any man is the secret place of the Most High. But we abide in God only when He abides in us. When God is set in the soul-temple as supreme, He Himself is the Sanctuary of the soul. Then the man has a hope of which he can give a good account. It is a living hope.

"Let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." But God is a kind and compassionate Father, as much more tender with His children than any earthly father is with his children as He is greater than man. Earthly fathers have love for their children, but "God is love." What a blessed position to be in, when the only thing in the universe to be afraid of is God, who is love. He loves men, even sinners, but hates sin. He is terrible to nothing but sin. When He is our fear, the result is the destruction of sin. The only dread we need to have, with respect to God, is the dread of displeasing Him; and when we fear to displease Him, so much that we will trust Him, and yield to His ways, He will give us the testimony that we please Him.

"Behold, I and the children whom God hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts." Who says this?—Read Heb. ii. 9-13, and it will at once be seen that Christ is the speaker here. Then we may take courage to go back and read verse 17 of our lesson: "I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him." Has God hidden His face from us? So He did from Christ, yet Christ saw Him again. Not long ago one said to me, "God has forsaken me." Very well, said I, That is just what Christ said, "Ah, but," said the other, "God had not cast Him off." Indeed He had not; and since all that He suffered was for you, and in your place, you may be just as sure that He has not cast you off. No matter how much God seems to hide His face, if we go through the dark experience with Christ, we may be confident. Of all overcomers it is said, "They shall see His face."

But what about the signs and wonders? That is a most glorious prospect. It presents the most marvellous possibilities before

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believers in God. "I and the children whom the Lord hath given Me, are for signs and wonders," says Christ. That is, we ourselves are classed in with Christ. It is not merely that we are to *do* signs and wonders, but we are to *be* them. All the marvels of "the Man Christ Jesus" are to be reproduced in all who are men in Christ. The world is to wonder at Christians just as much as it did at Christ, and for the same reason.

"The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks

foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. i. 22-24. Here we have the same stumbling-block as in our lesson. Thank God that the stumbling-block is the sanctuary to believers. This stumbling-block is the sign; it is Christ crucified. You will remember that Christ said the Jews should have no other sign than His crucifixion. See Matt. xvi. 4. He gave them the most wondrous sign that could be given, and they stumbled at it. God's people are to present the same sign to the world. When the death and resurrection of Christ are fully manifest in their lives, they themselves will be signs greater than any miracle that they could perform. Let the sign, then, the sign of the cross, shine out.

The remaining verses in this chapter were quoted for the sake of the connection, but will be left for special study till next week.

When Jesus sent out His disciples to preach, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," we read "He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner if disease." Matt. x. 1. Again, just before His ascension to heaven, He said to His apostles, "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me." Acts i. 8. Unless power accompanies the message it is not the Gospel. That which makes God's message to the world a gospel, or glad tidings, is that it brings the power which is so much needed. The Gospel is the power of God to every one that believeth unto salvation. Rom. i. 16. In the church of Christ there must be seen the working of His own mighty power. Unless this is true His people do not bear witness to Him. Any power short of the power of God does not reveal Him to men.

February 1, 1899

"The Peace of Righteousness. Isa. xlviii. 12-22" *The Present Truth* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlviii. 12-22.)

"Hearken unto Me, O Jacob, and Israel, My called; I am He; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand hath spanned the heavens; when I call unto them, they stand up together. All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The Lord hath loved Him; He will do His pleasure on Babylon, and His arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called Him; I have brought Him, and He shall make His way prosperous.

"Come ye near unto Me, and hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I; and now the Lord God, and His Spirit, hath sent Me. Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldst go. O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as

the waves of the sea; thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before Me.

"Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob. And they thirsted not when He led them through the deserts; He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; He clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked."

Never forget for a moment that the message of Isaiah is to the end of the world; that he was not prophesying merely for those who lived at the time he spoke and wrote, but for everybody who should live until everything of which he prophesied is completed. He foretold the coming of the Lord, and no matter how long that event may seem to be delayed, the message is to all who live until Christ comes.

COME OUT OF BABYLON!

Babylon, the power that thought that the strength received from God was inherent in itself, and that exalted itself above God, is still before us. The houses and walls built by Nebuchadnezzar were long since destroyed, and the kingdom of Babylon has long since ceased to be named among men; nevertheless Babylon is today as really in existence, and is as active, as it was in the days of Isaiah. The message that we are now studying proclaims, "Go ye forth of Babylon, . . . say ye, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob." This message is so important that the Lord repeated it several hundred years later, when, as the world reckons, Babylon was out of existence. In the Scriptures called the New Testament, which are not by any professed Christians handed over to the Jews, as their especial property, but which are claimed as the Christian Scriptures, we read, "Come out of her, My people." Rev. xviii. 4. Isaiah wrote, "Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob." John, by the same Spirit, uttered the same message, in almost identical words: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." The message is no more true or important because it is repeated; but the repetition makes it more emphatic. The fact that it is repeated after the time when men would unthinkingly say that Babylon is a thing of the past, and believers in the fulfilment of prophecy might say that the words of the Lord by Isaiah have been fulfilled, and are now a mere matter of history, to be studied merely as showing that God's Word cannot fail, shows that Babylon still exists, and

that Isaiah's prophecy is as live, present truth as any portion of the Bible. Nothing of God's Word has failed, and all that has already come upon Babylon is but a pledge that every prediction will be fulfilled to the letter. Babylon, that proud power that reigns in the hearts of men, leading them to exalt themselves against

God, and to ignore Him, and even openly to defy Him, is yet to receive the fulness of her punishment. Come out of her!

BABYLON ANCIENT AND MODERN

Christ is the one whose arm will accomplish the destruction of Babylon, even as it is He who redeems the people of God. The destruction of Babylon is merely a portion of the work of redemption. "The Lord hath loved Him; He will do His pleasure on Babylon, and His arm shall be on the Chaldeans." He is the Beloved of the Lord. The capture of Babylon by Cyrus was only a foretaste, a pledge, of the final destruction of that "mystery of iniquity," the "man of sin," "the son of perdition," of which Babylon and its king, putting human laws above the law of God, stood as the representative to the end of the world. The spirit of Nebuchadnezzar, when he made a golden image, and commanded all to worship it, thus setting at naught the law of God, and of Belshazzar, who in the pride of his dominion defied God, and thought that he had conquered Him, has been transmitted through all the kingdoms to the present time. And not only is the spirit of Babylon in the kingdoms of the earth, but it is in the professed church of God. When Nebuchadnezzar saw that there was a power above him, and acknowledged it, he presumed to legislate for God, as though God were not able to execute His own laws, and defend His own honour. He began to serve God in the same spirit with which he had just defied Him, and said, "I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort." Dan. iii. 29. There speaks religion in Government-the Church working through the State. Nebuchadnezzar was sincere in this supposed service to God-as sincere as he was when he defied God, and no more,-but his last decree was no more Christian than the first. In both of them he showed that he thought himself at least equal to God. The proclamation recorded in the fourth chapter of Daniel, where Nebuchadnezzar makes his public confession, not as a king, but as a man, is a Christian confession. Although he was king of the mightiest kingdom that ever existed on this earth, he could serve God only as an individual. His example and influence would be more far-reaching than that of any other man; but as a true Christian he could use no other means to make men serve God than his personal confession by faith. But that is not the spirit of Babylon. Babylon did not become imbued with the spirit that possessed Nebuchadnezzar at the last. He died, and the same old spirit of self-exaltation, and of rejection of God, resumed sway. It still exists in the world, in so-called "Christian nations," and even in the professed church of Christ, because it is the spirit of human nature. The call is to forsake it. "Come out of her, My people!"

GOD'S RIGHT AND POWER TO SPEAK

The Lord speaks. It is He who hath laid the foundation of the earth, who with the span of His hand has measured the heavens. He hath made a memorial for

His wonderful works, in order that we may know that He is God. Every week it comes to us, so that we are without excuse if we forget God, and fail to put our whole trust in Him. "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. xx. 11. "Hallow My Sabbaths: and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord thy God." Eze. xx. 20. He is the one who teaches us that which will be of profit to us, and who leads us in the way that we ought to go. We have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the way of peace we have not known, therefore God cries to us appealingly: "O that thou hadst harkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

WHAT RIGHTEOUSNESS IS

Righteousness is right-doing; it is the opposite of unrighteousness, and "all unrighteousness is sin." 1 John v. 17. "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John iii. 4. Therefore righteousness is the keeping of the law. It is also peace, because it is the way of the Lord (Ps. cxix. 1-3), and He is "the very God of peace." "Great peace have they which love Thy law; and nothing shall offend them." Ps. cxix. 165. "They have none occasion of stumbling." "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. v. 1. Thank God, "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." Even though we have sinned, and have departed from the law of peace and righteousness, we may in Christ be brought into the right way, because He is the way, the true way. His name is "the Lord our righteousness." He is of God made unto us wisdom and righteousness. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 4. Those who forsake their own way, and come to Christ, allowing Him to dwell in their hearts by faith, attain unto righteousness (Rom. ix. 30-33), even that righteousness which is witnessed by the law and the prophets. Rom. iii. 21, 22.

WHAT PEACE MEANS

What is peace? Alas, very few know. Even those who accept the Lord, very often are content with but a fragment of the peace which He bestows. It is wonderfully comprehensive. The Hebrew word here rendered "peace," is a very common one, conveying the idea of wholeness, soundness, health, welfare of every kind. A few instances of its use may be of service to us. In the following texts, the words which are identical with the word "peace" in our lesson, are given in *Italic*.

Gen. xxix. 6: Jacob asked the shepherds concerning Laban, "Is he well? And they said, He is well."

Gen. xliii. 27, 28: Joseph asked his brethren of their *welfare*, and said, "Is your father well?" "And they answered, Thy servant our father is in *good health*."

1 Sam. xxxi. 21: "When David came near to the people, he saluted them." The margin has it, "He asked them how they did." We ask people how they do; so did the men of old, only instead of saying, "How do you do?" they said, "How is your peace?" meaning the same thing.

2 Sam. xi. 7: "And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered." Literally, he asked after the peace of the people, and after the peace of the war!

2 Sam. xx. 9: "And Joab said to

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Amass, Art thou *in health*, my brother?"

The Hebrew verb from which the noun meaning "peace" is derived, means *finishing, completion, restoration*. It occurs, for example in the following texts:-

Ex. xxii. 14: "If a man borrow aught of his neighbor, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof not being with it, he shall *surely make it good*."

Lev. v. 16: "He shall *make amends* for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing."

PEACE IS HEALTH OF SOUL AND BODY

These illustrations of the use of the word rendered "peace" are sufficient to show that peace, in the Bible use of the term, is not an abstract thing, a mere sentiment or state of mind. It comprises everything that pertains to man. That which is expressed in Isa. xlviii. 18, as the condition of those who hearken to God's commandments, is identical with what we have in 1 Thess. v. 23, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The peace which comes as the result of keeping the commandments, or, rather, the peace which is the keeping of the commandments, means perfect health of body, as well as perfect purity of soul. It is indicated in the words of John: "Beloved, I wish above all things, that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 2. If men had hearkened to the commandments of God, their health of body and of mind would have been as continuous as the current of a river, and as full as the fulness of the sea. We have not hearkened to God's commandments; but there is forgiveness with Him, and the bestowal of righteousness through the Lord Jesus Christ; and in Him we are made complete (Col. ii. 10), for "He is our peace." Eph. ii. 14. "Of His fulness have all we received." If we will but allow the Holy Spirit to strengthen us according to the riches of the glory of God, so that Christ may dwell in us by the Spirit, we shall "be filled with all the fullness of God." Eph. iii. 16-19.

PEACE LIKE A RIVER

God's life flows as a river. From His throne proceeds the river of water of life, clear as crystal (Rev. xxii. 1), because with Him is the fountain of life. Ps. xxxvi. 9. That life flows through the universe, bringing perfect health and righteousness wherever it is allowed to flow unhindered. If we give the Word of life free course

in us, then our peace, our righteousness, our physical health, everything that pertains to our welfare, will flow as a river, even as the river of God, because we shall be having the saving health of God's life constantly in us. The stream "flowing, ever flowing," will wash away all impurities, so that no evil of any kind can remain behind to clog the system. He makes the poor sinner, sick in body and mind, "every whit whole." He gives "perfect soundness." The holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, is but the wholeness which the life of God in Christ imparts. The peace of God which passes all understanding will keep our hearts when we trust God for everything. That means that our life will be redeemed from destruction, for out of the heart are the issues of life

"Oh, what a salvation this.

That Christ liveth in me!"

THE FOUNTAIN EVER FLOWING

In proof of the fact that He will make our peace-complete health of spirit, soul, and body-flow as a river, God "caused the waters to flow out of the rock;" "He clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out." And this very thing He continues to do until the present time. Every river that is fed by the rain that descends from heaven, is but one of the branches of the river of life. Ps. lxxv. 9, 10. That fountain of water gushing forth from the rock, which so many of us have seen, from which we have slaked our thirst, and the beauty of which we have admired, is caused to flow by the Lord, and comes truly from the Rock Christ Jesus. 1 Cor. x. 4; Ex. xvii. 6. Every drink and every bath that we take should be a reminder to us that we drink in the life of Christ, which can also cleanse us from all sin; and that that life is perfect peace for us, if we will but take it,-the healing of every wound, every disease, that tends to spoil our peace. Shall we not make it the business of our lives to seek this fountain of peace?

"Sanitary Jews" *The Present Truth* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Daily Mail* raises the following interesting question:-

Why is it that Jews have escaped the influenza? Messrs. Dottridge say there is no doubt as to the fact, though they can throw no light on the reason for it. They supply, by arrangement with the synagogue authorities, all the coffins and carriages for Jewish funerals, and they say that the demand did not increase in the slightest degree while the epidemic was raging. It was just the same in former epidemics.

Perhaps it may occur to some to connect this freedom from disease with the sanitary directions given in the book of the law of Moses, which the Jews, even though infidel, still quite rigidly observe.

"Jesus and Nicodemus. A New Man. John iii. 1-18" *The Present Truth* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

(John iii. 1-18)¹¹

Human nature was the same nineteen hundred years ago that it is to-day. Nicodemus opened his conversation with the Lord in the same way that men now greet a preacher. "Ah, doctor, that sermon just suited me; it was just what I have always believed." The height of some people's religion seems to be attained in complimenting the preacher. "An able man; preaches just what I believe." It is well to encourage a minister, as well as any other labourer; but the best encouragement any true minister of the Gospel can receive is to see the truths that he presents accepted and put into practice. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." 3 John 4. We have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the words of Nicodemus when he said, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him." But Jesus Himself knew that He had come from God, even though every man denied it; and so He did not need any assurance from men, to encourage Him; He therefore ignored the compliment, and came straight to realities: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus was willing enough to acknowledge that Jesus was a Teacher come from God, yet as soon as Jesus brought the truth home to his own heart, laying bare its need, he was irritated, and began to argue with the Master. There was never a teacher so great, nor clothed with so great authority nor such good credentials, that men would not argue with him about that of which he is master, and they know nothing, if it does not coincide with their preconceived ideas, or with their practises. Indeed, the teacher from God is really the only one whose words are challenged to any great extent. When a man comes talking words of his own imagination, the multitude are ready to receive him without any protest. Jesus said, "I am come in

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My Father's name, and ye receive Me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." John v. 43.

The new birth is necessary, not merely that one may enter heaven, but that one may be a Christian. The kingdom of God is here and now. John on Patmos was "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." Rev. i. 9. God the Father has "made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Col. i. 12, 13. Christ has "loved us," and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." Rev. i. 5, 6. But the kingdom has no sort of connection with the kingdoms of earth. Christ admitted before Pilate that He was a King, but He said, "My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My kingdom not from hence." John xviii. 36. So little harmony is there between the kingdom of God and this world, that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James iv. 4. In order to belong to that kingdom, or even to see it, a man must be made over entirely new; he

must be a new creature, fashioned and controlled wholly by the Spirit of God. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Rom. viii. 9.

"I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. xii. 3. Flesh and blood cannot reveal the Son of God, nor can flesh and blood comprehend the things that pertain to His kingdom. Matt. xvi. 16, 17; 1 Cor. ii. 9-12. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." 1 Cor. xv. 50. In order therefore to be really a subject of the kingdom of God, one must be delivered from the flesh. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. viii. 9-11. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Gal. v. 24, 25. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. ii. 20.

What have we in all this? Just this, that to be a Christian indeed, which is the same as entering the kingdom of God, one must be as much different from what he is by nature as what he is by nature is different from what he was before he had any existence. Think of the body as literally dead, and awaiting burial. Now it has no connection whatever with anything in this world. Its life is ended; its love, and hatred, and envy are now perished. Eccl. ix. 6. Now think of the coming of the Spirit of God, and entering that body. "The body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The Spirit now makes that body alive, but its life is wholly that of the Spirit. The Spirit having rescued it from death, has sole control of it. It is animated and moved by the Spirit alone. It breathes only the atmosphere of heaven. It is evident that such a body would be indeed a new man, and its life would be perfectly pleasing to God. The flesh is the same that it was before, but it is kept under by the Spirit. The man no longer fulfils the desires of the flesh, for the flesh cannot assert itself. Instead of being subject to "the prince of the power of the air," "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," it is wholly guided by the Spirit from above. The only question is, "Is it possible for the Spirit of God thus to take possession of and control a body herein this world?" The answer is found in the life of Christ. The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord," so that He breathed in the fear of the Lord. Isa. xi. 2, 3. "But can any other person have the same experience?" Most certainly; for Christ came for that very purpose. He did not need to come to this earth on His own account. The fact that the Spirit had complete possession of His body, which was just the same as the body of any

other person born of a woman, shows that the Spirit can dwell in and control anybody that is willing. He has "power over all flesh." John xvi. 13.

As to the making a new man, that is taught to us in nature every day; for God is in nature teaching us Gospel lessons. The things that we see, and of which we have experience, are to teach us concerning the things of the kingdom of God. You cut your finger, and it soon heals. A severe wound is suffered, but in a short time new flesh, now skin, new nerves, and even new bones, are formed. Every day our bodies are throwing off old substance, and new matter is taking its place. Thus our youth is renewed. Some one may say, "That is only a physiological change." True enough, but it is a change effected only by the power of the life of God. In everything that is made, the everlasting power and Divinity of God are seen, and He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, *according to the power that worketh in us.* Eph. iii. 20. If we are willing that the work should be done, that power which works in us day by day, to keep us in life, will work far above the highest flights of imagination, to make us wholly new creatures in Christ. The power is present, and all that is necessary is that we yield to it.

"Why," says one, "I thought that it was a mystery!" So it is. Do you understand the mystery of life and growth? "As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." Eccl. xi. 5. Jesus in His talk to Nicodemus indicated that the work of the Holy Spirit in effecting the new birth is like that which we call "the operations of nature." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." It was a thing to be wondered at that a master in Israel did not know these things. Strange that the wise men who are continually observing the working of God in the things that are made, should stumble over the question of the new birth. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen;

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and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you of earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" The study of "natural phenomena" leads to the knowledge of God; and true science is "the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation."

"For Little Ones. Joseph's Dreams Fulfilled" *The Present Truth* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

The seven years of plenty that God had told Pharaoh about, soon began, and Joseph, who was now ruler over all the land of Egypt, gathered in a great store of food to last through the seven years of famine.

"In the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls." And Joseph gathered all the food that grew in the fields, and stored it up in the nearest city, so that in each city there were storehouses from which the people could be supplied with food during the famine.

At first Joseph kept an account of all that was stored up, but he "gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering, for it was without number."

When the seven plenteous years were ended, "the seven years of dearth began to come," but while the famine was in all lands, "in all the land of Egypt there was bread." Through the wisdom that God had given to Joseph, the people of Egypt had food all through the famine; and not the Egyptians only, but "all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn."

Now we can see something of God's wonderful plan in sending Joseph down into Egypt years before, and leading him into the prison. For it was through being east into the king's prison that Joseph was brought to the notice of Pharaoh, and to the highest position in the land of Egypt. God's way is perfect, it is always the very best for His children, and we may safely trust in Him, as Joseph did, even in dark days and dark ways. Like Joseph remembering always that He is with us, we can sing with David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

"Through waves and storms and clouds
He gently clears thy way;
Wait thou His time, so shall this night
Soon and in joyous day.
"Far, far above thy thought
His counsel shall appear,
When fully He the work has wrought
Which caused thy needless fear."

When Joseph spoke of God's purpose in sending him into Egypt, he said, "God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to *save much people alive*."

But what about Joseph's father Jacob, and his brothers? How were they getting on in this time of famine that was in all lands? Like the rest of the people they soon found themselves without any food; and "Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt." He sent down ten of Joseph's brothers to buy food, but he kept Benjamin, the youngest, at home, for fear that "some mischief befall him," like that which he believed had happened to his favourite son Joseph.

When Joseph's brothers reached Egypt they were brought in to him, and they "bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth." But they did not recognise him, nor know that they were then fulfilling his boyhood's dreams that they had thought to get rid of for ever. Joseph knew them however, "and Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them."

As he wanted to find out if they still kept in their hearts the spirit of envy and hatred that had made them so cruel to him, Joseph did not make himself known to his brothers at once. He pretended to think that they were spies, and questioned them very closely about their home life.

How glad Joseph was to learn that his father Jacob and his own brother Benjamin were still alive! He told his brothers that he would keep one of them in prison while the others went to fetch Benjamin, and he would give them no more

food unless they brought him back with them. So Simeon was put in prison, and the others were sent away.

When Jacob heard what had happened to his sons in Egypt, he was in great trouble and said, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me." But were they? No; Joseph and Simeon were both alive and well in Egypt, and all these things God was working for him, to save him and all his children and grandchildren alive through the time of famine.

But he could not part with Benjamin, he was afraid to let him go; so the others did not go back for some time, for they knew it would be no use to go without him. At last all the food that they had brought from Egypt was gone, and Jacob was obliged to let Benjamin go with the others to buy some more, to save them all from dying of hunger.

When they reached Egypt again with Benjamin, Joseph had them all to dine with him, and when he served out the food for them, he gave Benjamin five times as much as any of the others. He waited to find out if they were still jealous, for as they thought that no one understood their language, they talked freely together. But they did not show any signs of anger or jealousy.

Joseph gave them one more trial. When they left to go home, he had his own silver drinking cup put in the top of Benjamin's sack of corn. When they had got a little way from the city his servants were sent after them to search their sacks, and they agreed that the one in whose sack it was found should be taken back and kept as a prisoner.

But when the missing cup was found in Benjamin's sack, not one of his brothers would leave him; they all went back with him to the city with their clothes rent. They entreated Joseph to let Benjamin go home, for it would break his father's heart to part with him, and one of the others would stay and be his slave.

When Joseph saw the change that had taken place in his brothers, he did not try to hide them any longer

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who he was. He said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." When they heard this they were very much astonished and afraid, for they thought that now he would surely punish them, but he comforted them, and kissed them all, and told them not to be angry with themselves for sending him down there, for it was God sending him before them to save their lives and the lives of their families.

As this was only the second year of the famine, Joseph told his brothers to go home and fetch their father and their families, and he would feed them all through the five years that were yet to come.

The news that Joseph's brethren were come soon spread through the palace and reached the ears of Pharaoh. Everyone loved Joseph, for they all looked upon him as their deliverer; and Pharaoh was glad to have an opportunity to do something for them. So he sent waggons out of Egypt, to fetch Jacob and the wives and children of Joseph's brothers, and sent plenty of food for them to eat on the way.

When Jacob and his sons were come, Pharaoh gave them one of the richest spots in all the land of Egypt,-the land of Goshen-and there they lived in peace and plenty, with their families and flocks and herds.

Think what a lesson of God's way this must have been for Joseph's brothers, as well as for Joseph himself. Surely they learned something of His forgiving love, using even their own wicked deeds, and making these work for their own salvation and the salvation of others, when they repeated of their wicked works. More of what God was teaching by these things we will learn another time.

**"Temperance. Under What Influence Are You?" *The Present Truth* 16,
5.**

E. J. Waggoner

What would you think of a Christian who, in response to your greeting, "How do you do?" should reply, "Very poorly, thank you; I am suffering from an evil spirit; I am under the control of the influence of the devil"? Would you not wonder why he allowed himself to be controlled by Satan's influence? and would you not counsel him at once, by the power and wisdom of God, to break loose from the evil spell? Barely we do not need to wait to learn what would be your answer to these questions.

You say, "But surely nobody ever says such a thing." No; not in so many words, and not consciously at all; but unconsciously they do so in effect. "I'm suffering from influenza; haven't been able to do anything for a fortnight, and my work is terribly behind; this weather is so bad that scarcely anybody is exempt from the scourge; if we do not soon have a change, I'm sure I don't know what will become of us."

Do you recognise that language? Have you never heard anything similar? Have you not said virtually the same thing yourself? And did you feel at all embarrassed by the confession, or think that it was not becoming for a Christian so to talk?

"Why, what is there unbecoming in it? What is there to be ashamed of in having the influenza? How can anybody help it? and what connection is there between it and the spirit of the devil?"

Listen, and you shall learn. You know very well already that the influenza of these days is something very different from the influenza of years ago. You know that the doctors find it very hard to grapple with, and you also know that it has a very wide range of symptoms. Indeed, it seems to be a common name for almost every form of disease not already otherwise classified. In France, as in America, which has adopted the French name, it is called *la grippe*, often shortened in America to *grip*, from the suddenness of its attack, and the way in which it seems to seize and hold the bones and joints me in a vise. All this is well known, yet it tells us really next to nothing as to the disease itself.

When you say you have influenza, what are you really saying? Do you know that the name describes nothing at all? Stop and think. Get your dictionary, and look up the origin of the word. Indeed, if you think but a moment you will not need any help. The word "influenza" is a pure Italian word, adopted by us without the

change of a letter. It is only slightly changed from the original Latin. It has exactly the same meaning as in its Anglicised form, "influence." The word "influence" means "a flowing in." It indicates that something intangible is coming in like the air, and is flooding the mind or body, or both, and is assuming control. He who says, "I have influenza," simply says, "Something is influencing me." He who uses the other term, and says, "I have the grip," means that something has hold of him, and that he is firmly held by it. The man has not the influenza,-influence,-but the influenza has overpowered him; that is to say, it is not he who has the influence, but it is he who is influenced; he has not the grip, but something has a grip upon him.

You we already, do you not, that the name of the disease is very indefinite? To say that one has the *influence*, or, more properly, that one is suffering from an influence,-*influenza*,-does not give the least indication as to the nature of the influence, or the source whence it comes. That is a thing to be determined, and this brings no to the point of this article. It is to find the source of the influence that so seriously affects so many people. To use a scientific term, we are after the germ, the microbe, which causes this disturbance.

There can be no influence without some power exerting it. Influences are not entities. An influence is not a being, but is the mysterious, invisible power exerted by some being. What power is it that exerts this baleful influence?

That question can be answered at once when the nature of the influence is known. There are two great powers, and but two, striving for the mastery of this world, namely, Christ and Satan. Christ is the source of all good, and Satan, the adversary, is the author of all mischief and evil. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James i. 17. He gives nothing but good. Christ, the Representative of the Father of lights, who is Himself the light of the world, is the Prince of life. He came to this earth in order that men "might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John x. 10. Satan, on the other hand, is "the destroyer." As soon as he gets any influence over a man, it is exerted for his destruction. His power is the power of death. Heb. ii. 14.

Is the influenza a good thing? Is it a mild and beneficent thing? Is it a blessing to mankind? You know too well that it is a scourge, a plague, a pest. Then certainly it does not come from the Lord, but from the devil, and we have justified the statements made at the beginning of this article.

"But," you will reply, "the influenza depends upon the state of the weather; it is clue to the condition of the atmosphere."

Very well; have you never heard of "the prince of the power of the air"? and do you not know that he is not the Christ, but "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"? Eph. ii. 2. The farther you go in your investigation of this *influence*, the more will you be convinced that "this persuasion cometh not of Him that calleth you."

What shall we say, then? that everybody who has influenza is a sinner, possessed of the devil? Not by any means. Far from it. Under the influence of the devil they certainly are, but not willingly or consciously. They have been taken at a disadvantage, unawares. Many of them are the sincerest Christians; but they

have not learned that disease and death are the products of sin, and that "for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." That is, they have learned this only in part. Christ pities all who are held in the grip of Satan. He would fain set them all free, and He is fully able to do it, if they are only willing. When He was here on earth, anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, He "went about doing good,

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and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." Acts x. 38. He has still the same compassionate same marvellous healing power.

"The just shall live by faith." Do not get the idea that by a simple mental assent, a mere emotion, you can lay hold of the life of Christ, which makes perfectly whole. Faith has nothing in common with imagination. It is not a mere sentiment. The life which the just live by faith is something to be recognised and laid hold of. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," yet one cannot passively fold his arms and dream himself into righteousness. "Let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous." 1 John iii. 7. The keeping of the commandments of God is righteousness. Righteousness is active, involving the exercise of every power of the mind, and every fibre of the being. Matt. xxii. 37. Yet it is not our effort, but the power of Christ in us, to whom we have yielded ourselves. Gal. ii. 20. This is the life of faith, which the just live. To the unenlightened person it seems as if the power proceeds from the man, being inherent in him, because he can see no other source of power; but the believer knows that there is a life manifest in mortal flesh, which can control the body which is yielded to it, and can work righteousness with it. But to this end, we must seek the precepts of the Lord. We must walk in the light.

When it is said that the just shall *live* by faith, there is no qualification, no limit. They shall live, not simply a part of the time, but all the time, not merely in some respects, but in all, completely, by faith. This is the language: "Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. ii. 20. The life which one lives by faith is therefore the life of Jesus Christ. It is His life flowing in, and pervading the whole being, so that it is "no longer I, but Christ." The new life is the life of Christ "made manifest in our mortal flesh." 2 Cor. iv. 11.

Note the words: The life of Jesus made manifest in our *mortal* flesh. Mortal flesh is sinful flesh, but the Scripture does not say *sinful* flesh, but *mortal* flesh. That indicates that the life is not exercised merely in what is called a spiritual manner, but physically as well. If it meant that the life is manifested merely in the keeping of us from what is commonly recognised as sin, then the language would be "our sinful flesh." But the fact that the life of Jesus is manifested in our mortal flesh, indicates that it is manifested in redeeming our life from the destruction to which our mortality daily exposes it. In short, He heals all our diseases, as well as forgives all our iniquities.

Just as we do not become righteous by a sentimental belief, while ignoring the law of God, the ten commandments, even so we can not live a healthful life by faith unless we observe all the laws of life. Remember that the life of Jesus is

to be manifested in our mortal flesh. Now Jesus was not only a holy Man, although He had all the sins of the world upon Him, but He was also always "ready to every good work," although He bore our sicknesses. Nobody ever heard of His being laid up by disease. No evil influence ever gained control of Him. He was exposed to more sickness than any other man of His time, and breathed the same air that others did, yet He was never known to complain that "nobody can keep well in this weather," or to be inconvenienced by any epidemic. Why?-Because He lived by the Father. The life that was in Him was as free from disease as it was from sin, and so is the perfect life that He passes on to us. That eternal life which was in the beginning, was manifested to us, that our joy might be full. If in any respect we still suffer under the influence of the evil one, it is solely because we have not yet learned the greatness of the gift that God has bestowed upon us in Jesus Christ. We have not had the eyes of our understanding enlightened to know "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead."

This is but the beginning. The story of how to lay hold of this life must be deferred till later; it is enough at this time for us to recognise sharply that the life of Jesus is given to us to deliver us from disease as well as from sin. When we know this, then we can say with the psalmist, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations." Ps. lxxvii. 1, 2. And then we shall set ourselves diligently to learn His way, that we may experience His saving health, and may declare it to others.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

- Jerusalem now has a population of 45,000 of which 28,000 are Jews.
- John Ruskin died of influenza at his home in London on the 20th inst.
- It is stated that in all Spain there are only 3,230 children who attend Sunday-schools.
- Last year there were 863 accidents in mines in the United Kingdom, causing 910 deaths.
- It is estimated that during the past year Great Britain paid out to foreign countries over ?4,000,000 for eggs alone.
- The plague continues in Mauritius, there having been a number of new cases during the past week, and several deaths.
- Great damage and serious loss of life was caused by the blowing up of a dynamite factory near Turin, consequent upon a fire.
- The town of Westhofen, in Germany, still enforces an old ordinance which forbids anyone walking in the street with a lighted cigar.
- It is not generally known that clippings from masculine heads of hair are used for making strainers through which syrups are clarified.
- During the last nine years the lunatics throughout London have increased by over 4,500; this is out of proportion to the increased the population.

-During the week before last, ten steamers arrived at Liverpool from various American and Canadian ports, on which were 3,948 cattle, 2,222 sheep, and 30,747 quarters of beef.

-Nineteen persons were killed and about seventy-five more or less injured by the collapse of a church at Malo, a township in the province of Samare, Russia.

-The National Casket Company of Pittsburgh, (U.S.A.) have just filled an order for 2,000 coffins for the United States Government, and is now figuring on another large order. Thus is the prosperity of that country all-pervading.

-The Masawattee Tea Co. one day last week paid to H. M. Customs the sum of ?85,662, representing over 5,000,000 pounds of tea. This is the largest duty payment and the greatest clearance from bond in the history of the tea trade.

-According to a Reuter's telegram from Pekin, the Japanese Government has definitely offered to establish a military academy at the city for the education of Chinese cadets by Japanese officers. The offer is said to be favourably considered by the Chinese Government.

-There is a very serious strike in Austria, affecting 125,000 hands. Over 30,000 have left off work, and the number is rapidly increasing. In the Bohemian coalfields the disaffection is the most general, over 20,000 of the 35,000 employed being on a strike. It is the old story of shorter hours and more pay.

-Fifty tons of superior sweets have just been sent by a New York confectionary establishment to the American troops in the Philippines, Cuba, and Porto Rico. The sweets were paid for by the Government, at from 1s. 2nd. to 1s. 7d. a pound, and included chocolates, cocoanut macaroons, creams, and acid drops. It is stated that this is done on the supposition that the use of sweets of the proper purity increase the health and endurance of their troops. It is, however, but a supposition.

"Sowing and Reaping" *The Present Truth* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

Sowing and Reaping .-"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 7, 8.

When the devil can discourage a man by means of a text of Scripture, it is his delight, for then the conscientious soul will hold to his doubt as a matter of religion. Of course no text ever can discourage anybody, but when the devil presents Scripture to men, he makes them read it upside down. The text just quoted is one of them.

He says to the man who is suffering, "You have sinned grievously in your early life, when you lived only for yourself, and now you must reap what you have sown; you need not hope to recover from this disease or infirmity, because it is the legitimate crop from the seed that you have sown, and you must reap it; there is no escape; you can never expect to be the man that you would have been if you had not sinned."

What a pity that every man has not the spirit to slap the devil in the face, when he comes with such a contemptible lie. A more God-dishonouring lie never was told. He who sows to the flesh must indeed reap corruption; but that does not mean that nobody who has sown to the flesh can ever reap life everlasting, else none could be saved; for every person on earth has sown to the flesh. Yes, and every person has reaped corruption also. But there is deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

They who listen to the devil's backward reading of the text in Galatians forget the power of "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The man who has sown to the flesh may die,-it is his privilege to die in Christ,-and then, risen in Christ, he is another man, and his daily sowing to the Spirit brings him daily a harvest of eternal life. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Rom. viii. 13. Life is stronger than death, as is testified by the resurrection of Christ. He has power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life. John xvii. 3.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." Gal. iii. 13. From every ill that is entailed on us by Adam's fall, we have complete redemption in Christ. Christ, and Christ only, will bear in eternity the scare that sin has caused. He will bear them in His hands, and feet, and side; but we shall have no trace of sin, not even an old scar; for "with His stripes we are healed." His scars are sufficient for all the redeemed. He "loved the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or say each thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 25-27. Since He presents it to Himself without blemish, it is evidently in that condition before He comes.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

The negotiators who drew up the recent Anglo-German Convention in reference to Samoa overlooked one little particular. They forgot to consult the Samoans. The latest Intelligence by mail to that the Samoans are extremely dissatisfied with the new arrangements, and an early rising is anticipated. It is added that Germany will be compelled to keep several warships and a large land force at Apia.-*Daily Chronicle*.

This matter of settling the affairs of little countries to suit the policy of the great Powers involves no end of trouble. There will indeed be no end of the trouble until the Lord comes to judge the earth with righteousness.

If the evil of war consisted only in the loss of life which it involves, it would be insignificant compared with many diseases. Its evil consists in the passions that are roused in living men, in the heartlessness and cruelty that it engenders, and in the long train of consequences. The mere number of lives lost, shocking as it is, is the smallest item. At a recent meeting of the Church Sanitary Association, Dr. Childs called attention to the fact that no fewer than 20,000 persons have died of consumption alone in England, since the war began four months ago. The British losses in the field include something less than 2,000, so that the lost by

the silent enemy is ten times as great as by the bullets of the Boers. Yet very few are alarmed over the ravages of the destroyer. The doctor stated that the clergy could do a great deal towards the repression of consumption, by teaching the Gospel of sanitation in the houses that they visited.

The owner of a quantity of diseased meat which was seized by the Inspector in the Central Meat Market, where it was exposed for sale, was fined ?100. The medical officer said that the "worst part was the liver, which was covered with white tumours." The owner declared that he did not know that the meat was bad. It is highly probable that he told the truth, for the majority of people care but little, and know much less, about the quality of meat that they eat. Once in a while the eye of the Inspector saves them from eating decayed carcasses, but more often that which is nearly if not quite as bad, though not so bad looking, is passed. The safe way is to take the meat in its original form, that of nuts and grains. People who eat only the fat as it is produced by the earth, can always tell when it has become unfit for use.

On the 24th ult., twelve "Assumptionist Fathers" who were charged at the Paris Courts with belonging to an association of more than twenty persons, which met for religious, political, or other purposes, without Government consent, were sentenced to pay a fine of sixteen francs each, and their confraternity was dissolved. That sounds like a scrap from the middle ages, only in those days it was always the Catholics who imposed the fines, and dissolved associations and assemblies. We have no sympathy with any phase of Roman Catholicism; but it is a weak Government, or a weak form of religion, that is afraid to allow full and unrestricted liberty of assembling and speaking. Even error must never be fought with the weapons of error. If righteousness itself adopts the methods of error, it becomes sin.

The American House of Representatives has excluded Mr. Roberts, the new Democratic member for Utah, on the ground that he is a polygamist.

February 2, 1899

"Muck-Rake or Crown?" *The Present Truth* 15, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

John Bunyan's allegory of the man with the muck-rake is as much a reality of human life to-day as it ever was. Men, in their eager quest for the glory of this world, which passeth away, are contemning the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

When Satan tempted Christ with the offer of the kingdoms of this world, he showed Him all the glory of them "in a moment of time." Doubtless, he feared to prolong the vision lest the Saviour's gaze should penetrate the dazzling exterior and find the wretched reality of woe and misery that lay beneath the surface. Yet, short as the view was, it was more than sufficient to reveal to unworldly eyes all the glory that this world could show.

As the time draws near for the fulfilment of the promise that "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the

Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. xl. 5), Satan puts forth every effort to blind the minds of men, "that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them." He knows that all who with unveiled face behold "as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." It is his settled purpose to hinder men from receiving this preparatory experience, so that when the Saviour comes in His glory, they may be unprepared to meet their God, and "be punished

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with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from, the glory of His power." 2 Thess. i. 9.

This is why we now see such feverish activity in all departments of worldly affairs. Naval and military schemes for increased armaments, dreams of imperial and colonial expansion, enormous combinations of labour and capital, gigantic trusts, colossal frauds of every description, as well as the petty worries that beset the everyday life of men and women, each and all owe their origin to the enemy of the race, whose one design and continual effort is to turn the minds of men from the words of God. In proportion as the glorious day draws nearer will Satan increase his temptations to cause our affections to rest on things below.

Every soul on earth is the object of his malignant intentions because to every one, no matter how fallen and degraded, the crown of life is offered freely. To the capitalist as to the meanest drudge in his employ, to the man of world-wide ambition as to the humble lives that count for so little in his grasping schemes, to every one alike, rich and poor, free and bond, great and small, is offered the crown of a never-ending dominion, the key to all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and the passport to scenes of bliss that it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive.

It is true that the muck-heap in which the world is toiling is the witness of their willing degradation, but even out of the horrible pit and miry clay, God will lift those who choose the better part. Men are accepted just as they are, and the shame of their nakedness is hidden in white raiment. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." 1 Sam. ii. 8.

We may not know it, and the ignorance makes our plight the worse, but the Lord sees us wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Our foolish pride may disdain the statement, but it cannot help us to disprove it. To all such, and such are all, the Lord says, "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Rev. iii. 17-20.

"Ministers in Politics" *The Present Truth* 15, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

Mt. John Morley, in a speech delivered last week, referred to the attitude taken by so many ministers of religion on the subject of war. He said:-

They remind me of the fighting bishops and fighting popes of the Middle Ages, who used to go forth in their armour to fight as if they had been more secular men like you and me. One of them put in a formula, and I am bound to say more astonishing language I never read. "We are in a work-a-day world," one of the ministers said, "and we can hardly be asked to stand aloof from the practical business of life because there are higher laws of religious life which the world is not likely to adopt." No, nor is the world likely to adopt them when it sees preachers of these laws are dreadfully afraid to apply them in practice. They are not for peace at any price. We cannot afford to stand alone from that practical business of life, but is there no chance of carrying our higher laws into practical business? Suppose one of these ministers were to find himself in the company of the forty thieves. He need not go-judging from the newspapers-a thousand miles from the City of London to find forty thieves. Suppose he were to say: "I am for the Ten Commandments, but still this is a work-a-day world, we must not stand aloof from the practical business of life, and I am not for the Ten Commandments at any price." You would know what to think of such language, and I say that that language is the legitimate corollary from the principle what is laid down.

It may justly be inferred from this language that when the ministers of religion dabble in politics, the ordinary man of the world is not likely to be smitten with admiration for either their politics or their religion. They may think to gain influence by such a course, but the kind of influence they gain they would be better without. The Word of God is all the power that His servants need in doing His will. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not My Word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jer. xxiii. 28, 29.

"Studies in the Gospel of John. Man's Rightful Authority. John v. 17-27" *The Present Truth* 15, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

Jesus had just performed a great miracle. A man who for thirty-eight years had been unable to walk, had been instantly healed, insomuch that at the command of Jesus he arose, took up the pallet on which he had been lying, and walked. "And on the same day was the Sabbath." John v. 9.

"Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath day." Verse 16. Of course Jesus well knew that they would do this. Why then did He perform that special miracle on the Sabbath that day? The man was not in imminent danger of death. After thirty-eight years waiting, one more day would not have been so intolerable. For that matter, Jesus might doubtless have done the deed the day before as well as not; for the man had been long lying by the pool, and Jesus could not have failed to see him. Did Jesus wish to irritate the Jews, and deliberately to defy their prejudices? It is impossible to harbour such a suggestion for a moment, for it is utterly foreign to His character.

TRUE SABBATH OBSERVANCE

Why, then, was this miracle of healing, like so many others that are expressly mentioned, performed on the Sabbath day?-Because Jesus would show the true object and meaning of the Sabbath. He would show that it is *for* man, and not against him,-that it is not a burdensome yoke, but a lifter of burdens. He would teach us that the Sabbath, as the memorial of God's perfect and complete work, makes known the measure of God's power to make both soul and body "every whit whole."

When the Jews persecuted Jesus for the good deed done to the impotent man, He justified Himself by saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." That was a real justification of His act, for to do that which God does is the most perfect righteousness. Moreover, the acts of Jesus were not simply copies of what the Father did; if they were, then there would be in them no lessons or help for us, for it would show no connection between Him and frail human beings. But He said, "I do nothing of Myself;" "but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John viii. 28; xiv. 10. There is no man so weak that he cannot let God work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Jesus was accused of violating the Sabbath, and He did indeed break the Jewish Sabbath, but not the Sabbath of the Lord. The Jewish Sabbath consisted in formal cessation of all labour on the seventh day of the week, even though human life was lost thereby. It was simply a yoke, a burden, an act of penance by which they thought, to make themselves righteous. It had nothing in common with the Sabbath of the Lord except that it was kept on the same day of the week. The Lord's Sabbath is absolute rest in Him and His word,-dependence on His life; and since His life is activity,-service for others,-it follows that true Sabbath-keeping may sometimes

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involve severe physical labour. How can one tell what works are lawful on the Sabbath day, and what are not?-No list of lawful and unlawful works can be given, but this principle will guide whatever labour is necessary for the welfare of suffering humanity, whether the disease be of body or of soul, and from which the labourer derives absolutely no profit or benefit except the consciousness of God's presence, is proper Sabbath labour. True Sabbath keeping is rest in God,-absolute and unqualified acceptance of His word.

"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." How does God work, and how had Jesus done the work for which He was now persecuted?-By His word. Mark this: it was not as a man works by giving orders to another. No man may flatter himself that he is keeping the Sabbath while others are labouring in his employ. Whosoever does a thing by another does it himself. It is not the way that God works, and it was not in that way that Jesus healed the impotent man. He did not speak the word which set somebody else to work, but *His word itself did the work*. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." "He spake, and it was." Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9. This miracle of Jesus was therefore simply a manifestation of the creative power of God's word.

In six days God created the heavens and the earth; and then He rested on the seventh day, not because to have continued the work of creation would have been a sin, but for the good reason that it was all done. The word, however, continued to work in upholding that which it had created. All the works of God since that time (so far at least as this earth is concerned) are simply to uphold or to restore, and the works which He does for us and through us are to the same effect. Keeping the Sabbath of the Lord is simply the absolute resting in God's finished work, and allowing Him to put them into us. The absolute ceasing from all our own works on the seventh day,-from everything by which we may get gain,-is an indication of our trust in God for "life, and breath, and all things." If one dare not trust God to keep him if he should rest on what is to all the world (and even the greater part of the professed Christian world,) the busiest day of the week, how can he persuade himself that he is trusting for eternity?

RIGHT AND AUTHORITY OF A SON

"The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth; and He will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." John v. 19-23.

Every son is necessarily the heir of his father. Legislation, knavery, the caprice of the father, or something else, may exclude a son from any share in the father's property; but nothing can deprive any child that is born into the world of his essential heirship, namely, the parents' individual characteristics. The father bestows himself, whatever he may be, upon his son, and this is the son's essential heirship. Even so Christ is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15), "the brightness of His glory." Heb. i. 3. Humanity is imperfect, and can therefore only imperfectly reproduce itself, so that a son may be vastly inferior to his father in many or in all respects; but God, whose every way is perfect, reveals every perfection of His character in His Son-"the Beginning of His way." Therefore the only-begotten Son has by birthright the power and authority of the Father. Therefore it is that all judgment is committed to Him. To Him it is given to rule the nations, and at the last to break them in pieces like a potter's vessel; but this power is not arbitrarily bestowed; it is simply one phase of the working of the "power over all flesh" which Christ has in Himself, and which He uses for the salvation of mankind.

"For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given Him authority to execute judgment also; because He is the Son of man." John v. 26, 27. How different that is from what we would have written. We would have said that the Father hath given the Son authority to execute judgment, because *He* is the Son of God; but no, the reason is that He is the Son of man. This brings us face to face with the rightful place of man on this earth.

By virtue of the first creation, man is the son of God. Luke iii. 38. As such authority over all the earth was given him. Remember that this authority was given him in creation. He was made a king. The authority was in him. Just as the magnet is not a magnet because men agree to call it so, but because it has in itself drawing power, so man was king by virtue of what was in him, namely, the life of God. He had dominion over the beasts, the birds, the fishes, and over the earth itself. These did not obey Him because they had agreed to, or were told to, but because he had the authority that they could not help recognising and yielding to. Everything was placed in subjection to man, and remained so as long as man was in subjection to God.

Man's first dominion was one of glory, for he was "crowned with glory and honour" when he was placed over the works of God's hands. Heb. ii. 7. But "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. ii. 23. Consequently the dominion has been lost. Man is no longer king by nature, because he does not have kingly power in him. Now comes Christ in human flesh, made in all things like unto His brethren (Heb. ii. 17), tasting death for every man, and crowned with glory and honour. He "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 3, 4. So through Jesus the dominion of the earth still remains in the hands of man; for it must be remembered that Jesus came to earth as man, to win back the dominion for man. God never lost the dominion, or any part of it. Christ did not need to come to earth to get the dominion of the earth, and authority to execute judgment, for Himself as God, for that he had; but it was that the dominion given to man might be perpetuated. Therefore it is that Christ was on earth as man in every respect. He represented God to man, that God might in Him exhibit His idea of a man.

The one who rules is the one to judge. Man is rightful lord of this earth, and therefore he is the one to whom judgment is necessarily committed. "The saints shall judge the world." 1 Cor. vi. 2. "Let the saints be joyful in glory! let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute

vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written; this honour have all His saints." Ps. cxlix. 5-9. But they have this power only when as sons of men they are also sons of God. In Christ, through the eternal Spirit, we become the sons of God as surely as we are now the sons of our parents, and are heirs of His goodness as surely as we by nature inherit the traits of our earthly fathers. Through the exceeding, great and precious promises of God we become "partakers of the Divine nature." 2 Peter i. 3. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 12, 13. Thus are we joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, having rights and privileges with Him. In Him we become "one new man," created in the Divine image.

And now that we see it for a fact that "as He is so are we in this world" (1 John iv. 17), we may grasp something of the significance of the wonderful works that He did. Remember that Christ, the Son of God, became the Son of man, in order that we, the sons of man, might become the sons of God. He was made in all things like unto us, that we might become in all things like unto Him. Now read again: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth; and He will show Him greater works than those, that ye may marvel." John v. 19, 20.

What does this mean to us?-Everything. It is a part of our inheritance. If we are "in Him," sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, called by His name, and walking worthy of the calling, then as joint heirs with him, sharers of His glory and dominion, we may know that all this applies to us the same as to Jesus of Nazareth. "But we are so weak and helpless," you say. Very well, it is impossible to be more helpless than to be able to do nothing of one's own self. See verses 19, 30. Jesus does the things that He sees the Father do, not by Himself as a copyist, but by the Father dwelling in Him. To us He says, "All things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (John xv. 12), and "He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also." John xi. 12. Don't take counsel of past experience, and say that it is too much to believe, and impossible, but take counsel of the Spirit, who alone makes known the riches of the glory of the inheritance.

Jesus of Nazareth was "a man approved of God" "by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him." Acts ii. 32. Wondrous things He did for man, and even greater works were to be done. So to us He says that, believing, we shall do the works that He did, and greater also. What an unspeakable gift! What an incentive to yield ourselves to Him, to be perfectly cleansed from all taint of the curse, and made "complete in Him," "a perfect man," even up to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." What! poor fallen mortals to have power to heal the sick and the lame, and to cast out devils with a word? Even so, for so it is written, and so it shall be, even as it has already been. Not one only, but every believer in Christ, must have this authority. Don't try to understand it, but believe it and accept it; for what the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, and what have not entered into the heart of man, namely, the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him, -those things hath God revealed unto us by His Holy Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and is freely bestowed on us that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

"The Cost of War" *The Present Truth* 15, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

It is estimated that over 5,000,000 men and 73,047,000,000 have been lost by war during the past century. The greatest loss was 1,900,000 men and 1,250,000,000 by the war between France and England in 1793-1815. The most

costly war, however, was the United States civil war, 1863-65, which swallowed ? 740,000,000 in little over two years-or about ?300,000,000 a year, whereas the war already mentioned cost only ?60,000,000 a year. The Franco-German War, 1870-71, cost ?316,000,000, and that engaged in by Britain, France, and Russia in 1854-56, ?305,000,000.

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring" *The Present Truth* 15, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

Some one has said that "the Book of Nature, like the Holy Word, has four gospels,-the gospel according to the Spring, the gospel according to the Summer, the gospel according to the Autumn, and the Gospel according to the Winter,-each proclaiming the goodness and wisdom and love of God."

There is really only *one Gospel*, the "good tidings of great joy," that "unto us is born *a Saviour* which is Christ the Lord." Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all tell us the same good news of Jesus who "shall *save His people* from their sins."

Paul tells us that the Gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation." And this is just what we may read in all nature. The four seasons,-Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter,-are in different ways all telling us the same Gospel.

Think what "good tidings of great joy" the first spring-time must have brought to Adam and Eve! How sadly they must have watched the fading flowers and falling leaves of autumn, and mourned over their sin which had brought death and desolation over the face of the fair earth.

But at last, at God's appointed time, a change came. The leafless, and seemingly lifeless trees burst forth afresh into bud and leaf and bloom, the earth was covered again with its flowery carpet, and their wondering eyes could see *life*,-now life everywhere springing forth from the deathlike sleep of winter.

Oh, what hope and joy and courage this must have brought to them. The winter had taught them that "the wages of sin is death," and shown them something of what death is. The spring brought the bright hope of the resurrection from the dead, through the promised Saviour, who has power over death. For it was His life that they could see springing from the dead in all the living things around them.

But for this, the winter would have been death indeed; there never would have been any more leaves on the bare trees, no more fresh flowers springing from the barren ground. So the seeming death of winter, followed by the new life of the spring, teaches us that through the power of the life of Jesus

"Death is hallowed into sleep,

And every grave becomes a bed."

Now that the winter is passing, and the bright spring-time coming on, ask Jesus to anoint your eyes and open your ears, so that you may see and hear the message of salvation that He is giving you in this glad season.

You may read it in the trees, which have stood through all the winter season, the very image of death. The leaves are the lungs of the tree, through which it breathes. When the leaves are all gone the trees stop breathing; the sap, which is the life-blood of the trees, does not flow any longer, and there is no sign of life

remaining. But the trees and plants are not dead, only sleeping and soon they burst forth into life and beauty, all the ore fresh and vigorous for their long rest.

You may read the Gospel in which in the seeds, which in the early spring-time you bury out of sight in the cold, dark ground, while you wait in hope and confidence that at the right time they will spring up and bloom.

"O to awake from death's short sleep

Like the flowers from their wintry grave,

And to rise all-glorious, in the day

When Christ shall come to save."

But you need not wait until Jesus comes, to know the power of His life in you. He wants you to know every day the power of His life to overcome sin, which is *death*, and to fill you with His own righteousness, which is *life*.

You may read this same Gospel also in the pretty moths and gay butterflies that after their long chrysalis sleep through the winter, will soon be flitting about full of joyous life; and in many other things that, we cannot speak of now. But while this short season lasts, learn all you can of the "good tidings" that it brings, and we will try to study together a few chapters of "the gospel of the Spring."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

-In Germany the idea of a disarmament conference meets with very little favour.

-The English Zionist Federation has been organised for the purpose of settling in Palestine persecuted Jews from all countries.

-The total receipts from the Hospital Saturday Fund for last year were ? 19,888 9s. 4d., as against ?20,007 12s. 7d. collected in 1897.

-An earthquake, lasting three minutes, is reported from Mexico, which seriously damaged over 200 buildings, and injured 100 persons.

-Owing to the mildness of the season fifty-two different flowers were picked in Monmouth. Roses and wallflowers are blooming in the suburbs of London.

-The baya bird of India has the curious habit of fastening fireflies to its nest with moist clay. On a dark night such a nest aught be taken for an electric street lamp.

-Earthquake shocks occurred in Greece. Houses were much damaged in some towns, but the people having received due warning, escaped to the fields without injury. Whole villages were destroyed.

-Dr. Posch, a Vienna physician who has made a special study of the plague, in the course of a lecture said the use of alcoholic drinks by Europeans diminishes the faculty of resistance to most of the infectious diseases, especially plague.

-The gold discoveries in Western Australia have caused a rapid growth in that Colony. The population in 1891 was 53,000, while now it is 172,000. In 1891 the yearly revenue was ?400,000. Last year it was ?3,000,000. Exports and imports in 1893 were valued at ?2,412,000. In 1897 they had risen to ?10,368,000.

-The Japanese dentists perform all their operations in tooth-drawing with the thumb and forefinger of one hand. The skill necessary to do this is acquired only after long practice, but when once it is obtained the operator is able to extract half-a-dozen teeth in about thirty seconds without once removing his fingers from the patient's mouth.

-The number of Spanish soldiers who died during the recent war in Cuba amounts to 80,000. The majority succumbed to diseases contracted in the country.

-Pupils in the public school of Copenhagen Denmark, are required to take three baths a week in the public school building, and while they are bathing, their clothes are sterilised in a steam oven.

-Whatever may come of the present agitation in Macedonia, it is clear that Russia intends to intervene. It has been announced that she regards the movement as one of a revolutionary character, and intends to crush it.

-Mr. A. J. Balfour, replying to a correspondent on the subject of providing a Roman Catholic University for Ireland, thinks the best plan will be to provide a Protestant teaching university in Belfast, and one for the Roman Catholics in Dublin.

-Lord Cranborne said the other day that Volunteers must be prepared for changes and developments which might not perhaps be popular, but which would be actuated by motives to bring the auxiliary forties up to a greater standard of efficiency.

-The hopes of Chinese reformers have once more been dashed to the ground. One of the governors who recently petitioned the throne for some administrative reforms has, for this offence, been stripped from all office and debarred from future employment.

-From St. Petersburg it is reported that the health of the Amir of Afghanistan is causing uneasiness, as civil war is expected to follow his death. Steps are to be taken to strengthen the position of Russia on the Afghan frontier by the establishment of military settlements.

-It is said in some quarters that France and England are about to settle all outstanding differences by means of a treaty which will be of the highest historic importance. This remains to be seen. Certainly, speeches made by statesmen of both countries have been very conciliatory in tone of late.

-The United States Senate has adopted a Bill providing for the construction of the Nicaragua Canal. 1,000,000 shares, of \$100.00 each, the Government taking 926,000, will be issued. The canal is to be constructed in six years and the cost not to exceed 6115,000,000. It is proposed to offer free passage at all times to the ships of all nations, in peace as well as in war.

-The rivers Wye and Monnow have overflowed their banks, and several of the principal streets of Monmouth have been rendered impassable by the floods, except by boats, which have been requisitioned for traffic. The railway from Ross to Monmouth is under water, and all trains on that section have ceased to run. The flood is the heaviest known since 1851. Most of the valleys in North Wales have been turned into huge lakes.

-The Russian ship-building programme does not savour of disarmament. Two steamships for the Volunteer Fleet are to be built in England at a cost of 4,000,000 roubles. Two first-class iron clads, a first-class cruiser and three other cruisers, with two torpedo boats, are to be completed this year. Next year twenty-four torpedo boats are to be constructed, and three first-class ironclads and two cruisers are to be commenced.

-Gas consumers north of the Thames are agitating against the payment of 3s. per 1,000 cubic feet for their gas, because the change is twenty-five per cent. less than this on the south side of the river. At Plymouth, which is twice as far from the source of its coal supply as London is, the price for gas has been only 1s. 9d. per 1,000 feet for the last dozen years, and at this price the highest dividends allowed by the law have been uniformly paid by the shareholders.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thess. v. 18.

Is it an unqualified command, and it is a command just as surely as are the words, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

"It is a very difficult commandment to obey," do you say? No: "His commandments are not grievous." It is impossible, however, to obey any commandment of God, when it is regarded from the human side, merely as a commandment; we must know it as a promise, and then it becomes a delight. Obedience to the commandment, "In everything give thanks," not only brings, but is the highest happiness that human hearts can know.

What have we to be thankful for?-Everything. Listen: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. Now the very thought of God's free gift must awaken love, "and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Since God cannot but give us all things in Christ, and in Him all things are for our good, how can we be otherwise than thankful in everything?

"How can I be thankful when I know that I am a sinner, and that I am lost?" Easily enough, when you know that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke xix. 10. If you feel lost, that should remind you that the Lord Jesus Christ is good at finding.

"Ah, but you don't know how great a sinner I am; you would feel depressed if you felt yourself to be the greatest sinner in the world."

Not by any means; so much the more for joy. "Faithful is the saying, of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief; howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all longsuffering." 1 Tim. i. 15, 16, R.V. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. v. 20. The greater the sin, the greater the saving grace bestowed. Then thank God.

"But I have so many temptations; how can I give thanks in the midst of them?"

"My brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." James i. 2-4. How can one help being thankful for that which makes him perfect, and brings him everything good?

"Oh, but I have more trials and trouble than anybody else in the world."

Good! then you have more to be thankful for than anybody else in the world; for have you never read: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." 2 Cor. i. 3-5. The greater the trial, the greater the comfort.

"I am so very poor and needy, I lack everything; how can I give thanks?" Your great need should simply remind you of the promise, "My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory." Phil. iv. 19. The more needy you are, the more you get. "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon, me." Ps. xl. 17. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the, kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?" James ii. 5. Your poverty is your wealth.

"But I am so vacillating, so easily swayed; the slightest breath moves me, and I cannot stand."

Then thank God doubly for that, "because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John iv. 4); and if you are so easily swayed by the Holy Spirit. Only let the breath of Christ blow upon you, and it will always carry you in the right direction with the force of "a rushing mighty wind."

The fact is, Christ has so completely identified Himself with humanity, that there is not any circumstance in life, no condition of the soul or body, no need or frailty, that does not in itself suggest the fullness of God in Him. Whatever poverty or temptation or suffering we have, whether as the direct result of our own folly, or from causes of which we are not personally responsible, we may know that they are the sufferings of Christ, and find the joy of deliverance in the knowledge. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," James v. 16. It seems to a great many that these words drive off the thought of effectual prayer further than ever, for they would not presume to say that they were righteous. But how does anyone become righteous? "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." Titus iii. 5. "Being justified freely by His grace," we obtain righteousness, "even the righteous of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. iii. 22.

Therefore the man who is righteous becomes so by believing the glad tidings which God declares to all, "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." He has learned how to take what God gives, and having learned how to take the greatest gift of all, he knows how simple a matter it is to receive all things else.

For to the man who receives Jesus Christ, everything else is given. It can not be otherwise. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,

how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things"? Rom. viii. 32. And Jesus, speaking of food and drink and clothing, says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi. 33.

"God does not force allegiance. He waits for it. The crown of our own individual love and loyalty must be offered by our own hands."

February 8, 1899

"A Drink of Good Water. Jesus at Jacob's Well. John iv. 5-26" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

(John iv. 5-26.)²¹

What would you think of a man who should take his stand in the midst of the soldiers who are doing service in South Africa, under a burning sun, which shines with a heat to which they are altogether unaccustomed, and where they often suffer such intolerable thirst that they would almost risk their lives for a drink of cool water, and should call out to them! "If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink," and then when the men flocked to him should say that he did not mean that they could drink then and there, but that he would give them a drink when they came to a place where there was plenty of water? You would say he was a heartless man, and you would not be surprised, nor pity him very much, if he received severe punishment for the cruel joke. You would say that the men were warranted in supposing that he meant that he had water for them to drink as soon as they came where he was, and that they could not get any other idea from his words, and that if he did not have any water to give them, he was guilty of a base deception. There surely will not be two opinions on this matter.

Well, one day Jesus stood in the midst of a crowd of people, many of whom had travelled long distances on foot, and cried out, so that all could hear: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." John vii. 37. What if some poor, dusty traveller had come to Him, and had said, "Sir, I am almost famished with thirst; will you please give me some of that water?" Do you think that Jesus would have given him some real water to moisten his parched lips, and to refresh his whole body? or would He have said, "My dear friend, you are altogether too literal; I have no real water to give to anybody; what I said was meant to be taken in a spiritual sense; sit down here, or find a good place to stand, and listen to the sermon which I am about to deliver, and see if it does not refresh your soul." The man would surely reply "I am too thirsty to listen to a sermon, and I would not listen to you anyhow, because you are a fraud; you make sensational announcements simply to get people to hear you, and then you give nothing but words;" and nobody could say that the man's conclusion was not justified.

Don't be alarmed, and think that we are irreverent. We are not laying anything to the charge of Christ, for He never did such a thing as we have been supposing. Jesus never raised false hopes, and He never promised anything that

He could not bestow. But a great many professed believers in Christ do in fact charge Him with just such heartless dealings as in the case that we have supposed; they never think that He has real water to give to any thirsty person, or that He gives here and now anything else that is real and tangible. We should like to have all consider

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this matter seriously, and see what a charge they are really bringing against the Lord, when they talk about spiritual things as not being literal and real.

We are studying things that are real. This lesson deals with real things. The narrative of Jesus at Jacob's well, as well as every other thing that is told of Him, was written for the purpose of teaching us that the gifts of Christ are something to be taken and enjoyed as really as our daily food and drink. These are the facts: Jesus was weary with His journey, and was sitting on the ancient well of Jacob to rest. There was a real well there, and it had good, cool, refreshing water. There came a woman to the well, with a real jug on her head, to draw some water for family use. Jesus was thirsty, and asked for a drink of water. The woman was surprised at His request, not because she could not give Him the water for which He asked, but because she did not think that a Jew, as He evidently was, would receive a favour at the hands of a despised Samaritan; but Jesus told her that He was so far from despising her, that if she had asked Him; He would have given her living water that was far superior to that in the well. But unless the water that He could supply would do all that the water in Jacob's well would do, and a great deal more, then it was not better. The lesson to be learned is that Jesus gives water that satisfies every want of spirit, soul, and body.

NOTHING REAL THAT IS NOT SPIRITUAL

There was a multitude of people in the wilderness, and they were suffering from thirst. They had large herds of cattle, and it seemed as if both men and beasts must die of thirst. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on, before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." Ex. xvii. 5, 6. They "did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that went with them; and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. x. 4.

"Then it was spiritual, after all."

Certainly; for there is nothing that God does that is not spiritual; for "God is Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and truth."

"Didn't the people and their cattle in the wilderness get any real water to drink?"

Indeed they did. "He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers." Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16. It was as real, literal water as

any you ever saw or drank; but it was spiritual, nevertheless. There is nothing real unless it is spiritual; all else is only an illusion.

MIRACLES ARE GOD'S DAILY WORK

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. xv. 4. The Lord performs miracles, but does not overturn the course of nature. He makes no monstrosities. He does not at any time work merely to create a sensation, and make people stare. He is always the same. We gaze on His works, and actually see Him at work day after day and year after year, and scarcely ever stop to think that it is God working. Many do not know it. He is a God that hides Himself, and we see results, rather than the operations. But once in a while He removes a portion of the veil that hides His working, and allows us to see more than usual, and then we call it a miracle. A miracle it truly is, but really no more of a miracle than what we see all the time. Miracles are God's ordinary ways of working. God is so great that no human mind can ever comprehend His works. If we had eyes that could see, and senses acute enough to appreciate the spiritual, we should daily be lost in wonder at the sight of miracles exactly the same as that wrought in the desert. Indeed, we should see the very same thing done again and again. There is not a drop of water that flows from spring or well that does not come from Christ. Every drink is spiritual drink, coming from the spiritual Rock that still goes with His people; and if we received it as coming from Him, discerning Him in it, we should be made spiritual by it. This is not speculation or fancy. Just as truly as that water in the desert was real water, exactly like that which men and beasts drink to-day, so surely is the water that we drink to-day spiritual drink, just as that was. This is the lesson that the Samaritan woman learned that day, and it is what the Holy Spirit would have us learn.

AVOID TRIFLES

Human nature is ever the same. Jesus was unfolding to the woman the deepest spiritual truths, vital truths, which would make her entirely new; but as soon as He came to the very heart of the matter, she branched off upon a technicality, and began to talk about the proper place to go to meeting. Even so it is now instead of feeding upon the corn of heaven, and drinking of the water of life, men are speeding their time discussing forms and ceremonies. Begin to talk with a person about his soul's salvation, and offer to him that which will make him a new creature, and he will probably, when you are at the most important part of the matter, ask you to give your opinion upon some detail of no consequence whatever. Thus it is that Satan seeks to snatch away the good seed before it can take root. Do not give place to him. Keep steadily to the all-important matter. "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Despised One Chosen. Isa. xlix. 1-12" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. 49:1-12.)

"Listen, O isles, unto Me; and hearken ye peoples, from far; the Lord hath called Me from the womb; from the bowels of My mother hath He made mention of My name; and He hath made My mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of His hand hath He hid Me; and He hath made Me a polished shaft, in his quiver hath He kept Me close; and He said unto Me, Thou art My Servant; Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

"But I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for naught and vanity; yet surely My judgment is with the Lord, and My recompense with My God.

"And now saith the Lord that formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, and that Israel be gathered unto Him: (for I am honourable in the eyes of the Lord, and My God is become My strength); yea, He saith, It is too light a thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to Him whom man despiseth, to Him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers; Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall worship; because of the Lord that is faithful, even the Holy One of Israel, who hath chosen Thee.

"Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I answered Thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped Thee; and I will preserve Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, to raise up the land, to make them inherent the desolate heritages; saying to them that are bound, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and on all bare heights shall be their pasture. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them. And I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted. Lo, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and those from the land of Sinim."

CHRIST THE SPEAKER

The first thing to be noted in the reading of this lesson is the unmistakable reference to Christ. Called from the womb, to be a light to the Gentiles, and the salvation of God unto the end of the earth; the Chosen of God to restore Israel, and to establish the earth, although despised and rejected of men; His mouth made like a sharp sword (compare Rev. xix. 15, 21);-there is not the slightest possibility for a doubt that Christ the Redeemer, is the one here speaking. It is doubtful if anybody could read the passage, and get any other idea.

CHRIST STANDS FOR HIS PEOPLE

It would be a great mistake, however, if any should get the idea that the Scripture is fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth alone. The trouble is that most people rest content with the thought that the language means Christ, and let it pass at that, as though it had no further interest for them. As a matter of fact, we have in this portion of Scripture a good demonstration of the truth that whatever concerns Christ concerns His people, and that He has fully identified Himself with the human race, binding Himself to mankind by cords that can never be broken. Jesus of Nazareth is the Representative Man.

MEN CALLED FROM THEIR BIRTH

Take the first item: "The Lord hath called Me from the womb; from the bowels of My mother hath He made mention of My name." This is, of course pre-eminently true of Jesus; for the angel of the Lord said to Joseph when he was thinking of putting Mary away; "She shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. i. 21. But our minds involuntarily turn to the great ancestor of Jesus according to the flesh, and we recall the words of the Lord to Abraham: "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." Gen. xvii. 19. Read the thirteenth chapter of Judges, and see how

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the character and work of Samson were described before he was born. John the Baptist is another striking instance. The angel Gabriel said to Zacharias: "Thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. And he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." Luke i. 13-15. We may say that the language in Isaiah applies to John the Baptist as well as to Christ; and the same thing might also be said of Isaac. Indeed, if we should attempt to limit it to any one person, we should have a difficult task; for read these words of the Lord to the prophet Jeremiah: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." "Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Jer. i. 5, 9, 10. See also Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16. Then as another striking instance, we have the Apostle Paul, of whom God said, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts ix. 15), and Paul himself tells us that he was chosen to this work from his birth. Gal. i. 15, 16. To all this list, we have to add the name of Cyrus, who was called by name many years before his birth, and appointed to an important work in the restoration of Israel.

The reader must remember that the Bible does not deal in exceptions. We are not treated to a history of certain, exceptional cases, "freaks of nature," as it were, but to illustrations of God's dealing with all men, and of what is possible for all. The cases just referred to, together with the scripture that we are studying, are to show us that God has a plan for every human being, and calls him to it from his birth, and even before he sees the light. Few ever recognise the voice of God calling them, but they are called nevertheless. God has chosen you, and called you to your work; do you know His voice, and are you doing your work "heartily as unto the Lord," giving diligence to make your calling and election sure? There is marvelous encouragement for us in the fact that God has called us as surely as He called Christ, and has chosen and called us in Him.

"YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

Another proof that Jesus associates all His people with Himself in the work of the Gospel: Verse 6 says, "I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth." Now read the words of Paul and Barnabas, spoken when the Jews rejected their message, contradicting and blaspheming: "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, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Acts xiii. 46, 47. They, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, took the words as applying to them personally, and so we may know that they apply equally to all who are chosen and called by the Lord to His service. Jesus says, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you;" and, "God, sent not His Son into the world, to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." Everybody who receives the Spirit of God is sent forth equally with Christ, to work for the salvation of mankind. Recall 2 Cor. v. 17-20.

"WORKERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"

But there is more yet for us. How often have we heard these words in Gospel talks: "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee; behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. vi. 2. We have thought that this meant merely that the Lord is willing to accept us when we come to Him. It means that, and much more. It is a light thing for Him to accept and save those for whom He died; but the great wonder of His grace is this, that He accepts us as "workers together with Him." 2 Cor. vi. 1. This is most encouraging, because it puts the matter of our own personal salvation entirely beyond all question; inasmuch as we are chosen to be His salvation to the end of the earth, it is self-evident that we ourselves must be saved. We cannot carry salvation to others unless we have it ourselves to carry. So while working with the Master we are relieved from all care as to our own safety. The Lord accepts us, not merely for salvation, but for service.

NO VOLUNTEER REJECTED

Whom does the Lord accept for service? Is He very particular as to the persons who present themselves for labour in His cause? Must they come with a certificate of good character, and be those who are well spoken of by all men? Listen: "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and His Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, . . . In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people," etc. The Lord is in need of labourers in His vineyard, and He stands and calls for whosoever will to come. No applicant will be rejected; all will be accepted and set to work.

The Government has called for volunteers to serve in the army; out of thousands who present themselves, only hundreds are accepted; the majority are rejected as unfit for service. Not so with the Lord; He accepts every volunteer,—"whosoever will,"—and makes him fit for service—"thoroughly furnished unto all good works." No matter how despised and rejected and cast off by men,—the Lord will receive us, and take us into partnership with Himself. Here is encouragement for the weakest. There is no ground left for anybody to indulge in doubts because of his unworthiness; if you are despised, no matter for what cause, justly or unjustly, the Word of the Lord singles you out, and says, "I have specially chosen you for a very delicate piece of work that I must have done." What wonderful honour God has placed upon fallen man!

FREE AGENTSóAGENTS OF FREEDOM

What is the work that we are called and chosen to do?—"That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves." He calls the bondservants of Satan, the slaves of sin, all who labour, and are heavy laden with iniquities, bound by the cords of their own sins, and not only sets them free, but makes them the agents of releasing others who are in cruel bondage. What more could He say? Come, and enter His service, and taste His power to save,—power not only to save you, but power working in you to save others. "Base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him

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are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. i. 28-31. The weaker and more despised you are, the greater will be the glory to God in that which He accomplishes through you. We hear a great deal about man being a "free moral agent." That is only half the truth; he is not only himself free to choose what he will, and in Christ given the freedom of the universe, but is made God's agent in setting at liberty those that are bound.

COURAGE IN DESPONDENCY

Yet with all this for our encouragement, feelings of despondency will sometimes oppress us. We say to ourselves, if not to others, "It is no use; my work doesn't amount to anything." Well, the Lord has provided help for just such a time as that; nay, more, He has provided that you should be able to find encouragement even from your despondency. Remember that all the language of this chapter applies to Christ, primarily. Now read again: "But I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for naught." What! did Christ ever have such feelings of discouragement? Certainly He did, else it would not be the case that He was in all things "made like unto His brethren," "in all points tempted like as we are." Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15. The weakness as well the burden of humanity was on Him, and He was tempted many times to give up the struggle. But, thank God, "without sin." He never gave way to temptation. With the temptation the way of escape is always prepared, and He always took advantage of it. Even in His greatest depression of spirits, He said, "Surely My judgment is with the Lord, and My work with My God." "Himself took our infirmities," so that we may know in every temptation and trial that Christ not only has suffered the same thing, but that He has conquered it by the very same power which He gives to us. If we know that "Christ liveth in me," then whenever the despondency comes, we may know that He is bearing it. The very words of discouragement that come to our mind should be a reminder of these words of Christ, and so should turn to encouragement; and when we have learned this lesson, we shall be reminded of Christ before the words get to our lips. Then that which started as a wail of discouragement will end as a song of triumph. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." "When I am weak, then am I strong."

LED TO LIVING FOUNTAINS OF WATER

Verse 10 makes very clear to the thoughtful student what this deliverance from Babylon means, and shows incidentally that as Babylon was a world empire, so Babylon, whether in the Old Testament or the New, is "the present evil world," whether under the garb of Christianity or not. Concerning those who are set free, we read: "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them."

Now turn to the book of Revelation, which has so much to say about Babylon. John saw in prophetic vision the closing work of redemption, and "after this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Then one that stood by said to John: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day

and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. vii. 1-17.

We cannot fail to see that the two prophets, Isaiah and John, are describing the same thing, and that deliverance from Babylon is deliverance from sin, and sickness, and sorrow, and death. The scene in the Revelation is undoubtedly in "the heavenly Jerusalem;" but we must know that if we are believers indeed, we even now "do enter into rest" (Heb. iv. 3), and that we already "are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." Heb. vii. 22-24. Not as a mere empty song does the Christian say with David, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." Ps. xxiii. 1-3. Even now God dwells among His people, and with Him is the fountain of life, for He is indeed "the Fountain of living waters." Jer. ii. 13. The water is real, and is as refreshing and life-giving as it is real. It is only for us to appreciate the reality.

CHRIST IS ISRAEL

In this lesson the question of who constitute Israel is plainly answered. Verse 3 reads: "Thou art My Servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But it has already been made clear that Christ is the One who is speaking here, and who calls upon the people from far to understand that from birth He has been called to accomplish the work of God. So we learn that Israel is one of the names of Christ. Why should it not be? Rather, How could it be otherwise? For "Israel" means "A Prince of God," or, "He who conquers," and Christ is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," who "hath prevailed" (Rev. v. 5),-"the great Prince which standeth for the children of Thy people." Dan. xii. 1. He is most emphatically Israel, and since we overcome only through the blood of the Lamb, it follows that we become Israel only as we are in Him. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." No person on this earth has, or ever has had, or ever will have, any right to be called Israel unless he has the victory over sin, through faith in Christ. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii. 29.

"Lift Up Thy Voice with Strength" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

It is an admitted fact in all the Christian denominations that the one lack in Gospel work is the power to move the people to forsake sin and accept righteousness. A message is borne, but it does not affect the hearers. There is much said about the *power* of the Gospel, but little of that power is manifest.

When a man has been brought up, like the psalmist, "out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay," and his feet set upon a rock, and his goings established, he cannot

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help telling about it; and when he does tell about it, his words are effective. Of course some will declare that he is an enthusiast, that he talks too much, that he is injuring the cause, and all that; and perhaps in times of momentary discouragement he will determine to hold his peace, but he cannot. The prophet Jeremiah's experience will be his: "His word was in my heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Or like Peter and John, who when they were threatened even with death, declared, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." The apostles had seen and heard something, and when they told what they had seen and heard, it moved the people so that even their enemies "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."

An actor who had the power on the stage to move his audience from laughter to tears at will, was once asked by a minister for the secret of his success. "I cannot understand it," the minister said, "for what you say is only fiction, while I speak the truth, yet I have no such power as you have." "The secret is this," replied the actor, "I speak fiction as though it were truth, while you speak the truth as though it were fiction."

There is too much half-heartedness in giving the Gospel message to-day. The flood-gates of evil are wider open now than ever before, and men and women are being swept down the current more rapidly, and with less concern. The Lord calls upon his watchman to "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." There need be no discouragement, for "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him," and the Lord is stronger than Satan.

There is a message to bear to the world, a message that when given in the power and demonstration of the Spirit will find its way to the hearts of the people, and lead them to cry as on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" That message is to preach the naked Word of God, pure and simple. That is sharper than any two-edged sword. But no man can preach the Word in fact till he knows for himself what that Word is, and not till his own lips have been touched with a live coal from off the altar, can he give the truth of the Word as though it were truth and not fiction.

"In the Footsteps of Jesus" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

Many have a great ambition to visit the Holy Land, walk up and down the streets of Jerusalem and Nazareth and Bethlehem and Cana, sit beside Jacob's well, and gaze upon the blue waters of Galilee, because it is there that Jesus walked and talked with the people when He was upon earth. Interesting as that would be as a matter of curiosity, it could have no virtue. It would have been far more grand to be present and to walk with Him when He was upon earth. But

even then His words were, "The hour cometh when ye ehall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father." Wherever men worship in Spirit and in truth, they are in the personal presence of God.

It is a blessed thing that one does not have to go to Jerusalem to walk in the footsteps of Christ he can do it right where he is; and even more, he can walk side by side with the Saviour, all the time, for the promise is "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

"For Little Ones. A Prince and a Saviour" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

Adam's history taught us many precious lessons of the Son of God, the Second Adam, whose children we may become by faith, and who has won back for us all that "our first father" Adam lost.

From the story of Abraham and Isaac we learned of the wondrous love of God the Father, shown in "the unspeakable gift" of His only Son to die for us, and of the love of Jesus, who freely gave Himself a willing sacrifice to save us from death.

In the life of Joseph we have another parable; in it we see how the Son of God was to be treated by His own brethren, those whom He had come to save, and also how their unkind and wicked treatment of Him was really the working out of God's plan for their own salvation.

Notice first *why* Joseph's brethren hated him: it was because they were jealous of the favour shown to him, and because his pure life was a rebuke to their evil ways.

Now you will remember why the brethren of Jesus, the children of Israel, hated Him, and wanted to get Him out of the way. The rulers, the priests and Pharisees, and scribes, were jealous because of "the mighty works which God did by Him," that drew the people to Him wherever He went.

At His baptism the voice of the Father was heard saying: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." In all the miracles that Jesus did, the power of God was working through Him, because He did always and only those things that pleased God.

His spotless and beautiful life was a light that shone into the dark hearts and lives of the people, and showed them their own sinfulness. Those who loved God and wanted to please Him were glad to walk in the light that shone from Jesus. But most of the people did not want to give up their sinful ways, and they tried to put out this Light that God had sent into the world to serve them.

The Jews made a mock of the claim of Jesus to be the Son of God and the Messiah, just as Joseph's brethren did of the dreams that God gave him. They made up their minds to get rid of Him, to put Him to death, and so show that He was a pretender, and not the promised Saviour.

But, as in the life of Joseph, the very things that they aimed to get rid of Him for ever, God used to bring to pass all that they were trying to prevent. When the disciples spoke of this afterwards they said: "The children of Israel were gathered

together for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel *determined before to be done.*"

As Joseph was put into the pit, so Jesus was put into the tomb, but He did not stay there; He was brought out to be the Saviour of the very ones who slew Him.

Think again of Joseph's history in Egypt: how he was cast into the prison, until "the king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance."

Now notice how like this is to what we are told of Jesus when He was bound with the cords of death, and cast into the prison house of the grave: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." "Him hath God exalted with His own right hand, to be a *Prince and a Saviour.*"

When Joseph's brethren saw him exalted in the land of Egypt, and that they had but been instruments in God's hands to bring him to this high place, you remember that they were afraid, and thought that they would surely now be punished for their wickedness. So when the disciples of Jesus showed that He was risen from the dead, and ascended to the throne of God, the people who had put Him to death "were cut to the heart," and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Then they were comforted, just as Joseph comforted his brethren, by showing them that in all these things God had been working, not to condemn and punish, but to save them. As Joseph was exalted to be ruler in Egypt, so that he might, as he said himself, "save much people alive," so Jesus was exalted to be "a Prince and a Saviour" of the very ones who had crucified Him, and of all who will come to Him, as the people came to Joseph, to be fed with the bread of life.

Through the sufferings of Joseph he was brought to a place where he could feed the people for a few years with the bread that perishes. But Jesus died so that He might feed His people for ever with the true Bread of life, His own body which was broken for us, so that we may live for ever.

Joseph got for his brethren a possession in the land of Egypt, which they could hold only for a few years; but Jesus has purchased for as an everlasting possession, where we may live with Him in peace for ever.

The last we read about Joseph's brethren is that he took some of them in and "presented them unto Pharaoh." Though he was in such a high position, he was not ashamed to call them his brethren. And Jesus is not ashamed to own us, and to call us His brethren. If we put our trust in Him, He will "present us faultless," with nothing left in as for Him to be ashamed of, before the throne of His Father, "with exceeding joy."

"Health Hints. The Gospel of Life" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

It is a fact, patent to everybody, that of all the Christians in the world, very few have any idea that the Gospel has anything to do with their physical life, or that acceptance of Christ as their Saviour from sin can possibly have any effect on their bodily health. This must be on account of the general impression that the

Bible is not a practical book, adapted to everyday life, but that its sayings are all to be taken in a "spiritual sense," that is, in the minds of those who use the term, that they are intangible, unreal, mystical; because the Sacred Book abounds with statements referring to the bodies of men, and promises of life and health to those who believe. In fact, in the words that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," we have the positive statement that the Bible does not pertain solely to the world to come. 1 Tim. iv. 8. A good deal has been said in this line in the PRESENT TRUTH, but now we propose to devote a few articles especially to it, putting them in the department of health and temperance, so that none can fail to see that it is health indeed, that we are talking about. We trust that the readers will see that the matter is not theoretical, but intensely practical; and we would counsel them to preserve the numbers sustaining them, so that they may be able to have the entire subject before them at one time.

In order that we may be agreed at every step of the way, we will begin at a point where we are sure that all Christians meet on common ground, namely, the words so often quoted, and that have brought light and peace to so many hearts, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" and also, "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7, 9.

While it is true that these statements are often upon the lips of Christians, we fear that it is altogether too true that to many of them they are but words, and not living realities. How many of those who talk so much about "the blood," believe and know that "the blood of Christ is a real thing, poured out once for all, and all the time, for the real cleansing of sinners? that it is to-day a thing as real, and as really to be seen and applied by each person individually to his own need, as was the blood that flowed from the side of Jesus when He hung upon the cross, and the Roman spear pierced Him? That these things are so, we may know by reading the first words of the chapter already cited:-

"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; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." 1 John i. 1-5.

Ponder these words well. From them you will learn that we are to have as close fellowship with the Father and the Son as the apostles did, and that the life which was manifested to them is equally manifested to us. The life was from the beginning, and is everlasting, and is therefore the same in every age.

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, is the manifestation of God to men. See John i. 18; xiv. 6; 2 Cor. v.

19. He is "the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person" (Heb. i. 8), and is therefore "the light of the world." John ix. 6. This light is real, as is shown by that which follows the text last quoted. Immediately after uttering those words, Jesus gave sight to a man that was born blind, thus demonstrating that the light which He supplies to the world is the light which enables us to see to perform our daily work.

This light is life; for we read, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John i. 4. "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Verse 9. "I am the light of world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii. 12. So we see that light and life are one, and cannot be separated.

If we walk in the light as God is in the light, that is, if we walk in the life, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. But the blood is the life. Everybody knows, even if he has not read it in the Bible, that "the life of the flesh is in the blood." Lev. xvii. 11. Therefore it is that "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," for we are "saved by His life." Christ gives His life, in order that we might have it. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John x. 10.

This life of Jesus is manifested in our mortal flesh. 2 Cor. iv. 11. It is manifest in keeping us alive from day to day. As the life is the light of men, and Christ is the light of the world, it is evident that there is no life on earth except the life of Christ. We have no life in ourselves. It is impossible for any creature to live independently of God.

The blood of Christ is real, although often invisible. We cannot see all of it, but we can always see a manifestation of it. If we but remember that "the blood is the life," and that there is no life but from God, we shall know that wherever there is life, there is the blood of Christ. Whatever conveys to us life, pure, uncorrupted life, conveys to us the blood of Christ, which cleanses us from all sin, provided we confess our sins, and accept the blood as our sole cleansing.

Please read Matt. ix. 20-22 and Luke viii. 43-48, where we have two accounts of one occurrence. There was a woman who was dying from loss of blood; she came behind Jesus, and touched the hem of His garment, in faith that life dwelt in Him, for she said in herself, "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole;" immediately the flow of blood stopped (she was "healed immediately"), and "she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." Mark v. 89. Her faith had made her whole.

What was it that the woman lacked when she came to Jesus?-It was life; her life was ebbing away with her blood. What did she receive?-Just what she lacked namely, life, that is, blood. New blood came into her body, to supply the place of that which had gone from her, and so she was immediately as well as ever. She was a new creature. This is a demonstration of the assurance that "my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. iv. 19.

Where did that new life come from?-From Jesus, for it was for the purpose of receiving it that the woman touched Him, and as soon as she had touched Him, and had been made whole, Jesus asked, "Who touched Me?" and when the

disciples marvelled that He should ask such a question in that crowd, He said, "Somebody hath touched Me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me," or, as in the Revised Version, "I perceived that power had gone forth from Me." The power which went from Him was the power that healed the woman, supplying what she lacked, namely, life,-blood. The new blood that she received came directly from Christ, although no one could see the transfer. The point which we wish to impress upon the reader is that there is blood, the blood of Jesus, in places where we do not recognise it, and that the blood of Jesus has as many and as various forms as His life. The blood which flows in our arteries comes as directly from the body of Christ, as did that which animated the poor woman after she had touched Him.

Take another instance. The same night that Jesus was betrayed, He took a cup containing pure grape juice,-the blood of the vine,-and said "This is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many." He had but a little while before told the disciples that He is the true vine, and now He declared that "the fruit of the vine" is His blood. The sap which is the life of vine, and which, ascending through the branches, is stored up in the grapes, and is by the sun turned into wine, is the blood of Christ. For this we have the authority of the very words of Christ, and that is all we can ask or wish.

When Jesus hung on the cross, and the Roman soldier pierced His side with a spear, "forthwith came there out blood and water." John xix. 34. This was an important matter, as is evident from the words that follow: "And he that saw it bear record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."

Now read 1 John v. 8, R.V., "There are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one." We know that the blood is the life, and that the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. viii. 10), and therefore we know that this water which was mingled with the blood, and which is one with it, was the water of life, living water. We have then only to remember that the body of Jesus was the temple of God, and His heart God's throne (for the law of God, which is the foundation of the throne was in His heart. Ps. xl. 8), to know that in that event upon the cross we have the visible revelation of the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." That is, the river of water of life, is the blood of Christ; and this is made more evident, when we read that in the midst of the throne, whence the river of life flows, is the Lamb slain. Rev. v. 6; vii. 17.

Still further: The river of God, which is full of water, comes down to this earth in the form of showers to water it, and make it bring forth abundantly for man's use. Ps. lxxv. 9, 10: "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it; Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; Thou settlest the furrows thereof; Thou makest it soft with showers; Thou blessest the springing thereof." So we see that it is the blood of Christ that provides us all our food.

Reviewing what we have passed over; we see that since the blood is the life, and there is no life but the life of God in Christ Jesus, everything that conveys life

to us, the light, the water, the air, our food, is but a means of conveying to us the blood of Christ, that blood, which, when received in faith and humble confession of sin, cleanses us from all unrighteousness. If this statement seems dogmatic, please read again all the scriptures that we have quoted (and we have referred to but few out of many), and you will see that it is exactly what they all teach.

Space does not admit of our carrying this subject any further this week, but in the next number it will be continued. Save this number, so that you can read what follows in connection with this, as we can not take room to repeat all the texts that have once been quoted. Think over the statements made in these scriptures, until the truth of them is firmly fixed in your mind, and thus you will be prepared to go on with that study understandingly.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

-A very rare astronomical feature belongs to the present month; it will have no new moon. January and March each have two.

-Statistics of church growth in the United States for 1899 show that the Christian Scientists are increasing more rapidly than any other religious body.

-To add to the perplexities experienced by the army in the Transvaal, a tremendous swarm of locusts have appeared in different quarters, destroying every vestige of green of the veldt.

-Ninety-one years ago Robert Morrison went as a missionary to China. The *Missionary Review* states that since then three thousand missionaries have followed, and nearly one hundred thousand converts are now reported.

-The demand of the Government for cavalry equipments has had the effect of producing a scarcity of leather never before experienced in the history of Great Britain, and hides during the past three months have advanced in price 10s.

-The Chinese Emperor has been dethroned, and a nine-year-old boy, the son of a member of the Imperial clan of the second rank of nobility, has been selected by the Empress Dowager as his successor. He was proclaimed on the Chinese new year's day, January 31, with the title Pu-Tsing.

-Three hundred waifs and strays were given a treat at Bradford one day last week, and immediately afterward two of the number who ate of tinned beef were seized with violent fits, and soon died, the indications being that death was due to irritant poison. The tinned beef was taken possession of by the sanitary authorities for the purpose of analysis.

-A strange disease called "sleeping sickness" has attacked two natives of the Congo, here in London, and they are now under treatment in one of the city hospitals. There is a pronounced change in the moral character, a well-behaved person becoming very insulting, etc. There is more or less fever, and the sleep is periodical, and usually terminates fatally. The remedy of the Congo doctors is to rub cayenne pepper into the eyes of the patient to keep them awake.

-The *Daily Mail* makes the assertion on the authority of a Chicago correspondent, that the American tinned meat furnished the English Government for its forces in the Transvaal is subjected to processes which "deprive the meat

of all its valuable qualities; that without fear of discovery putrid meat can be mixed with the good, and that workmen are often detected in the act of introducing putrid meat;" and that sulphurated hydrogen is generated in one of the processes of manufacture, and pervades every particle of the flesh."

-During a sitting of the Food Preservative Committee the other day, Mr. Walter Collingwood, a public analyst, stated that in ginger wine, raspberry, orange and black-currant wine, lemon squash, lime juice, etc., he had found salicylic acid in varying quantities. One of the members of the Committee remarked, "If some benevolent person took school children out for a picnic, you would advise that they give milk rather than these drinks," to which the Professor replied: "It would be a question of choice; in the one case they would be given salicylic acid, and in the other boracic acid." Evidently the people are awakening to the fact that even milk as it is usually dispensed is not a desirable beverage.

"Something That Will Last" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

Endurance is a quality much sought for. If a man goes to buy a coat, he examines the quality of the material, to see if it will wear well. He does not expect it to last for ever, but he wishes it to last as long as possible.

If he finds that his coat lasts ten years, he does not set it down to accident; he attributes its lasting qualities to the skill and honesty of the manufacturer. The manufacturer knew how to do good work, and he did as well as he knew how.

That is all plain enough: but when it comes to goodness in men, to holiness, wholeness in body and soul and spirit, most people seem to think that it is accidental. The mass of people, including not a few professed Christians, act and talk as though sin and disease were the normal condition of men, and righteousness and health only accidental states.

We are all acquainted with people who are always and everywhere expecting and prophesying evil. They are frequently called "croakers," and not without reason. They never enjoy sunshine, because they are sure it is going, to rain. Great them with a cheery remark about the beautiful weather, and they will grudgingly assent to it, but will endeavour to spoil your enjoyment by immediately adding, "but we shall pay for it later on." They seem really to find a sort of delight, the only pleasure they have, in adversity, because it seems to justify their doleful predictions.

There are so many of these hypochondriacal Christians, whose greatest encouragement to any young convert is, "I hope you'll hold out," the implication being that they do not expect him to. More frequently, on hearing of the conversion of some reckless young man, or some hardened sinner, they will say, "Yes, that is very good; but I'm afraid it will not last;" or, "I don't believe it will last." Poor souls! they never know the joy of real life, because they do not really know the Lord.

The fact is that the most enduring thing in the world is salvation. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John ii. 17. God says: "My salvation shall be for ever; and My

righteousness shall not be abolished." Isa. xlv. 6. "Israel shall be saved in Jehovah with eternal salvation; ye shall not be ashamed, neither shall ye be confounded, to the ages of eternity." Isa. xlv. 17, Lowth's translation. God is the manufacturer of salvation; He knows how to do perfect work; and He always does His best.

That perfect salvation begins here and now. He who can save men in eternity, can save them now. To say that in the world to come people will be free from sin and disease, because the conditions will be so much more favourable than they are here, is to make God the slave of circumstances. Jesus Christ lived a perfect life under the most unfavourable conditions, and He is our salvation. The everlasting God in our refuge. "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

One of the best authorities on cancer, Dr. W. R. Williams, says: "I am convinced that among the probable causes of the dread cancer, are the drinking of strong tea, the consumption of large amounts of table salt, and the eating of flesh food."

Athletes and prize-fighters go into rigorous training when they intend to compete for a prize. By this means they get into the very best possible condition of health. The Christian is always competing for a prize; therefore he ought always to be in training. The Christian has this advantage of the man who strives for a corruptible crown, that he is winning a prize all the time he is training.

"Some Significant Movements" *The Present Truth* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

Under the heading, "Russia and France on the Move," the *Daily Mail* of the 31st ult. comments editorially upon some very important items of recent news, of the first of which the *National Zeitung* (Berlin) says that "politically it is unquestionably one of the highest importance." We reproduce the article entire, as it very strikingly indicates the direction the affairs of the world are taking:-

For the last few weeks the Russian Press has been persistently affirming that Russia's great opportunity in Central Asia and Persia has come. Apparently the Russian Government is of the same opinion, since we are now given the outlines of a scheme which will virtually place the finances of Persia in Russian control. The Loan Bank of Persia, itself as much a Russian Institution so the famous Russo-Chinese Bank which has paved the way for Muscovite advance in China, is to lend the Persian Government a sum of about two and a half millions sterling. In return the bank is to control the custom-houses of Persia on the Persian Gulf, should there be any difficulty in meeting the payments of interest and the requirements of the sinking fund-and in a country such as Persia difficulties are certain to arise.

It is Russia's habit, to make her advances in a leisurely and methodic manner. She rarely commits the error of asking too much at first, or taking too large a mouthful out of the dish which she has settled ultimately to devour. She seeks to soothe suspicions rather than to provoke alarm. At any other time than the present she might have hesitated before virtually annexing the littoral of the Persian Gulf—a sea where British interests have hitherto been paramount. But it is clear that she has been encouraged by our exhibition of weakness, and that this is her practical revenge for the Muskat affair, when we refused to allow France to acquire a coaling station at the mouth of the gulf.

From Russia to France is no far cry, and we have this morning to record the decision of the French Government to spend ?36,000,000 on its Navy. For some months there has been talk of a vast French naval programme, based upon the precedent of our own Naval Defence Act. Hitherto French programmes have rarely been carried out, because the money has not been voted in a lump, and the Chamber has year by year cut down its grants. This time, it report can be believed, there is going to be no such error, a loan is to be floated for this special purpose of strengthening the navy, and the money will have to be expended and the ships provided within a fixed period. The character of the additions in ships shows clearly that England is aimed at rather than Germany. Anyone who has studied the French Press during the past year must be aware that Germany is no longer looked upon by France as her antagonist. England is the enemy, and statesmen such as M. Lockroy have not hesitated to say so.

The construction of six battleships, five armoured cruisers, and 166 torpedo craft, at the cost of ?19,000,000, will, of course, have to be promptly answered by England as soon as we ascertain that this measure is really being executed. Not for one moment would this country countenance the slightest hesitation in its Government where the Navy is at stake. We must be supreme at sea, or perish as a great nation and as an Empire.

February 9, 1899

"Grace Abounding" *The Present Truth* 15, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

The sacrifices and offerings commanded to Israel of old were all intended to set before the people the work of Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God which beareth away the sin of the world." When Israel failed to see Christ in their sacrificial offerings, these were of no avail, and were no better than the sacrifices of the heathen. God did not regard them as offerings rendered unto Himself, but as worship given to some false god who only existed in the perverted imaginations of the people.

Thus it was possible for Israel to be guilty of idolatry, even while nominally worshipping Jehovah. "Did ye bring unto Me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel. Yea, ye have borne Moloch [margin] and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves." Amos v. 25, 26. The worship of Jehovah did not, like that of Moloch, call for the

purposeless shedding of blood, but when Israel overlooked the teaching of their sin offerings, the blood was shed without avail, and the fact that this wholesale taking of life was done in the name of Jehovah rendered it no more acceptable in His sight than were the awful sacrifices by which Moloch was worshipped.

"Thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought Me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured Me with thy sacrifices . . . but thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities." Isa. xliii. 22-24. Christ, bearing the sins of the whole world, is not a manifestation of God for three and a half years merely, but for the whole period of earthly history.

God has taken upon Himself to sustain the life of all His creatures, to provide them with life and breath and all things.

He places His life at their disposal and gives them a free choice as to what they will do with it. Not one thought or word or act ever came into existence, which was not rendered possible by God in supplying, the necessary power. Not a sin could be committed if it were not that God given life and strength to sinful men.

It is no burden to the Lord to maintain imperfect health and soundness the whole of His vast creation. "The God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of

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the earth fainteth not, neither is weary." Isa. xl. 26. But although it is no drain on the Lord to supply men with all the life they need, and more than they can use, it does weary Him to have His life used for purposes of sin. This is so foreign to His inclinations that it distresses Him beyond our comprehension. "Thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities."

"I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake." The Lord is more anxious than men are to make an end of sin. It wearies Him more than it does them. Therefore, for His own sake He blots it out. No one need fear that the Lord will not forgive his sins because they are too great. If he is weary of them, the Lord is much more so, and for His own sake He blots them out.

Since every soul on earth is a sinner, and all live by the Lord's life, it is evident that it is the Lord Himself who bears the whole burden of sin. Multitudes are not conscious of any burden themselves, but the Lord bears the burden of all, and whether they feel it or not, it wearies Him. Therefore it is true of the whole world that, for His own sake, God has blotted out their transgressions. He commits to His servants the ministry of reconciliation; "to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; . . . for He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. v. 19-21.

But there are some who have sinned more deeply than the heathen. There are those who, knowing their Lord's will, have not done it. The Lord speaks to such a class in the first chapter of Isaiah, who offer a multitude of sacrifices and make many prayers, yet whose hands are red with the blood of souls, lost by their unfaithfulness. These have a form of godliness, but lack the power of it. Like the Pharisees of old, they make a fair show outwardly, but inwardly they are full of sin and uncleanness. The Lord is wearied enough when the heathen make Him

to serve with their sins, but those are infinitely worse than the heathen, for not only do they pervert God's life into the commission of the same sins, but they further make Him to serve, in that which is most detestable of all to Him, the sin of hypocrisy.

Surely we would think, the Lord must hate those who burden His life with that which is so repugnant to every instinct of His being, even using the strength He gives to lead astray and destroy other souls. He says, "Your appointed feasts My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them." Isa. i. 14. But, since the underhanded sin of professed Christians, using God's life not only for their evil-doing, but also for the attempt to make it appear righteousness, is worse than the open sin of the heathen, the burden upon Him must be so much the heavier, and therefore His desire to get rid of the wearying burden must be so much the greater. More emphatically to them than to any others, comes the word, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake."

Because the silver is become dross, "thy princes are rebellious and companions of thieves," every one seeking his own gain and oppressing the helpless, "therefore, saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease Me of Mine adversaries, and avenge Me of Mine enemies." Isa. i. 24. God will blot out the sins that weary and burden Him, so that the greatest sinner need not be discouraged. Although we have added hypocrisy to guilt, if we will let the Lord deal with our sins, He will gladly and promptly attend to their removal, and the heavier they are, the more assurance we have that God, for His own sake, will blot them out of remembrance. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

"God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." The sinful soul need not fear to find clouds of discouragement if he turns to the Lord, for the penitent will find in Him no darkness at all. "His going forth is prepared as the morning" and He sets His people in a path that "shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

"Studies in the Gospel of John. Christian Giving. John vi. 1-12" *The Present Truth* 15, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

John vi. 1-12

Jesus had gone across the sea of Galilee, and as was usually the case whenever He went anywhere, "a great multitude followed Him." Why was it that people flocked in such numbers around this poor man—a man so poor that He had no home, no place where He could lay His head? It was because He had something to give which they wanted. It was not food or money, although even in His poverty He did give those things; but such gifts were only secondary; the people could work and earn money, and buy bread, but He gave them freely that which money could not buy. They followed Him "because they saw His miracles which He did on them that were diseased." He had a message of power, words of

life,-and people were drawn to Him by an attraction which they could not understand or explain.

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When Jesus saw the multitude around Him as He taught (for there were not fewer than five thousand men, besides women and children), He said to Philip, but in the hearing of all the disciples, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" Philip made a hasty calculation, and said, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little." Remember that the purchasing power of money was very different then from what it is now. A penny was the ordinary wage for a day's labour. See Matt. xx. 1, 2. Two pence was a good deposit toward the lodging and care of an invalid at an inn. See Luke x. 30-35. Two hundred pence would therefore buy a great quantity of bread, yet not enough so that each one of the company could have just a taste, and Philip could see no way of helping the hungry crowd.

It was very evident to the disciples that no matter how great the need of the company, and how disposed they themselves were to assist them, the thing could not be done. So they said to Jesus, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals." Matt. xiv. 15. But even if this were done, many must have gone hungry, having no money to buy with. "Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat." Again the business sense of the disciples was brought into requisition, and they looked over their resources, and found so meagre a supply that it was useless to speak about it. Peter, acting as spokesman for the twelve, said, "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?" Clearly nothing could be done. "Oh, no; it is useless to talk; we should like to feed these hungry people, but we have nothing worth mentioning to do it with, we have carefully considered the situation, and it is absolutely impossible to do anything. Oh, if we only had means!"

All this time Jesus "Himself knew what He would do." The business calculations of the disciples, and the demonstration that they were in too straitened circumstances to allow of their doing anything to help, did not affect Him in the least. He was not discouraged at the prospect. Five loaves and two fishes? Oh, that is an abundance! "Make the men sit down." Everything must be orderly. We don't want any pushing and crowding, any unseemly scramble for the overflow of food that is to be provided. There must be no chance for some weak, timid person to be overlooked. Moreover there must be quiet, so that all can have opportunity to think upon the wondrous gift of God, and upon the Giver. Let the men be still, that they may recognise God. So the men sat down, "and Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which remained over and above unto them that had eaten."

Here is the story complete; only a few of the lessons that it teaches can be noted at present. For the first we may see the tender compassion of Jesus on the

poor and needy. His heart was and is always touched by the sight of human need and suffering. Everything moves Him. He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." But He doesn't rest content with mere pity and expressions of sympathy. He wastes no time in regrets that He is not able to help; but from His abundant fulness He supplies the want. His sympathy is practical, and always accomplishes something. He sympathises; He longs to do something to help; He knows what He will do; and He does it. He knows the need; He cares for it; and He is able and willing to relieve.

The Lord allows us to realise our helplessness. His question, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" was calculated to emphasise the great need and their lack of means. But remember that the question was not one of doubt. "He Himself knew what He would do." Let this case, then, stand as the type of all. How often we have felt our hearts stirred as we have seen poverty and suffering, and have longed to help, and have mourned our inability. Now that desperate situation, that was made so vivid to us, was only the repetition of the Lord's question to Philip, Whence shall we supply these hungry souls with food? And just as the question was asked then to prove the disciples, so the desperate need is set before us so vividly in order to prove us. How often we have been tested in this manner, and yet we have not learned the lesson. May we begin now.

Jesus would not send people away hungry. He would not allow the disciples to do so. He always feeds the hungry. Therefore we may be assured that when we allow people to go away hungry for food either for the body or the soul, we ignore or deny the presence of the Master among us. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." 1 John ii. 6. "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father." John xiv. 12.

"They need not depart; give ye them to eat." Why did Jesus say that?—Because it was so. Jesus did not trifle with the disciples. He knew what *He* would do; the question was, Did they know what *they* would do? Yes; they knew that they would send the multitude away empty; but they did not need to. His question to Philip was for the purpose of proving him, and the rest of the disciples as well. The words of Jesus show that if they had but recognised their opportunity they might have fed the multitude the same as He did. And the lesson is recorded for our sakes.

"How can we give when we have nothing?"—Just the same as Jesus did when He had nothing; for He did not do anything while here on this earth, except as *man*.

"Yes; but it pleased the Father that in Him all fulness should dwell, and it was of the abundant fulness that was in Him, that He fed the multitudes." Very true; "and of His fulness have all we received." John i. 16. The same Christ is alive to-day, and dwells among us; and if we but allow Him to dwell in our hearts *by* faith, we shall also "be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph. iii. 19.

What a marvellous manifestation of the power of God's grace! that having nothing we should be able to give everything. "We then as workers together with Him beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain;" and we approve

ourselves as the ministers of God, "as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." 2 Cor. vi. 1, 10.

Peter and John found a man at the gate of the temple in sore need. He asked for money, but Peter had none to give him. This did not, however, make it necessary for Peter to pass by with a sympathetic greeting and the remark, "Poor fellow! how I wish I could do something for him." No; Peter gave the man something better than money,-something that money could not buy, but that which would enable him to get money if he needed it. When all God's professed people have Christ's abiding presence through the Holy Spirit, as a reality of which they are conscious, they will never pass a needy soul by without supplying more than he asks or thinks to receive.

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God gives us richly all things to enjoy. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Acts xvii. 25. Everybody therefore has everything given him. Most people, however, do not recognise the gifts of God. Not only do they not know God as the Giver of every good and perfect gift, but they do not know how abundantly He gives, even when they know that He does give something. It is the business of God's servants, therefore, "to open the blind eyes" (Isa. xlii. 7), that men may know the boundless grace of God, and the gift by grace. They are to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God." 1 Peter iv. 10. But oh, how sad it is when those who profess to know God are themselves blind to the riches of the glory of their inheritance. Who is there of us who has not discounted the words of Jesus, and the lessons that He has left us, so much that they have scarcely any more meaning to us than as mere stories? Shall we not learn?

As we have freely received, so are we freely to give. That is, we are to give as much as we have received, and on the same terms. We have received everything; we are to give everything. The fact that we do not have a big stock to carry about with us to exhibit, does not prove that we have nothing. God is our treasure house. "The unsearchable riches of Christ" are all and always "in Him," for "in Him are all things created," and "in Him all things consist," and He is ours. He saves us the trouble of looking after and caring for our vast property, while we have all the use of it on demand. He says, "Concerning the work of My hands, command ye Me." Isa. xlv. 11. These are realities, and not empty words.

In all this God is trying to teach the world that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" or seemeth to have. He would have us know, and teach others, that He cares for us, and keeps us. He would have all man know that all things come from Him, so that all may give Him glory, by receiving from Him the things that He gives. True, He has said that the man who will not work shall not eat, but that does not teach us that man must support himself. No man on earth "earns his own living." No man can earn a living. Life is too precious a commodity to be bought with money, or earned by human labour. Life is a gift. God "*giveth* to all life, and breath, and all things." The occasions when He gives us help, when it is manifest that we are unable to do anything for ourselves, are to show us that even where we are most active we simply gather up what He showers down.

Now when Christ's followers rise to their privileges as "workers together with Him," realising that He was on earth as a representative Man, showing what every child of God ought to do when occasion calls for it, the world will see that there is something better than what this world can give. They will not all believe, but the work that God designs for the world will speedily be accomplished. They will see that poverty does not handicap a man of God; that the expression "rich in faith" is not an empty phrase; and that the poor Christian can do what the wealthy worldling cannot. How to give with nothing is the lesson that God teaches, for He takes the things that are not, when He has a great work to do.

Therefore let us know that a great need only magnifies God's gift. Instead of despairing when we cannot see the way to accomplish a necessary thing, remember that Christ Himself is the way. Yea, He is a "new and living way." With Him at hand, knowing His real presence, we do not need to be worried over "ways and means." When the Lord asked Philip how they could buy bread for the multitude, Philip might well have answered, "Lord, Thou knowest, for Thou art the Bread."

Christ "gave Himself for us," and the reality of the gift is demonstrated in the feeding of the multitude, for He literally gave Himself to them. But as He Himself said, He could do nothing of Himself. It was the Father dwelling in Him who did the works. He comes to dwell in believers, that they may be filled with the fulness of God, so that they may also do the same as He did. We see that the disciples did give the people bread, after all. They took it from Jesus, and gave it to the multitude. That is to show us that we may feed the hungry when we are in touch with Him. Let each servant of Christ take the bread of life fresh from Him, and pass it on.

As Christ gave Himself, so are we to give ourselves. This we can really do when we can say, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but, Christ liveth in me." Gal. ii. 20. He who does not give himself gives nothing, even though he bestows thousands of gold and silver. He who gives himself (and he can do it only by the grace of Christ dwelling in him), gives everything, that any soul can need, even though he has not a penny.

What will then follow?-The same thing that took place with Jesus. Multitudes ran after Him, because He gave them Himself. So "thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for He hath glorified thee." Isa. lv. 5. If He has glorified thee, then "the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. lx. 3.

All will receive abundantly, but there will be no waste. Doubtless there were many "unworthy" persons in the crowd that day. He fed them all; for He was the Son of the Highest, "who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust." Matt. v. 46. He even causes it to "rain on the earth where no man is; in the wilderness, wherein there is no man." Job xxxviii. 26. The ocean also, where there is no need of water, receives showers equally with the dry land. So lavish is God with His gifts. Yet there is no waste; for He draweth again all the drops of water to Himself. He gathers up the fragments, so that nothing is lost. All comes back to Him, to be again given forth. What if the

recipient be unworthy? Know that God does not ask you to give because He needs your help to supply the needy, but that you may be blessed in giving. If it were simply to see that somebody's wants were supplied, God could do that without your appearance on the scene. He allows you to share His work, that you may be partaker of His riches and joy; and this is accomplished for you, no matter what be the character of the one helped. So to him that gives shall there be given. That, which he imparts, namely the life of God, will come back to him again, to make him doubly rich. Thus may we be channels for the great stream of life that flows from God throughout all the universe, and returning to His bosom flows forth again ever fresh and new.

**"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Seeds" *The Present Truth* 15,
6.**

E. J. Waggoner

SEEDS

The very first thing that you look for, the first sign that the winter is over and the spring is here,-what is it? Wise king Solomon tells us what he says:-

"For, lo, the winter is past;
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth."

Long ago the Chinese put the same thought into this short and beautiful legend:-

"The flower opens, and, behold! another year."

First comes the pure and delicate snowdrop, looking almost like a living snowflake, or as if the mild breath of the spring,

"by some transforming power,
Had changed an icicle into a flower."

This is followed in turn by the crocus, the violet, the hyacinth, the primrose, and so on all through the year. Those of you who have gardens, and love to watch the sweet things growing there, know that each month brings some new beauties to adorn the British flower garden.

And not in the garden only, but in the woods, in the fields where by and by you will see the red clover, the waving corn and dancing oats, and in the orchards,-think of the richness, as well as the beauty, that is coming out of the earth.

Where does all this beauty and fruitfulness spring from? Perhaps some of you will remember some of the lessons we had together about seeds in the autumn, when we learned that the real seed, from which all other seeds have come, and from which everything in the earth is brought forth, is *the Word of God*. For in the beginning God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," trees, fruit, whose seed is in itself. So all the wonders springing from the ground are the visible Word of God,-God's Word made into forms that we can see and touch.

Your words, you know, express your thoughts; by them you are able to give out the thoughts that come into your mind. The Bible tells us that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so *is he*." So your words, which tell what you think in your heart, show just what you yourself are.

And it is just so with the words of God. They express His thoughts, and so show us *what He is*. And in all these beautiful forms into which God, by the power of His Word, has put his thoughts, He is making it possible for us to *see Him*, to learn of His nature.

There are a great many different seeds, for there are many, many thousands of different kinds of plants. Think of it! Each tiny seed has wrapped up in it a *thought of God*, and as it springs up and unfolds in leaf and bud and flower and fruit, we may read in it the thoughts of God, and so learn to know and love Him.

Be sure to sow some seeds this spring, if you can have ever so small a piece of ground, or only a window box or flower-pot to put them in. Think as you look at the little seeds before you put them in the earth, of the wonderful, powerful, beautiful life of God that is in them. And as you watch them spring up and grow, and unfold and develop, in these plants which are His visible Word God Himself will talk with you, telling you His thoughts and revealing Himself to you.

"Multiplying the Seed" *The Present Truth* 15, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

Did you ever think how much is wrapped up in one little seed that you can hold in your hand? Take a grain of wheat, for instance, and think what would come from it if at the proper time it should be put into good ground.

The Roman Governor and great naturalist Pliny tells of a single plant of corn that grew in Africa, with 340 stems, bearing 340 ears,-at least 10,000 grains of corn all springing from one seed!

As many as 12,780 grains have sprung from a single grain of the famous corn of Smyrna, called "the miraculous corn." This was indeed "miraculous corn," but so is every ear of corn that you have ever seen, or that has ever come from the ground. For is it not a wonderful miracle of the power of God that any seed should grow and multiply in this way?

When you hear about Jesus feeding a great multitude of people, more than five thousand, with only five loaves and two fishes, you think this a wonderful miracle, do you not? And perhaps you wish you could have been there to have seen Jesus doing this wonderful work, and to have tasted the bread that was made by His power.

Well, Jesus is doing the very same thing to-day. You *may* see Him at work, you *may* taste of the bread as He multiplies it for *you* by His power.

What makes the little grain of wheat that is sown in the ground in the Spring grow and spring up "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," bringing forth thirty, forty, sixty, and an hundredfold? It is the presence and life of Jesus in the seed,-His power working to-day just as it did nearly nineteen hundred years ago when He multiplied the loaves.

This is the Lord's usual way of multiplying the bread and feeding the multitude. Then is not the bread, made from the wheat, that you have upon your table every day, just as wonderful as the loaves with which Jesus fed the five thousand. And have you not just as much reason to give thanks to Him for it as they had?

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Remember, too, what Jesus said to the people after He had fed them, "I am the Bread of life." And this is what He is saying to us in the seed, the corn from which the bread is made with which He feeds us every day. For it is His life in the seed that makes it grow and bring forth fruit, and that gives us new life when we eat it.

So Jesus is feeding you continually with His own life. Think of this every time you eat the food that He gives you, and ask Him to use in His service, to His own glory, all the life and strength that he is giving to you day by day.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

-Tabby, the name of a peculiarly marked oat, was so called because its markings resembled those of a watered silk made at Atabi.

-It has been found in Switzerland that in building a railway, labourers could work only one-third as long at a height of 10,000 feet as a mile lower.

-Artificial legs and arms were in use in Egypt as early as B.C. 700. They were made by the priests, who were the physicians of that early time.

-The great Siberian railway is making Tapia progress. A powerful steam ferry will transport the trains across Lake Baikal. It is stated that 200,003 Russian emigrants settled in Siberia during 1898.

-Seven miles an hour is the camel's best pace, nor can it maintain this rate over two hours. Its usual speed is about five miles an hour-a slow, lounging pace, beyond which it is dangerous to urge them.

-The diminution of cost of production effected in modern times by the improvements in processes of manufacture is wonderful. Thus a gross of steel pens, which are sold to-day for half-a-crown, formerly cost 7 to produce.

-A large crowd assembled outside a Mormon meeting-house in Bristol, instigated by the Anti-Mormon League, and made a hostile demonstration. The situation became serious and the Mormons had to be rescued by the police.

-Mr. Eagan, the American Commissary General, who was court marshaled for making insulting references to General Miles, has been sentenced to dismissal from the service, but has been recommended to the mercy of the Executive.

-There is a plant in Jamaica called the life plant, because it is almost impossible to kill it. When a leaf is cut off and hung up by a string, it sends out white, thread like roots, gathers moisture from the air, and begins to grow new leaves.

-Reports received in Berlin state that the Turks have 30,000 picked troops on the Bulgarian and Servian frontiers in view of a possible rising in Macedonia. Russia's attitude in somewhat doubtful, conflicting statements having been made.

-The Egyptian reed, which was used for making the pens found in Egyptian tombs, is a hard variety, growing to about the diameter of an ordinary goose quill. Pens made from it last for a day or two, and are said to do excellent work.

-The Dreyfus case has been taken out of the hands of the Court that was trying it, and is to be brought before a Court consisting of all the judges of the Cour de Cassation. This is regarded as lessening the chances of Dreyfus being pronounced innocent.

-Towards the end of May a Congress of Specialists will meet in Berlin for the discussion of tuberculosis as the national disease, and for the consideration of the best methods of averting its ravages. Foreign Governments will be asked to send delegates.

-An advanced ritualistic church in the south of London spends ?250 a year on their choir, surplices, incense, etc., but at a recent sermon on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, their offertory amounted to only twelve shillings and sixpence.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

A Peace Crusade has been organised by Mr. W. T. Stead, and meetings are being held in many large cities with the view of quickening English enthusiasm for the Czar's peace proposals. Among the latest names which have been added to the movement are those of Lord Roberts, and Mr. W. H. Russell, the war correspondent. The latter writes:-

It is just because I have seen so much of the unutterable misery and desolation caused by war in the nine campaigns in which it has been my lot to be a camp follower that I would, with all my heart and soul, pray that the terrible temptation to settle quarrels by the arbitrament of the sword which is afforded by the great armies of the conscription should be resisted and overcome.

Mr. A. J. Balfour has caused considerable division in political and church circles by his proposal to establish a Roman Catholic University in Dublin. Many of his own party are bitterly opposed to the idea. What with this proposal, and the burning question of ritualism in the Church of England, it would seem that politicians will soon have their hands full in dealing with church matters. Some are blaming the Government for giving any recognition to Roman Catholic claims, but at the same time are calling for forcible intervention to restrain ritualism in the church. They object to political interference with matters of religion, except which they hope to gain by it.

The only way to have pure religion and undefiled before God is to keep unspotted from the world. James i. 27. Politics are all right in their place, but they do not con corn the relation which God has established between Himself and men. When those who profess the service of Christ, and even to be ministers of the Gospel, concern themselves with affairs of worldly government, they show that they have less faith in the words of Christ. "I have given then, Thy word; and the world hath hated them. Because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." John xvii. 14.

The friendship of the world is still enmity with God. James iv. 4. The Lord does not say that the world will change for the better, and that the conditions of things will be so vastly improved over what it was when He was upon earth, that His instructions, then given, will become obsolete, and His servants may with advantage concern themselves with politics. He warns us that the last days will be specially perilous times. It is true that men will have a form of godliness, but this will only increase the peril, for "evil man and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. iii. 1-13.

We may be sure, therefore, from the Word of God, that when any perils arise which seem to threaten His church, whether Roman Catholic aggression, Ritualistic practices, or any other evil, the remedy will not be found by appealing to the institutions of the world, for redress and help. Such a resort should not enter into the mind of a Christian. What then, shall we suffer these evils to grow and crush the church of Christ?

In the first place, it will not prevent the evils, but will only increase them, to invoke the assistance of the world from whose spirit the whole trouble arises. In the second place, God is well able to keep that which is committed unto Him. He could preserve the apostolic church in the face of bitter persecution, and He is still able to keep His sheep so that none can pluck them out of His hand. But His people have become proud and lifted up, and they do not love His way because it is a humble one. Paul's message to the churches, "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," would not be well received now. As soon as a shadow of tribulation appears, or even a prospect of unequal distribution of the world's favours, there is an immediate outcry and an appeal to earthly powers for protection and help.

Yet in times of peril and persecution, God's people, by turning to Him with all the heart, might find the help and strength they vainly seek from the State. "If, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again: when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1 Pet. ii. 20, 24. This is the attitude Christ's church should occupy at the present time, on every question for which they now seek the aid of Parliament, for it is the example of their Lord and Master. It worked out all right in His case, and if the servants are content to be as their Master, God will show Himself strong in their behalf. If they are not content to be as their Master they are not worthy of Him.

The *Catholic Times* states that the Pope at the instance of a well-known French priest, has issued a Brief granting special indulgences to those who read the Bible and says,-

This act is, in our opinion, one of the most important that has taken place in the course of a Pontificate filled with facts of far-reaching importance. Not that there is any basis for the Protestant charge that Catholics do not read the Bible; but the reading of the sacred text will undoubtedly be promoted in an

extraordinary degree by the concession of the spiritual privileges which the Pope has now granted.

The mere reading of the Bible to earn "spiritual privileges" which come from another source will profit nobody. The Word itself is Spirit and life. When men receive it, as it is in deed and in truth, the Word of God, it will work effectually in them (2 Thess. ii. 13), and by its exceeding great and precious promises they are made partakers of the Divine nature. 2 Pet. i. 4. It is to be hoped, however, that men who may be led to read the Scriptures by the Pope's Brief will discover their true character, and find in them spiritual privileges which are real ones, and not false promises.

A writer in the *Youth's Companion* complains of the ignorance of the Bible which prevails so widely amongst young, and gives several illustrations of it. One of these reveals an ignorance which is indeed lamentable.

I once asked a graduating class of young men in college, said a teacher, why the Jews kept Saturday as the Sabbath, while Christians observe the Sunday. Not one could tell me, and yet the majority of them undoubtedly belonged to church-going families.

But the ignorance is on the part of the teacher, not the scholars. They could not be expected to answer from the Bible a question on which the Bible has nothing to say. If the teacher had not been so ignorant of the Bible himself, he would have known that it gives no reason whatever why Christians should observe Sunday, instead of the Sabbath of the Lord, the only Lord's Day, which was sanctified in Eden, commanded from Sinai, and kept by Christ and His apostles.

February 15, 1899

"The Earth's Interest in Redemption. Isa. xlix. 13-23" *The Present Truth* 16, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlix. 13-23.)

"Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted.

"But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

"Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even

now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me; give place to me, that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up My standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me."

DIFFERENT CALLS TO THE EARTH AND HEAVENS

This is not the first time that earth and heaven have been called upon to take part in something pertaining to men in their relation to God. In the first chapter of Isaiah we read, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me." The call is very much more emphatic in the second chapter of Jeremiah: "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Jer. ii. 12, 13. In Deut. xxxii. 1-3 the heavens and earth are called upon to listen to the good doctrine which the Lord imparts to His rebellious children. But in the text before us the heavens are called upon to sing, and the earth to be joyful, and the mountains to break forth into singing, because the Lord hath redeemed His people.

THE EARTH'S EXISTENCE DEPENDS ON THE GOSPEL

It is easy to see that the heavens and earth are deeply concerned in man's salvation, since they are called in to witness every step in the transgression, and in the progress of redemption. Not only so, but they tremble with terror at the sight of man's causeless rebellion, and sing for joy when he is brought back saved. From these things we can see that the stability of the heavens and the earth depends upon the success of God's work of saving men. "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." Rom. viii. 19-21. When God comes to Judgment, the heavens and the earth shall shake, the heavens shall depart as a scroll when it is rolled together (Rev. vi. 14), and the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, because of the transgression that is on it (Isa. xxiv. xx);

but when God's people come to their own land in peace, the mountains will greet them with songs of rejoicing, and all the trees of the forest will clap their hands in delight. Isa. lv. 12.

THE EARTH GIVEN TO MAN

Why is all this?-The answer opens to us a fine, large truth, which is full of encouragement to every soul. In the beginning the Lord laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of His hands (Heb. i. 10), and at the same time He made man, and crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of His hands, that is, over the heavens and the earth. Heb. ii. 6-8. "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Gen. i. 27, 28. But all things are not under him now. Nevertheless, man having been placed in authority in the beginning, as the ruler of the things that God has made, so far as they have intimate connection with this planet, it must needs be that they can of right have no other ruler than man; because "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Eccl. iii. 14. God never takes back a gift; He never undoes what He has once done; He is never forced to retreat from any position that He has taken. Should such a thing ever be necessary, it would show that He was not supreme and all-wise. Man, therefore, has been placed in authority over this earth, once for all.

THE EARTH LOST

But behold, what a sad state of things has occurred. Man, the ruler, has lost control of himself; he can no longer control his own body or spirit, much less the heavens and earth. Therefore they are left without a ruler, so far as man is concerned. That is why we see earthquakes, and disturbances in the heavens; and the nearer we approach the end, and as the wickedness of man increases, the greater and more frequent are these disturbances. Creation is groaning in pain because of man's sin. If it should be that the redemption which is in Christ Jesus should fail, and men should not be saved, then the earth would have been created in vain, that is, for chaos, for nothingness. See Isa. xl. 17-19. We are sometimes told that God could have destroyed man at once, as soon as Adam sinned, and could have peopled the earth with another race of beings. Those who say that, do not understand the works and gifts of God. He could not have destroyed man without destroying the earth also. They both belong together. One was created for the other. In the days of Noah, when the earth was corrupt, because all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth, God said, "The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Gen. vi. 12, 13. When man is

destroyed, the earth must perish with him. God's word made them both in the beginning, and placed the earth under the dominion of man; the same word destroyed them both together in the flood; and "the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter iii. 7. "Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This is the reason why the heavens and earth mourn when man falls, and rejoice when he is redeemed. Their salvation is bound up with man's.

THE UNIVERSE PLEDGED FOR MAN'S REDEMPTION

But this is not the whole story. "When God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself; . . . for men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife, wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, wherein it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolidation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." Heb. iv. 13-18. God is the One whose great power upholds the earth and heavens. His ability to hold them up is given as the reason why His people need not be discouraged, but always be strong. See Isa. xl. 26-31. The word which created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, and which now upholds them, is the same word that brings salvation to man. In swearing by Himself, God placed the heavens and the earth in the balance against man's salvation. If "the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation," should fail, then the heavens and the earth would fail. Not only would they be deprived of man's sovereignty, but God's word having been broken, they would be no longer under His dominion, and would at once vanish into nothing. But they will not be annihilated, because God's word cannot fail. He "cannot lie." This is our "strong consolation." The weakest and meanest soul on earth has this consolation in fleeing to Christ for refuge. He may know that if God should refuse to pardon him, and give him overcoming grace, the heavens and earth would instantly cease to be. If he asks in faith, and does not instantly hear the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds, he may know that his prayer is answered, and that his sins are forgiven. Then let men join in the song of the starry host, and shout for joy over the fact that God "hath visited and redeemed His people."

GOD CANNOT FORGET HIS PEOPLE

Who has not heard the complaint, almost in the identical words, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me"? Impossible. "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands." In the hands of the Lord are the prints of the nails that fixed Him to the cross. But it was our sins that nailed him there. It was our sins that He bore on the tree. Therefore we are crucified with Him, and in the nail prints He sees us. It is not simply a few people who "belong to church,"

that the Lord remembers; but every sinner on earth is engraved upon His hands, carried in His heart. Zion's walls are continually before Him. What are her walls?-"Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Isa. xxvi. 1. Salvation, the salvation of sinners is continually before the Lord, for "with His stripes we are healed." He has reminded Himself of mankind, and of each individual, in such a way that He cannot possibly forget.

THE STORY OF ZION

Zion is here represented as speaking. Where is Zion?-It is the place where the sanctuary of God was built, in Jerusalem. That place is now forsaken, and desolate, given over to strangers. The city of Jerusalem, and its temple, might have stood for ever, if the people had obeyed the Lord; for that was the promise of God. See Jer. xvii. 24, 25. But they disobeyed. They slew those who foretold the coming of the Just One, and when He came they betrayed and murdered Him. So Christ, just before His crucifixion, said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. xxiii. 37-39. Forsaken it is indeed, but not for ever. Nay, it is not really forsaken at all; because as we have just read, its walls are continually before Him. Christ is anointed upon the holy hill of Zion, in "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." That city is yet to come down "from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. xxi. 1, 2. Its adornment will be her inhabitants, "the nations of them that are saved," "for Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Gal. iv. 26.

When the city is restored, and her children "come again to their own border," "from the land of the enemy" (Jer. xxxi. 15-17), there will be so many more inhabitants than old Jerusalem ever had, that they will say, "The place is too strait for me; give place for me that I may dwell." A few hundred thousand people inhabited old Jerusalem at the time of its greatest prosperity, but the New Jerusalem will be peopled by a "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." Rev. vii. 9. Of the enlarging of the place of the city, to make room for its great increase of population, we read in Zech. xiv. 1-5. When the Lord goes forth to fight against the nations that fight Jerusalem, "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley."

Of the greatness of the valley thus formed we can get some idea when we read that "the city lieth four square, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with a reed, twelve thousand furlongs." Rev. xxi. 16. Taking this at the smallest, that is, not as the length of each side, but as the distance round the city, we find that it will be three hundred and seventy-five miles

square,-a very fair sized city. It is not generally supposed that all of the inhabitants of any country will be able to find room in its capital; but the New Jerusalem will be so large that it could contain every person that as ever been born since the days of Adam; so that none will have been crowded out for lack of room. It will therefore hold all the inhabitants of the new earth, as they come up from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, to worship before God. Isa. lxvi. 22, 23.

THE INHABITANTS OF ZION

Who will inhabit this city?-The answer is, Israel. The city has twelve gates, three on each side, and on these gates are "the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." Rev. xxi. 12. All who enter that city will have to enter as members of some one of the tribes of Israel. Read verses 21, 22 of the lesson, and then read Acts xv. 16, 17: "After this I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." And this is done by visiting the Gentiles, "to take out of them a people for His name." Verses 13, 15. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles to come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Rom. xi. 25, 26. Israel is now scattered amongst all the nations. That is, there are in all nations on earth some who will allow ungodliness to be turned away from them, and that will constitute them Israel, and they will dwell in the New Jerusalem. "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." Matt. viii. 11, 12. Who will come to the standard which God sets up for the people? All who will, may come, and none who come will ever be put to shame or confusion because of their confidence.

"A Sabbath-Day's Lesson. Jesus Rejected at Nazareth. Luke iv. 16-30" ***The Present Truth 16, 7.***

E. J. Waggoner

We hear a great deal about the example of the apostles, and of that of the Christian church in the early centuries; and many people think that if we can but find out what they did, we have no need to look further to find out what we ought to do. But the greatest apostle of all tells up that the apostles are but ministers a through whom the word of the Lord comes, and that "neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." 2 Cor. iii. 5-7. He tells us that it is no difference who anybody is, "God accepteth no man's person" (Gal. ii. 6); and he openly rebuked Peter, because he had led many of the Jews, who followed his example, into dissimulation, contrary to the truth of the Gospel. Verses 11-14. As for the church, even from the very days of the

apostles until modern times, its history has been one of apostasy, and of persecution of those who steadfastly held to the plain Word of God. Where then can we look to know what course we ought to pursue?—The answer is plain: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. xxix. Then we have the living manifestation of the Word, in Jesus of Nazareth, who left us "an example, that ye should follow in His steps." 1 Peter ii. 21. "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." 1 John ii. 6.

THE CUSTOM OF JESUS

Our course therefore is clear, and in the lesson before us we have a statement of one of the ways of Jesus. "He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke iv. 16. If we intend to "follow in His steps" it is certain that we ought also to regard the Sabbath day. "In His steps" has been used as a title to a book that has been sold by the hundred thousand, so that the people are very familiar with the phrase; and "What would Jesus do?" has been asked many times of late; but here we find what Jesus really did, and so there is an end to all doubt as to what we ought to do in order to follow in His steps. For it

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is certain that if Jesus were on earth today He would do exactly the same that He did when He was here nearly nineteen hundred years ago.

WHAT DAY IS THE SABBATH?

There is no room for question as to what day it was when Jesus went into the synagogue to worship, according to His custom. It was the day on which the Jews had regular worship. That day was and is the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday. It is the last day of the week, and in the cycle is immediately followed by the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday. The day which is now almost universally devoted to business, being to many the busiest day of the week, is the day which in the beginning was sanctified by God as the day of rest and worship; and He "who is the Beginning," kept it sacredly. The commandment that is given to us is the old commandment which was from the beginning. We have all wandered from the right way, and are called upon to seek the old paths, and to walk in them. The old paths are the steps of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting.

THE SABBATH UNCHANGED

We are told that after His resurrection Jesus changed the day of rest and worship from the seventh to the first day of the week. Is there anybody who really believes that at the very last of His earthly ministry Jesus deliberately undid all that He had done in the preceding years? What a fearful charge of inconsistency that is to bring against the Son of God! He said in the hearing of multitudes,

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. v. 17-19. Yet in the face of this plain declaration, there are those who will tell us that Jesus Himself changed the fourth commandment, and taught men to violate it! Surely they know not what they do" If it were so, then Jesus, according to His own words, would be the least in the kingdom of heaven, instead of being Lord of all.

"SAVED BY THE LIPS OF JESUS"

It is by the death of Christ that we are brought to God, and reconciled to Him; but we are "saved by His life." Rom. v. 10. When we die in Christ, which is the giving up of our own ways, and our own ideas and prejudices and wishes, we become one with the Father and the Son; then the life of Jesus,-the same life that He lived when here on earth, in Nazareth and elsewhere,-abiding in us, saves us from all lapses into sin. He is the Righteous One, and only His righteousness, His right doing, His obedience to the law, in us is of any value.

ONLY ONE LIFE

Some one will tell us that "Jesus was a Jew," and that therefore He naturally did as the Jews did, but that it is not by His life as a Jew that we are to be saved. That is to reject Jesus entirely as Lord; for all His life long He was the Son of David, and He was crucified as King of the Jews. The wise men came to worship Him in His infancy, as King of the Jews, and the same title was hung upon His cross. Jesus did not live a double life; He had only one life, and He gives that to us. The "same Jesus" who was crucified, rose again, and ascended to heaven, and will come again. Whosoever therefore rejects the life of Jesus before His crucifixion, rejects His sacrifice and His coming to reign. He Himself has said that "salvation is of the Jews" (John iv. 22), because He who is our salvation is the seed of Abraham. There is no way of escape from this conclusion, and nobody ought to wish to escape from it, that if we are to follow Christ, walking in His steps, we must come back to "that which was from the beginning."

BIBLE TERMS NOT OBSOLETE

But the lesson here as to the Sabbath is not alone from the example of Christ, important as that is. Here we have a book written many years after the resurrection of Jesus, by a Christian, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for Christians to the end of time, and in it the day on which the Jews assembled for worship is called "the Sabbath day." If there had been any change, is it not most wonderfully strange that Jesus Himself did not say a single word about it, and

that the writers of the New Testament, writing many years after His resurrection and ascension, gave not the slightest hint about the matter? If the seventh day had been superseded by the first day of the week, Luke would have said something like this: "On the day which was at that time observed as the Sabbath, Jesus went into the synagogue." How easy it would have been to let us know of the change, if any such change had taken place. If it had taken place, we may be sure that the Lord would have told us about it. The simple facts of the case are these: There is a commandment forbidding the doing of ordinary labour on the seventh day of the week (Ex. xx. 8-11); and the transgression of the law is sin. 1 John iii. 4. On the other hand there is not the slightest trace of any law for the observance of the first day of the week, and "where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. iv. 15. To disregard the Sabbath is therefore a sin, while to do any sort of honest labour on the first day of the week is perfectly right and proper.

FAITH RECEIVES FAVOURS

We have left ourselves but little space to speak of this time of that which Jesus did and said on the Sabbath day under consideration; but if we learn this first lesson thoroughly, all the rest will come very easily. The passage from Isaiah will come in due time in our lessons from that book. That which is taught by the references to the widow of Sarepta, and to Naaman the Syrian, is that every one who is humble and receptive will be saved. It is the same lesson that is taught in the account of the centurion who wished Jesus to speak the word, that his servant might be healed, and of whom Jesus said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." Matt. viii. 11-13. Jesus will do mighty works wherever there is a desire to profit by them, but not merely for the sake of silencing carping criticism. He could not do many mighty works in His own country, because of the unbelief of the people (Matt. xiii. 54-58), and He would not perform a miracle to gratify the curiosity of Herod. Luke xxiii. 8, 9.

BLINDNESS OF UNBELIEF

What a fearfully blinding thing prejudice is! When Jesus first spoke, the people were involuntarily touched by the words of grace that came from His lips, and they "all bare Him witness" by the customary

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"Amen." But very soon they began to question among themselves, "Who is this man, that he should say such things? We know him well, as well as his mother and brethren. He is only the carpenter's son, and yet he professes to have a message that will set everybody free; who is he, that he should presume to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah?" And thus they put from them the Gospel of their salvation. For of a truth, Jesus made no pretensions at all. The same message

that He bore that Sabbath day, He has commissioned His followers to bear. "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Acts xiii. 47. They might not only have been set free that day, but all that were in the house might have gone forth with shouts of rejoicing to bear the glad news of freedom to others. Instead of that, they sought to kill the One to whose gracious words they had but just before borne witness. Surely the "sentiment of the people" is a very fickle thing.

"KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD"

"And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. But He passing through the midst of them went His way." Jesus allowed Himself to be led to the brow of the hill, but that was all. Then He did the very mighty work that they had wished to see wrought in their own country. He passed "through the midst" of the angry crowd who were seeking His life, and went His way. They had no power over Him. They could not kill Him, because His work was not done. Some one has said that "every man is immortal until his work is accomplished;" this is not true, for every man in this world is mortal until the Lord comes. But it is true that every mortal man who has committed himself fully into the hands of God, is proof against death until he has finished the work that God has sent him to do. Therefore instead of saying, "I am so feeble that I cannot work, and I believe that I shall not live long," the servant of the Lord ought rather to say, "I have work yet to do, and therefore I am going to have health and strength to do it." "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord."

"A Prophecy Fulfilling" *The Present Truth* 16, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Church Family Newspaper* say:-

The long-range the magazine rifles, the long-range gun, and smokeless powder have given an advantage to defence never known before. The increase of range, combined with the greater rapidity of fire, make one man in a trench with plenty of ammunition worth more than ten men a few years ago. This means that the number of men required to man trenches efficiently can be enormously decreased.

The *Daily Chronicle* says to the same affect: "If this war teaches anything, it is that modern weapons have levelled the intelligent civilian with the trained soldier. What is chiefly required nowadays to turn a citizen into a fighting man is a good rifle and the capacity to dig a trench."

This plainly indicates the near fulfilment of the prophecy in Joel: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war drawn nearer; let them come up; beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong." Joel iii. 9, 10. With

modern weapons the weak man can do a hundred times as much as the strongest man could with the weapons in use in ancient times; and thus the way is preparing for all to engage in the battle of the great day of the Lord.

"The Child Moses" *The Present Truth* 16, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

Good many of our talks lately have taken us down into Egypt where Joseph was first a captive and afterwards ruler. You remember that all the family of Jacob, the children of Israel, came into Egypt during the famine, and Pharaoh gave them land for themselves and their families. "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph."

This new Pharaoh was afraid when he saw the children of Israel so many and on strong. All thought that they were "more and mightier" than the Egyptians themselves, and in time of war they might join themselves to their enemies, and fight against Egypt.

So he "set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens," and gave them very hard, heavy work to do, thinking that this would kill some of them, and weaken the others, and they would not increase so fast, nor be so strong. In this however, he was disappointed, for hard work does not hurt anyone, but makes people strong and healthy. The Egyptians found this out when they tried to kill the Israelites with hard labour; for "the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew."

Then Pharaoh thought of a very wicked and cruel plan; he charged all his people that they should kill every little baby boy that God gave to the Israelites, but they might save the little girls alive.

Hundreds of years before this God had told Abraham that his descendants should go into Egypt, and he brought into bondage there; but He said also that after four hundred years He would bring them up again into the land of Canaan. Now the time for them to be delivered was drawing near, and Satan wanted to hinder God's purpose, and to prevent Him raising up a deliverer for them. So he was working through Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to have all the baby boys killed.

But when Moses, the one whom God had chosen, was born, his mother hid him carefully where the Egyptians could not find him, and was able to keep him in this way for three months. But as the baby grew and became strong, and his cries got louder, she knew she could not keep him hidden much longer. We are told that it was "*by faith*" that Moses' parents hid him, and "were not afraid of the king's commandment." They trusted that God would keep and save the child, and He did.

When Moses' mother could not hide him any longer, she took a little watertight ark made of bulrushes, and putting the child inside, she laid it in the flags at the edge of the river. Moses' little sister Miriam waited by the river, and watched to see what would become of the baby.

In a little while she saw Pharaoh's daughter coming to bathe in the river, and her maidens were walking along by the river's edge. Soon she saw the little ark, and as it was covered, she could not see what was inside, so she sent her maid to fetch it. When she opened it, she was surprised to see a sweet little baby boy. Most likely the child had been asleep, and waking up hungry to see only a strange face bending over him, "the babe wept."

God touched the heart of the king's daughter with pity for the beautiful child. She knew that he was an Israelite, and that his mother had taken this way to try to save his life, and she determined that he should not be thrown into the river to perish, like the rest of the babies.

But what was she to do with the little one? Just then Miriam, who had been watching all the time, and could see that she had pity for her little brother, came to her and said, "Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?" She was told to go, and of course ran home quickly and fetched "the child's mother."

Pharaoh's daughter said to Moses' mother, "Take the child, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." But she did not seem to know that she was hiring a mother, and paying her wages, to feed and take care of her own little one.

Here again, just as in the history of Joseph's life, we see how wonderfully God works to carry out His own purposes. He had chosen Moses, that through him He might deliver the children of Israel from their Egyptian bondage. Then came the decree of Pharaoh that all the baby boys should be killed, and it seemed that Moses must perish with the rest.

But instead of this God used this very decree to bring Moses to the notice of Pharaoh's daughter, for if it had not been for this, his mother would not have put him by the river. Through the king's daughter, God provided the means for Moses to be properly nourished and clothed and educated.

During the years that Moses' mother had him with her, she taught him very carefully of the God of his fathers, the only true God, so that he should not afterwards become a worshipper of the idols, the false gods, that the Egyptians served. He knew how God had watched over and saved him, and he understood that by his hand God would deliver the children of Israel from the Egyptians.

When Moses was old enough to leave his mother, he was taken into the king's palace and brought up by Pharaoh's daughter, who looked upon him as her own son. But he did not forget that he

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belonged to the people of God, and that God had a work for him to do for them. He became "mighty in word and deed," and "learned, in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."

But this was not the training that fitted him for his life work. He had other lessons to learn that he could not learn in Pharaoh's palace, and so God led him away from there into a place where He could teach him. How He did this, and what the result was we shall see at another time.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 16, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

- During last year 119 lives were lost in London by fire.
- The smallpox epidemic at Hull cost the people of that city nearly ?50,000.
- A serious scourge of the foot and mouth disease has broken out among the cattle in Norfolk.
- Two thousand tins of canned fruit, fish, and milk have been seized at a store in Bride-street, Barnsbury, and destroyed by order of the Clerkenwell Bench.
- Plague bacilli have been found in the glands and other organs of dead rats found in Adelaide, and the fear is rife that the scourge is thus likely to be propagated.
- The new naval programme framed by the French Minister of Marine provides for the construction of thirty-four submarine boats and vessels which can be submerged at will.
- Nearly ?16,000,000 was given by Americans, during 1899, to religious, charitable, and educational institutions. No such sum was ever given before in the whole history of the country.
- The cup which Sir Thomas Lipton sought to win back from America in the yacht races at New York several weeks since, originally cost about ?102. But it is said that ever ?8,000,000 has been spent to win it.
- In view of the loss arising from the spread of the Asiatic plague, the Italian ministry has suggested to the European Governments the holding of a new International Sanitary Conference, to meet, as previously, at Venice.
- At a meeting of spinners engaged in the worsted trade, in Bradford, the 3rd inst., 106 firms were represented, and plans were laid for the formation of a combine, with ?18,000,000 capital.
- The text of a secret edict issued by the Empress-Dowager of China is made public, in which she counsels the resistance of aggression on the part of foreign powers at the price of war.
- The outlay of the American Government in connection with the Spanish-American War is very great. It is said that pensions will have to be granted in 30,000 cases, which does not include soldiers still fighting in the Philippines.
- A news vendor was the other day fined in a London Police Court seven days' imprisonment for crying false war news. What a pity it is that some of the newspapers who publish false war and other news could not be subjected to a like punishment.
- Turkey has been engaged in war 38 years of the present century, considerably more than one-third of the time; Spain comes next, with 31 years of war; France has 27 years; Russia, 24; Italy, 23; England, 21; Austria, 17; Holland, 14; and Germany, 13.
- The Mansion House War Fund now amounts to ?675,000. Dr. Barnardo has informed the Lord Mayor that 1,000 or more places will be reserved in his homes for the free admission of destitute children of soldiers, sailors, or civilians who may be killed in the war.

-According to the *Echo de Paris*, one of the greatest attractions of the Exhibition will be a huge diamond, bigger than the Koh-i-noor, which was found in the De Beers mine shortly before the War began. The stone has been insured, says the *Echo de Paris*, for ?400,000.

-While separating some wild beasts after a fight at Madrid before a large audience, a tamer fired an old gun loaded with small shot, and wounded twenty-one spectators. The entire press is said to have denounced these fights, and the Government will advise their prohibition.

-The number of deaths at Bombay from the plague on Tuesday, February 7, amounted to 408. That was a record day, the highest number in any previous day being 392. Plague and smallpox are raging, and the position of affairs is aggravated by the advent of famine refugees.

-Gheel, a market town in Belgium, has 10,000 inhabitants, 2,000 of whom are lunatics. The reason for this is that in the thirteenth century a bishop of Antwerp began sending lunatics to Gheel because there was there a shrine of St. Dymphna, patron saint of the mentally diseased, and the custom has since been continued.

-There seems to be a little abatement in the ravages of influenza in London, but in other cities the epidemic is alarmingly on the increase. In some places the Board schools have been closed, churches have discontinued services, and the capacity of physicians, both private and public, has been taxed to its utmost. It is remarkable the number of people in high social and professional rank that have been claimed as its victims.

-Nikola Tesla, the celebrated electrician, claims to have completed his experiments in wireless telegraphy, whereby he will soon be able to communicate from New York to every city in the world, and he hopes to attain a speed of from 1,500 to 2,000 words a minute. A Professor and his assistant in the Western University of Pennsylvania (U.S.A.), working on somewhat different lines, have invented an instrument for receiving wireless telegraphy two thousand times more sensitive than the one invented by Marconi, and claims that it, too, when perfected will transmit messages without any wire across the Atlantic.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 16, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

It is impossible for anybody to do anything that he doesn't think he can do; and nobody thinks that he can do the thing that he does not wish to do; but "all things are possible to him that believeth."

"Nobody cares, or gives me any credit when I do well." How many a child has thought and said this, often with too much truth as far as its parents or guardians were concerned, because they could never appreciate honest effort and success, or else thought it a sin to award the encouragement of a hearty "well done!" But it is not alone the small children who long for a little sympathy, and a few words of appreciation. Who has not sometimes felt almost discouraged in a good work, because nobody seemed to care.

From ourselves we are to learn of others. If we long for words of encouragement and cheer, we must know that others have the same longing, for human nature is always the same; and so from our own lack we may be able to supply the want of others. Here is a case where our own emptiness may prove a storehouse full of blessing for others; for knowing by experience how people long for an inspiring word, we can do our part toward seeing that they do not suffer for it as we have. So the more we have lacked, the more may we fill another.

But we need not lack, even though no one recognises our labours, or appreciates our work. Do we not count God anybody? Is He nothing to us? He says: "I know thy works, and thy toil and patience;" and again: "I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and patience, and that thy last works are more than the first." Rev. ii. 2-19. He keeps watch of us all the time, and marks every step of our progress. Is this nothing to you? Do you reckon Him less than a man? If we always had a proper knowledge and sense of the Lord's reality, and His personal presence, we should not be at all downcast, though we never heard an encouraging word from man. "I have set the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved." "Beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." "God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love."

The Supplementary Army Estimate that has been issued, shows that, in consequence of the War, the amount of money now wanted is ?13,000,000, and the number of additional men to be provided for is ?120,000.

The *Daily Mail* reports that, while crossing Parliament Fields on Friday last, a man saw five sparrows with their claws firmly frozen to a low branch of thorn. The poor creatures were released by the expedient of blowing on their frozen feet. Yet in spite of the unusual cold, the sparrows fill the air with music each morning. Though five sparrows be sold for two farthings, not one of them is forgotten by God.

The *Youth's Companion* (Boston, U. S. A.) in noting the fact that there were 107 lynchings in the United States last year, says that the record "is even more depressing than the record of crime in general; for crime discloses the depravity of individuals; while lynch law reveals whole communities swayed by passion, and given over to lawlessness." It sees, however, "a glimmer of light in the year's record," in the fact that the list of lynchings is the smallest for fifteen years!

It is now stated that the drinking of eau-de-cologne is becoming quite common among fashionable neurotic women. *The Hospital* says "there can be no doubt that the habit grows until it becomes absolutely a form of the drink craving." That journal says that occasionally an inebriate, who appears to be recovering from the drink habit, and who appears to be making good progress will say that he-or more frequently she-never touches any strong drink; yet all the time she is drinking eau-de-cologne, "unconscious that the new stimulant is as dangerous as the old one."

Another fashionable stimulant just now is camphor, which is said to give the consumer a creamy complexion, but the habit grows upon one rapidly, cannot easily be shaken off and has a very bad effect upon the body.

It is a common notion that the craving for stimulants is the expression of a natural want of the system; but the fact is that the body does not need anything that is injurious, and every form of stimulant is harmful, and only harmful. The increasing demand for stimulation is an indication that the ordinary food and habits of eating are faulty; for a properly nourished body never craves a stimulant.

We are all absolutely dependent upon God. How many times we say this, but do not realise it. If we could but think of ourselves as a handful of dust, that we have no more power even to think anything of ourselves than the dust of the street has, but that everything we do that is really of any value is God taking that dust and animating it to do His will, then would the will of God be done in us as it is in heaven; then should we recognise Him as supreme.

Quite recently a Wolverhampton barber was convicted under the Sunday Trading Act of Charles II., which prohibits tradesmen, artificers, workmen, and labourers from pursuing their ordinary calling on Sunday. He appealed, his counsel contending that he did not belong to any one of these classes, and the Court of the Queen's Bench sustained his appeal, holding that the Act did not apply to barbers. What a strange condition, to have a law on the statute books, which puts all fair-minded judges at their wits' end to evade it!

We are often told, by those who would make us believe that the world is growing better, that the increase in armaments, and the greater effectiveness of modern weapons, are peace factors, in that people will be afraid to go to war. Last year, a Frenchman, M. Bloch, published a book on war, entitled, "Is War Impossible," the ground being taken that it is, on account of the marvellous range of modern rifle fire. But, unfortunately for his theory, the Transvaal War immediately followed; and now the author, adapting himself to the situation, has re-issued his book, with another title, and shows that with modern weapons the civilian is as good a soldier as the regular. Thus it is admitted that the more effective and deadly the weapons, the more general will war be; and that is what anybody might have known beforehand.

February 16, 1899

**"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Power and Glory of the Kingdom. Isa. viii.
19-12; ix. 1-6" *The Present Truth* 15, 7.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. viii. 19-23, ix. 1-6, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

19. And when they shall say unto you:

Seek unto the necromancers and the wizards;

To them that speak inwardly, and that

mutter:

Should not a people seek unto their God?

Should not they seek, instead of the living, unto

the dead?

20. Unto the command, and unto the testimony,
let them seek;
If they will not speak according to this word,
In which there is no obscurity,

21. Every one of them shall pass through the
land distressed and famished;
And when he shall be famished, and angry
with himself,
He shall curse his king and his god.

22. And he shall cast his eyes upwards, and look
down to the earth,
And lo! distress and darkness!
Gloom, tribulation, and accumulated darkness!

23. But there shall not hereafter be darkness in
the land which was distressed,
In the former time He debased
The land of Zebulon, and the land of Naph-
thali;
But in the latter time He hath made it
glorious;
Even the way of the sea, beyond Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles.

1. The people that walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
They that dwelled in the land of the shadow
of death,
Unto them hath the light shined.

2. Thou hast multiplied the nation, Thou hast
increased their joy;
They rejoice before Thee as with the joy of
harvest;
As they rejoice who divide the spoil.

3. For the yoke of his burden, the staff laid on
his shoulder,
The rod of his oppressor, hast Thou broken,
as in the day of Midian.

4. For the graves of the armed warrior in the
conflict,
And the garment rolled in much blood,
Shall be for a burning, even for a fuel of fire.

5. For unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is
given;
And the Government shall be upon His
shoulder;
And His name shall be called Wonderful,
Counsellor,

The Mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of peace.

6. Of the increase of His Government and peace there shall be no end,
Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom,
To fix it, and to establish it,
With judgment and with justice, henceforth and for ever;
The zeal of Jehovah God of Hosts will do this.

It will be noticed that in Lowth's translation, which is here printed, the chapter division is not the same as in our common version. The eighth chapter is given twenty-three verses, so that what we ordinarily call the seventh verse of the ninth chapter is here the sixth. Some other versions follow this division, which is according to that in the Hebrew Bible. But both amount to the same thing however, since it is clearly to be seen that there is no break in the subject, and in the prophecy as originally written there was no division whatever into chapters and verses. The scripture is just the same whether it be called eighth or ninth chapter, and attention is here called to the fact of the difference in numbering the verses, so that none may be confused.

"When they shall say unto you, Seek ...unto wizards." The meaning of the word "wizard" is "one who knows." The Hebrew word rendered "wizard" is merely a form of the verb "to know." Of course people would not be exhorted to seek to them who did not profess to know. But if they know, why not seek to them? Because they do not know. Their knowledge is foolishness. They "speak inwardly;" their knowledge is of themselves, and not from God. It is not the wisdom that comes from above. God "frustrateth the tokens of liars, and maketh diviners mad;" He "turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolishness." Isa. xlv. 25.

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"The Lord giveth wisdom, out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 6. In Christ are "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. ii. 3. The place to go for wisdom is to the Fountain Head, and not to any man, even though he got his wisdom from God. God gives to *all* liberally. Much less should we go to those who speak from themselves. For remember that wisdom is a gift from God. Truth is *revealed*, not searched out by human shrewdness. No man knows the place where light dwelleth, but light springs forth, and we see it. Even so with truth, which is light, we get it merely by looking-looking to God and His Word. The man who thinks that he can "originate thought," will find out at the last that his supposed thought was emptiness. Only the thoughts of God shall stand.

But if we should not seek wisdom from living men, not even from ourselves, how utterly foolish to go to the dead for wisdom. "The dead know not anything." Eccl. ix. 5. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. cxlvi. 3-4. We pity the folly of poor heathen who ask wisdom

from a piece of wood or stone; but what shall be said of the foolishness of men calling themselves enlightened Christians, who go to the dead for knowledge? What an insult to God!

"To the law and to the testimony." Because "the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Ps. xix. 7-8. "Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies." Ps. cxix. 98. "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." Job. xxviii. 28. The Lord gives wisdom, but not apart from Himself in Christ. He cannot separate any of His attributes from Himself. All things are in Christ, and He gives us all things in giving us Christ. Nothing is inherent in man; but whatever good thing there is in any man is the working of God in Him. Christ is "the wisdom of God and the power of God," and He is that to us who believe. God is not niggardly with His gifts. He "giveth to all liberally." So it is better for a man to acknowledge the truth, that he knows nothing, because then he has for use all the wisdom of God. "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." 1 Cor. iii. 18.

Even as God cannot separate His attributes from Himself, for in that case He would cease to be God, so He cannot separate them from each other, "for the Lord our God is one Lord." Therefore wisdom and righteousness go together. Christ is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. i. 30. If we seek the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, all necessary things, including wisdom, will be added. "If any man willeth to do His will, He shall know." John vii. 17. The way of wisdom is therefore the way of the cross, which saves from sin. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God;" and this power is the direct antithesis of foolishness. All that any man has to do is to live a life of faith in God's Word, thus pleasing God, and this will bring him into such close companionship with the Source of all wisdom that he cannot fail to know things that are hidden from the wise men of the earth. How much better to seek wisdom from a living God than from a mortal man.

Whatever reading of verse 20 we follow, we find the same thing. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." God's word is light, and those who reject that word have no light, and so must walk in darkness. Or we may take it as given in the Revision, "If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them." How can there be, if they reject the only source of light-God's Word? Or we may take the rendering of our text, "If they will not speak according to this word, in which there is no obscurity, every one of them shall pass through the land distressed and famished," and shall find only darkness. All the readings agree in the one thing, that God's Word is light, and that apart from it there is only darkness. And it is true food also; so that those who reject it must go hungry.

By comparing versus 1 and 2 of chapter 9 with Matt. iv. 12-16, we see that it is a direct prophecy concerning Christ. There was formerly great darkness in the land, but now "hath He made it glorious." Though darkness cover the earth, and

gross darkness the people, the glory of the Lord shall lighten the gloom; for He is the Light of the world, and the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death upon them hath the light shined." The light of Christ pierces even the darkness of the grave, for He went there; and even the grave was not able to quench the light of His life. His life-the light-triumphed over the darkness of the tomb.

The Revised Version renders verse 3 (verse 2 according to Lowth) just as we have it in our text: "Thou hast multiplied the nation, Thou hast increased the joy." The connection shows that this is better than, "Thou hast *not* increased the joy;" for immediately we read, "They joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." The question at once arises, "How can there be so marked a difference, even a direct contradiction, in the two translations?" The answer is at hand: In the Hebrew the word "not," and the phrase "to him" are almost identical, and are pronounced exactly the same. Look now in the margin of verse 3, in King James' version, and you will see the words "to him" given as an alternative. The nation has been multiplied by Christ, and thereby the joy to Him has been increased.

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We read of Christ that, having been made an offering for sin, "He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand," "and He shall divide the spoil with the strong." Isa. liii. 10-12. Christ is the Seed, but, having died, He bears much fruit, so that the nation is increased. This is His joy, and His people share it with Him. It is the joy of harvest, because in the harvest-the end of the world-all His people will be gathered into the kingdom to shine forth as the sun. Matt. xiii. 38-43. It will be the rejoicing of them that divide spoil, because He then opens the graves, and takes away from "him that had the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. ii. 14), millions whom he has shut up in his prison house, the grave, claiming them as his own. The joy that is increased to Jesus in the multiplying of the nation, is shared by all His saints, because He gives them a share in His redeeming work, and thus says to them, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"Thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor." For Jesus took part in flesh and blood "that He might destroy" not death merely, but "him that had the power of death, that is the devil." "Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself." Col. ii. 15; margin. Satan is the oppressor, who binds heavy burdens on men. He has laden men with iniquity, but the bands have been broken, and liberty is proclaimed to all the captives. To all who are in prison the Lord says, "Go forth," and they can do it if they wish, for in the face of that command Satan has no power to hinder.

"For all the armour of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire." Yes, the Lord "maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire." Ps. xlv. 9. War is of the devil, the destroyer. Christ redeems by destroying the destroyer, and so all the instruments

of destruction will be destroyed. And the power by which at the last great battle all who destroy and all their weapons of destruction shall be destroyed, is the power by which today the yoke of Satan's oppression is broken for every believer.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." Who is He?-"The Son of man." He is born unto *us*. The message that came to the shepherds of Bethlehem on the night of Christ's birth, is spoken equally to us, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke ii. 11. He is our Saviour, our Christ, our Son. He belongs to us, and so all that He has is ours. With Him God freely gives us all things.

The Government is upon His shoulder; the kingdom is His. Therefore we shall reign with Him; for He who is born to us is also "the Everlasting Father." In Him we have obtained an inheritance. "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ." Rom. v. 17. Never forget that as Christ is raised to the throne of God, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion," and we are made to sit together with Him in heavenly places (Eph. i. 20-21; ii. 1-6), we have thus with Him power "over all the power of the enemy" (Luke x. 19); so that in Christ we may assert our freedom from every bondage. Since Christ has given us power over "the prince of this world," "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," how can we have any fear of what wicked men may do to us. God can restrain the wrath of man, and that which He allows to manifest itself, He makes to praise Him.

His name is Counsellor. He is "wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." Isa. xxviii. 29. He is a host in Himself, so that the "multitude of counselors," in which there is safety, is found in Him. We read so often in the Bible of people who went to seek counsel of the Lord, and they were not disappointed. Why not do the same thing now, since God is the same? of them who walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, but delight in the law of the Lord, it is said that all that they do shall prosper. The Lord Himself is pledged to execute any action that He counsels, so that in Him we find not only advice as to what to do, but the thing itself done. He who is the wisdom of God, is of God made unto us wisdom and right doing.

"Of the increase of His Government and peace there shall be no end, ... the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Christ does not ask any help of man to establish His kingdom. "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David." Luke i. 32. All that man has to do is to submit to His reign. We have not to enact laws and prepare the kingdom for Him, and then conduct Him to it; the kingdom is His, for God has anointed Him King in Zion, and He will put all His enemies under His feet. It is not by strife, not by force, not by human effort, but by the peaceful power of God in individual hearts, that the kingdom is made ready for the King. Then leave others alone, and "let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

**"Studies from the Gospel of John. Living by the Father. John vii.
28-37" *The Present Truth* 15, 7.**

E. J. Waggoner

John vii. 28-37

The life of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels, sets forth not merely the pattern life for all men, but also the means by which the same life may be reproduced in whoever desires to live it. The Saviour, it is true, lived and worked and spake as never man had done before, but this was not because of any special advantages enjoyed by Him. His life was lived on earth to show what could be done with the opportunities provided by God for all men. He was poor, having nowhere to lay His head, He was despised and rejected of men, neither did His brethren believe on Him. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and counted unworthy to live by those who thought themselves righteous. Whatever of disability and hindrance is felt by any man, was Christ's portion. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men."

There was one thing, however, that enabled Jesus to rise above His surroundings, and live a life that showed to men "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." He represented the Father perfectly, so that He could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," and that which enabled Him to do this was the fact that the Father dwelt in Him. Jesus emptied Himself, and interposed no obstacle to the Father's working in Him, and since God giveth not the Spirit by measure,

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it followed naturally that in Christ dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

God desires to do for us what He did for His only begotten Son. Jesus said to His disciples, "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." John xx. 31. By pursuing the same course that Jesus took, the same results will follow in our case. So far as God is concerned, no difference is made between us and Christ. Just as He equipped and sent forth Jesus, He sends us also. Jesus recognised what the Father was to Him in all His life, and so we do not find Him thinking, planning, speaking, acting, or claiming anything for Himself, but leaving all things to His Father. "I am not come of Myself," He said, "I am come in My Father's name." Although Christ has sent us forth, just as He Himself was sent, we, instead of committing everything to God, take matters into our own hands. We are afraid that if we did not, sometimes at least, take the initiative, nothing would be done. Others expect us to take action, and although we cannot see what is the best thing to do we feel that something must be done. Saul, after waiting the appointed time for Samuel, thought it was incumbent on him to offer the sacrifice himself, but he had done foolishly. 1 Sam. xiii. The Lord wants us to trust Him with all the heart, and not even to lean to our own understanding. Prov. iii. 5. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." Ps. xxxvii. 5.

Christ was dependent on His Father through every step of His life. If God had not given Him the word to speak, it would never have been spoken, for He had none of Himself. If God had not revealed to Him the course to take, nothing would have been done, for He came not to do His own will. Christ "emptied Himself" and if the Father had not filled Him, He would have remained empty. If we confess our own helplessness and emptiness, and wait on the Lord at all times, is there any danger that our life record will be a barren one? It was not so with Christ. If we find ourselves in some situation where it might seem that we should speak, and the Lord gives us no word to speak, we are not to conclude that the Lord has overlooked us and decide to take the matter into our own hands, but know that the Lord has nothing for us to say, and that, at that time, silence is golden. Jesus was brought into circumstances where to human eyes, it would seem that every consideration demanded instant and energetic speech, but the Father gave Him nothing to say, and so He answered never a word. So He says to those whom He sends forth, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Matt. x. 19, 20.

Jesus had such confidence in His Father that He could wait for Him to give the right word or act, and the Father was never found wanting. He never disappointed His Son, and He never will disappoint those who commit their way to Him, leaving Him to will and to do of His own good pleasure, and who are prepared never to speak another word or perform another act which does not originate with Him. "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me." Isa. xlix. 23.

Men were surprised at the learning of Jesus. He had not attended the schools of the rabbis, yet He spoke with authority, and all recognised the unanswerable wisdom of His utterances. The explanation was, "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me." He had not learned of an earthly teacher. The Father Himself was teaching through Christ, and as Elihu asked, "Who is a teacher like unto Him?"

The works of Christ did not proceed from Himself. "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." Yet none could deny that His life was filled with good works. The Jews said, "When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" So with the words of Christ. He said, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself," yet Gentile soldiers were forced to confess, "Never man spake like this Man."

Christ's qualification for the work of revealing the Father, consisted in the fact that there was nothing in Him that was not of the Father. Since He lived by the Father, and there was nothing in His life that came from any other source, every thought and word and action was a revelation of God's way. It is to be the same with all Christ's followers. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." 2 Cor. v. 17, 18. It is not possible for Christians to regard this matter with indifference. No one may excuse himself by saying that the standard is too high for anyone to live up to, and no one may think that he will reserve to himself the privilege of thinking his own thoughts and speaking his own words occasionally. Christ draws a sharp line of distinction between those who deny themselves, take up their cross daily and follow Him, and those who love the praise of men and esteem anything above their Lord. He says "He that speaketh from himself

seeketh his own glory." John vii. 1. Whoever seeks his own glory cannot receive Christ, for He is meek and lowly in heart. It was for this reason that the Jews could not believe on Christ, and the same difficulty in us will prove just as fatal. "How can ye believe, which receive glory one of another?" John v. 44.

In hating Christ, and seeking His life the Jews showed what was their real feeling toward the Father. They professed themselves very jealous for the honour of Jehovah, because they thought He was altogether such an one as themselves, but when they became acquainted with His true character, as revealed in His Son many of them hated Him without a cause they were filled with the murderous spirit of Satan, and at the first opportunity they put the Son of God to death, Satan's spirit has not changed, and it animates all who do not allow God to think and speak in them. In seeking their own glory, they are repeating that which caused Satan's fall from heaven, and changed him from an anointed cherub to the prince of devils. While the professed church of Christ seeks its own glory, Satan can do much to further his own plans through its unconscious instrumentality, but when its members become like their Lord, and in God speak and work in them, Satan's wrath will be speedily aroused against them, and he will stir up his followers to destroy the members of Christ's body. "All that will live godly *in Christ Jesus* shall suffer persecution." All in whose hearts Christ dwells by faith may know that He by whom they live is the object of Satan's deadliest hatred, and that they themselves will share his rage, but they may know also that Christ's perfect victory over all the power of the enemy is theirs as well.

"Judge not according to appearance but judge righteous judgment." One of the most remarkable things about Jesus, was the way in which He distinguished between right and wrong. Puzzling questions were often brought to Him, but were always solved with such wisdom that those

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who were seeking occasion to accuse Him were dumbfounded. We need the same wisdom, for the traditions of men, false theories, and considerations of expediency have so confused the distinction between right and wrong to men's minds, that many honestly believe wrong to be right and right to be wrong. What will clear the issues for us? The same state of things existed in Christ's day, but the prevailing mental confusion did not dim His judgment, because God Himself was His judgment. He did not judge according to appearance, for while this is all that humanity has to go by, appearance are often misleading. Jesus said, "I can of Myself do nothing: as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." John v. 30. Selfish interests always stood the judgment, and bias the decision, but Christ was swayed by none of these. Because He sought only the will of God, and listened only to His voice, the Father was to Him for "a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment." It was foretold of Christ; "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and He shall be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither decide after the hearing of His ears: but with righteousness shall He judge the poor; and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." Isa. xl. 2-4.

This same Spirit is given to all freely, and will be, to all who receive it, what it was in Jesus of Nazareth.

It was never intended that the experience of Jesus, in these matters, should be an exceptional one. So far from that, God has covenanted, and the covenant is sealed with the blood of Christ, that He will put His law in our inward parts, and write it in our hearts. It is perfectly natural for Him to do right, and it will be the same for those who let Him write His law in their hearts. They will judge righteous judgment, will speak words in season, and always do the right thing in the right way, because God's way is in their hearts. God Himself is their life. They, like Christ, do not need that any man teach them, for the covenant in, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." Jer. xxxi. 34. This condition is not achieved by men's own worthiness. It is a covenant that is established upon promises, made to sinners, and the Holy Ghost applies it to all whose sins are forgiven. Heb. x. 15-17. When we recognise that we are not our own, to do with what we please, but that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and every member is to be yielded as an instrument of righteousness unto God, He will take complete possession, and we shall be "filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

Whatever appears desirable in the life of Christ, men are called to partake of His invitation given in the temple court is still the same to-day. "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." He reserves nothing for Himself, but makes all who receive Him that sent Me. Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me: and where I am, ye cannot come." "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." Isa. lv. 6, 7. It is our thoughts that keep us from God. His thoughts are as much above ours as the heavens are above the earth. God's thoughts received will lift man to heaven, even to the throne of Christ. Rev. iii. 21. Those who continue to think their own thoughts will seek Christ in vain, for where He is they cannot come. For those who receive His word, He prays, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me." John xvii. 24. Knowing the Lord now, by actual experience, learning His way by letter Him reveal it in us, prepares the way to a more perfect knowledge, when we shall see Him as He is. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

"Being Made Whole" *The Present Truth* 15, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

The miracles of Christ are recorded for us that we may believe in Him, and believing, find life in His name. John xx. 31. Therefore when we read of the many interesting circumstances that were connected with His works of healing, we are not to think of them as applying solely to the persons who were healed, but to learn from them what we may expect when we ourselves come to Jesus for help

in time of need. The people who received His blessing in Judea and Galilee displayed many characteristics which we recognise as belonging to human nature at the present time, and we may learn from their experience how the Saviour deals with us under similar circumstances.

We read in the fifth chapter of John's Gospel of a man who had had an infirmity thirty-eight years. He was greatly desirous of being freed from his disease, and with this object he lay beside the pool of Bethesda. At certain times the water was troubled, and then there was a rush on the part of the sick people who clustered round the pool to get first into the water, that they might be healed. As Jesus walked one Sabbath by this place He saw the man, and knowing that he had now been a long time in that case, He asked him, "Wouldest thou be made whole?"

Notice what a despairing answer the man returns: "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool:

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but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." He desired to be made whole earnestly enough, but he only saw one possibility of this being accomplished, and that was that some man would take pity on his helplessness and wait for an opportunity to help him into the water. Doubtless most of the sufferers lying round the pool had friends with these, and the man who had the most friends stood the best chance. The greatest thing that this man could think of that Jesus could do for him would be to undertake to wait by his side till the waters were again troubled.

"Jesus saith unto him, Arise, take up thy bed and walk. And straightway the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked." This is what Jesus does for men. He comes to every one and says, "Wilt thou be made whole?" and He desires to do as much for us as He did for the impotent man on that occasion.

We too may have been held by our infirmities thirty-eight years, or even more. Inherited tendencies to evil may have grown into fixed habits that are part of our lives, and that we cannot possibly overcome, but it is as easy for Christ to make us whole, and free from them, as though they were not a day old. When He calls the dead from the grave at the resurrection, it will be as easy for Him to raise Adam and Eve as those that have only lately turned to dust.

Jesus sees us in bondage to the lusts of the flesh, led captive by Satan, and defiled with the leprosy of sin, and he wants to make us every whit whole, but, like the man by the pool of Bethesda, we too often put Him off by saying that if we only had the help that others have, we would be all right. If only we were as free from trouble and temptation as others that we know, we would soon be whole. If some man would help us, or other men would cease to hinder us, all would be well.

The Saviour does not want us to lean upon these broken reeds, which always disappoint, and wound those who trust them. He has, all ready for us, all that we can desire and, passing by as worthless all our plans for helping ourselves, He solves the whole problem at once, by giving directly what we need. If we are willing to abandon our confidence in our own methods and devices, acknowledge our weakness, and trust implicitly in His all-powerful, all-sufficient Word, we may

pass straightway from the condition of weakness and infirmity, no matter of how long standing, and enter at once into the joyful experience of freedom in the Lord from all the power of the enemy.

All the years that the impotent man had been lying by the pool had brought him not a single step nearer the attainment of his desires. All our own efforts to make ourselves whole, leave us further from the end than before. A word from Jesus accomplished immediately more than the man had dared to hope. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Jesus, the True Seed" *The Present Truth* 15, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

JESUS, THE TRUE SEED

We were talking last week about the seed being multiplied,-how we may get many, many seeds from one. But there is something that we did not speak of then, that must take place before this can be done.

Jesus said: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth *much fruit*."

Perhaps some of you are studying botany,-plant life. Here, then, is the very first lesson that you need to learn about the plants. The seed must *die* before it can be *multiplied*. It can give birth and life to other plants only by giving up itself, by the sacrifice of its own life.

The new plant that is to spring from the seed is in most seeds only a tiny part of the whole seed. All the rest is for the nourishment of the young plant when it shall awake and spring up. But the seed must die and change before the new plant can spring up and feed upon it.

So you see that the seed really gives up its own life in order to give life. But is it lost? Oh, no: it is *multiplied*. Many plants, bearing many seeds exactly like it, come from it. If it should not die, but keep its life all to itself, it would, as Jesus said, "Abide alone," and at last perish and be lost indeed. But by giving its life, it saves and keeps it.

And now, what is the Gospel message that our Heavenly Father has written for us in all this? Do you remember that the very first Gospel promise ever heard by men said something about *seed*?

When He first promised to give His only begotten Son to save men from the power of Satan, God called Him, the *Seed*. And many times, when this promise was repeated, Jesus was called by the same name. He is, "the Seed of the woman;" "the Seed of Abraham;" "the Seed of David." But except the seed "fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone."

If you had the seed of a very rare and choice plant, would you think it too great a treasure to be sown in the ground? No, the more you valued it, the more anxious you would be to sow it, so that it might not "abide alone," but that you might get many more like it.

And so God did not keep back "His only begotten Son," but gave Him freely, so that He should not "abide alone," but that He might "bring *many sons* unto glory."

In the place of the one seed that is put in the ground, we get many seeds exactly like it. In the place of the one Son whom he gave, God the Father will at last, when the harvest shall come and all the seed shall be gathered, get many sons, many children, all in His exact image.

The seed dies that it may give life. Jesus died that He might give life to you that you might feed upon His life, and grow into His image, and so be one of the *many* children that through His sacrifice He will bring to glory. He died so that He might not "abide alone," but that you might abide with Him for ever.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

-Nearly a million persons make their living in America by the electrical industries.

-There is an agitation in Russia for the appointment of a recognised diplomatic agent in Afghanistan.

-The Peace Treaty between Spain and the United States has been ratified in the U.S. Senate by a majority of one.

-Only two minutes are required for the blood to course through the heart, thence to the lungs, back again to the heart, and then through the entire body and return to the heart.

-Lake Morat, in Switzerland, has the curious property of turning red every ten years, owing to the presence of certain aquatic plants which are not known in any other lake in the world.

-A Boston paper says that toppers in many of the towns of the Argentine Republic are shamed into reformation by being compelled to sweep the streets for eight days for each offence. No exceptions are made.

-A Berlin paper elates that as far as could be ascertained there have been forty-eight convictions for lèse majesté in Germany during the month of January alone, the actual number being probably much larger.

-A pack of steghounds in the West of England were returning from a chase after a hind, which they caught and killed, when they set upon a herd of tame deer belonging to the Earl of Carnarvon, and before any of the hunting party could stop them, had killed seventeen.

-Aguinaldo has declared war against the United States, and a battle has been fought with the Filipinos, of whom some hundreds were killed.

-All the Governments invited to the Peace Conference have agreed to the Russian proposal that the place of meeting should be at the Hague. The Conference itself will decide upon its programme.

-The Panama Canal Company have offered to sell their canal to the United States. If the offer is not accepted, it is said that the canal will become the exclusive property of Russia, France, Germany, and Austria.

-It has been decided in Parts that executions shall no longer take place in public. The usual crowd gathered a few days ago to see the last of these gruesome spectacles, and passed the night drinking, singing and playing dice.

-A bill will be laid before the U.S. Congress immediately, providing for the construction of twelve new warships. All of the vessels are to have the highest speed and greatest radius of action, the heaviest armour, and the most powerful ordnance obtainable for ships of their class.

-The Cape to Cairo Railway scheme has met with considerable opposition. The Government has consented to guarantee 350 miles only, from Bulawayo to the Zambesi River. When this is completed, the remainder of the scheme to the Tanganyika district, another 600 miles, will receive consideration.

-A general protest is going up all over the United States against the continuance of the revenue taxes instituted last year to cover the expense of the war. The popular opinion is that the war having ended, taxes should stop. The Government, however, is unlikely to reduce the revenue, as the increase in the army and other new projects now before the Congress call alone for an expenditure of 444,000,000 dollars.

-In the forthcoming session of Parliament a Bill will be introduced, dealing with joint stock companies, which is intended to correct some of the abuses of the Limited Company system. One provision that any promoter who receives a secret profit or remuneration shall be liable to repay the same to the Company with such interest as the Court may direct. Directors who do not use proper care and prudence to protect the interests of shareholders, shall be liable to compensate them for any damage incurred.

-At a speech made last week the German Kaiser said that the furtherance of universal peace is a splendid enterprise, but so long as unredeemed sin prevails in humanity there will be war, hatred, envy, and discord. This is so among individuals, and among nations it is a law. The Kaiser does not believe in universal peace. War is an element in the world's order, attributable to the existence of original sin. Political institutions, diplomatic conferences cannot abolish it until sin is abolished. If the Kaiser really recognises this truth, it ought to teach him where he gets his own military enthusiasm from.

-The Pope recently received in audience a number of English converts to Rome, among them several Anglican clergymen who were preparing to return to England as Roman Catholic missionaries. The report says that the Pope, in addressing them, recalled with what solicitude he had striven to secure the return of England to the ancient faith. He did not conceal from himself the immense difficulties in the way of this noble enterprise, but he trusted in Divine grace, and he rejoiced in the numerous conversions already effected, hoping to see the number soon doubled. He relied greatly upon the apostolic work of those who had already embraced the faith and were students at Rome. They, in the true Catholic spirit, would be able, as priests, to exercise in England a ministry of great efficacy for their fellow countrymen.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

We read in the book of Revelation that there is in heaven, as there was in the earthly sanctuary, "the patterns of things in the heavens," a golden altar of incense. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." Rev. viii. 3, 4.

From the experience of Isaiah we learn what effect the incense has upon the prayers of the saints, when it is added to them. He saw the glory of the Lord in His temple, and was overwhelmed at the sight. "Then said I, Woe is me I for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Then one of the seraphim flew to Isaiah with a burning coal which he had taken from the altar of incense, "and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isa. vi. 5-7.

We may know therefore, that when the incense is added to our prayers, it purifies them from all iniquity and selfishness, so that they come up before God as from cleansed and purified lips. The lurking insincerity, of which we ourselves are barely, if at all, conscious, the seeking after our own interests, and all that is unlovely in God's sight, is taken out of the prayers and they come before Him as just the prayers which He delights to honour, and answer to the full.

The incense on the golden altar was only to be lighted from the fire on the altar of burnt offering, and no strange fire was to be used. The altar of burnt offering represented the sacrifice of Christ, and no prayer or praise is acceptable to God except it be kindled in the heart Jesus. Prayer that is offered in His name comes before the Father fragrant with the Spirit and merit of His only begotten Son. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." The Saviour says, "If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." John xiv. 14.

What an encouragement is here to continual prayer. It may seem to us that we are weak and unworthy to draw near unto God, but the feeble, stammering prayer which our hearts utter does not come before the Father in the way that it seems to us to go. The beings who minister in the heavenly sanctuary offer with the prayer the incense which consumes all the unworthiness out of it, and it comes to God with all the weight that the prayers of Jesus had when He was on the earth. Since we have a faithful High Priest to present our prayers acceptably to God, "let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace."

But with Isaiah the cleansing of his lips did not alone avail to render his petitions meet for the Father's ear. It also fitted him to bear the message of salvation to others. We may be but little gifted with the ability to speak, but if our lips be cleansed, the fire that does it will also take out of our testimony all the elements of weakness that would otherwise destroy its efficacy. The cleansing which takes everything un-Christlike out of our prayers will accomplish the same work for our words to others. "Thanks be unto God which always causeth us to

triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." 2 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

"By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." Heb. xiii. 16.

The *Methodist Times* in writing of the disrespect paid to Sunday, uses language which is truer than it seems to realise:-

Rome has done no greater evil to mankind, and especially to the poor, than her wicked success in destroying the sanctity of the one day in the week which the early Christians legitimately devoted to the worship of Jesus Christ and to religious intercourse with one another. Every one knows that the masterpiece of the Papacy is the Continental Sunday.

It is true that the Sunday, as openly claimed by the Roman Catholic Church, is the masterpiece of the Papacy, whether it be called Continental or English. It is so recognised by Romanist lecturers who find, in its observance by Protestants, opportunity for an unanswerable taunt at the inconsistency of professing to be guided by the Bible only, and yet observing as sacred a day which has no authority except that of the Papacy. There was and is only one day in the week which the early, or later, Christians could legitimately observe as a Sabbath, and that is the seventh day of the week, which is set apart as holy by the law of God.

It is not correct, however, to say that Rome achieved "success in destroying the sanctity" of the Sabbath of the Lord. No man can unsanctify what God has made holy, any more than men can make sacred what God has never pronounced holy. Therefore the seventh day of the week remains still a holy day, and not even the unanimous vote of every soul in the universe, or the enactment of laws by every legislature in the world, could sanctify the first day of the week, since God has not made it holy.

It is true that the power which should speak great words against the Most High, and should wear out the saints of the Most High, should also think to change the times and laws of the Most High (Dan. vii. 25); but however much the Papacy, to which this prophecy unmistakably points, should think to change God's laws, these are as far above its reach as the throne of God, which is founded upon them. And "the foundation of God standeth sure."

It is not in England alone that Rome is gaining ground. In a recent number of the New York *Independent*, which is probably the most influential religious magazine in the United States, appear these words:-

Archbishop Chapelle is now in Porto Rico, and will afterward visit Cuba on the mission committed to him by the Pope, which is that of oversight, and we may say reconstruction of the Roman Catholic Church in those Islands. It is an extremely important work, and one in which he ought to be followed by the good wishes of all good Americans and good Christians.

And this, notwithstanding that the same article confesses that Porto Rico has not profited in the past by the ministrations, of the Roman Catholic Church.

It will require time, a long time, Church in good working order, it has been so long in disrepute. Father Sherman calls Porto Rico a Catholic country without religion.

February 22, 1899

"Teaching with Authority. Jesus Healing in Capernaum. Mark i. 21-34"
***The Present Truth* 16, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

(Mark i. 21-84.)³¹

"And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day He entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes."

Compare this with the lesson of last week. We have another instance of the custom of Jesus to observe the Sabbath day. Remember that all that Jesus did was an example for us. People say that times have changed very much from what they were when Christ was on earth in the flesh. That is true in some respects; but the Lord has not changed. He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Heb. xiii. 8. If He were visible in the flesh, to-day, He would do no differently from what He did in the days of old. Moreover, the Scriptures have not changed. There has been no new Bible written. The Scriptures written by the prophets and apostles, and other holy men, were for all time. The language of the Bible is to be the language of Christians till the end of time. We are to call things by the same names that they did. They, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, called the day on which the Jews were accustomed to worship, the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath; therefore we ought to call it the same, and to keep it as such. Some one may say, "Yes; I believe that we ought to say 'Sabbath,' instead of 'Sunday.'" Oh no; nothing of the kind, Sunday is not the Sabbath, and our calling it so cannot make it so. Sunday is the first day of the week, but "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. xx. 10, 11. And for those who keep the Sabbath, calling it a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, there is such a blessing as they have never dreamed of. It is most blessed to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Jesus taught with authority. The same statement is made at the close of the account of the discourse on the mount. The teachers of the day, the scribes, did not teach with authority. It was not that they were not arbitrary, and did not ask people to believe what they said. Far from it. The most arbitrary people are they who have the least authority. There is no real authority in their words, and so they try to make up for the lack by a pompous manner. There are no men who are more arbitrary than the priests of the Roman Catholic Church. They require the people to accept everything they say without question; the fact that they have spoken is considered sufficient. Yet they do not teach with authority. Take one instance as a sample of what frequently occurs: A few months ago the writer saw in a secular paper a letter written by a priest, in which he entirely repudiated a

book that he had recently written. He declared that it was all wrong. Why was this?-Simply because his bishop had said that the book was heretical, and had ordered him to retract the teaching that he had put forth in it. You say that in obeying the bishop he showed an humble spirit. Let that pass; but how much authority can there be in the teaching of a man who holds big views subject to the will of another? He who teaches with authority, teaches the truth, and only the truth, and he knows that it is the truth, so that the thunders of all the

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Church and State councils on earth could not make him retract it, as was the case with Luther. In the teaching of Jesus there was nothing doubtful. He taught those things that He had learned with the Father, and had no need to be afraid to declare them. They were His own life, and therefore He could speak with a power that carried conviction.

AN EVIDENCE OF AUTHORITY

Immediately after the teaching in the synagogue, Jesus gave a practical demonstration of the authority of His teaching. There was a man present, who had an unclean spirit; he was possessed by the devil. He snarled out at Jesus, because he was uncomfortable in the presence of the Holy One of God, and Jesus said, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him," and the devil left the man. Then the people were still more amazed, and said: "What is this? a new teaching! with authority He commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." The authority of the teaching of Christ was such that the devils were cast out by it. The very same power and authority must characterise the teaching of the Gospel now. The devil works in the children of disobedience, and must be expelled. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation from the power of Satan; it is to deliver man from the bondage of sin, and therefore from the devil; for "he that committeth sin is of the devil." 1 John iii. 8. Gospel teaching that does not succeed in driving the devil out of men is of no value. The doctrine, or teaching, of Christ does not consist in formulae and platitudes, but it expels the evil spirit from men. The age of miracles is not past. The teaching that can drive the devil out of a man, can accomplish any other work that needs to be done. Any teaching that does not expel the unclean spirit, is not the teaching of Christ.

PRACTICAL TEACHING

Having departed from the synagogue, Jesus entered into the house of Peter for refreshment. Here there was another manifestation of the authority with which He taught. Peter's mother-in-law had a severe fever, and all the household arrangements were thrown out of order. There was no dinner, for all were absorbed in waiting on the sick one. "And they besought Him for her. And He stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her; and immediately she arose, and ministered unto them." Luke iv. 38, 39. That was practical teaching. There was real authority. That authority has not departed from the earth, inasmuch as Jesus, with all power in heaven and in earth, is with His true followers till the end

of the world. The spirit of fear and unbelief in the church has obscured the authority to a great extent, but it will again appear as vividly as when Jesus went about in Galilee. When the people of God stand unscathed in the midst of pestilence and plagues, which will devastate the earth even before "the seven last plagues" are poured out, there will be such authority to their teaching as comes only from those who have learned of God, and are in direct touch with the Lord. The life of Jesus manifest in mortal flesh will be a testimony that none can gainsay or resist.

"And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door." It was the Sabbath day, and the people waited until the Sabbath was past, which is at the setting of the sun, before they brought their sick to Jesus. Jesus was just as ready to heal on the Sabbath day as on any other, for such work was not a violation of the Sabbath, but was simply a manifestation of His teaching; but the people were at least outwardly strict in the observance of the Sabbath, so they waited until sunset. In this connection we cannot refrain from calling attention to that most beautiful hymn, number 431 of "Sacred Songs and Solos," which begins,

"At even, ere the sun was set.

The sick, O Lord, around Thee lay."

That should be changed, because it contradicts the Bible. The author had evidently not looked at the account for some time when he wrote the hymn. It was not before the sun set, but after, that the sick were brought to Jesus. We must be as careful to sing the truth as to speak it.

GREAT JOY

What joy there must have been in that city that night! We read that "all the city was gathered together at the door," and that they had brought "all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils;" and we are told that "He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick." Matt. viii. 16. He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them. So there was not a single sick person in that city that night, and not one person left under the influence of the devil. Was it not wonderful? That is what the teaching of Christ does; are you acquainted with it?

Jesus did not suffer the devils to say that they knew Him. He did not care for any testimonials from that quarter. He made them hold their tongues. There are many agents of Satan to be found in congregations to-day, "whose mouths must be stopped," but the man who does it must have authority. It must not be that sort of authority that must be enforced by muscular power, but the authority must be in the word spoken. When Jesus commanded, the devils could do no other than obey.

THE SECRET OF AUTHORITY

What was the secret of this power and authority? The answer is given in the Gospel by Matthew. All this was done "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Matt. viii. 17. He had all the diseases of all the people in the city of Capernaum on Himself that night, yet He did not die, nor did anybody discern that He was in the least weakened by the load of infirmities that He bore. He tasted death, and swallowed it up in His own eternal life. The authority was the inward life. That same eternal life, "which was with the Father," is still "manifested unto us." Christ's touch has yet the same healing power that it had in Capernaum. He still bears our sicknesses as well as our sins. His authority has not diminished in the least. If Christ dwells in our hearts by faith to the extent that we are "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man," "according to the riches of His glory," so that we are "filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 16-19), and this "inward man is renewed day by day," so that constantly the life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh (2 Cor. iv. 11, 16), we shall bless the Lord with soul and body, because He has forgiven all our iniquities, and healed all our diseases, redeeming our life from destruction, and crowning us with lovingkindness and tender mercies. It is a glorious thing to be completely subject to the authority of the Lord Jesus.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Triumph of Submission. Isa. I. 1-11" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. I. 1-11.)

"Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, wherewith I have put her away? or which of My creditors is it to which I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities were ye sold, and for your transgressions was your mother put away. Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at My rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness; their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.

"The Lord God hath given Me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should be able to sustain with words him that is weary; He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as they that are taught. The Lord God hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward. I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that I plucked off the hair; I hid not My face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help Me; therefore have I not been confounded; therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near, that justifieth Me; who will contend with Me? let us stand up together; who is Mine adversary? let him come near to Me. Behold, the Lord God will help Me; who is he that shall condemn Me? behold, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His Servant? he that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that gird yourselves about with firebrands; walk ye in the flame of your fire, and among the brands that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of Mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."

Read Gal. iv. 25, 26, in order to understand the reference "your mother." Jerusalem which now is, old Jerusalem, answers to the old covenant, and "is in bondage with her children." "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all," and this answers to the new covenant. Recall what was said concerning Jerusalem, in the last lesson. Although Jerusalem is forsaken, "when the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory" (Ps. cii. 16), and the new Jerusalem will come with Him, to take the place of the present city, so that it is considered as a continuation of the Jerusalem that has existed so long. It is the old city rebuilt. So the Lord has not cast off Jerusalem, although the city known on earth as Jerusalem will be destroyed with the rest of "this present evil world." He has not divorced her. Read in this connection Isa. liv., especially verses 4-7, and the first verse of this chapter will be much more easily understood.

GOD IS NOT REDUCED TO POVERTY

Among the nations of old it was often the case that a father sold his children into slavery, in order to satisfy a creditor, and this was practiced even among the Jews, as we learn from Ex. xxi. 7 and Nehemiah v. 1-5; but God never became so poor that He was obliged to resort to that plan. No creditor ever had so great an advantage over the Lord that he could compel Him to sell His children. He had not sold any of His children, even when He allowed them to go into captivity; but they sold themselves. "Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money." Isa. lii. 3. So far is the Lord from having been obliged to sell His people to satisfy His creditors, that He is able to buy them back, after they have sold themselves.

THE POWER THAT REDEEMS

Who dares doubt God's power to redeem? How can anybody think that He has no power to deliver? We have only to read the account of the deliverance of Israel from the land of Egypt, to see how easy a matter it is for God to save His people. Compare verse 2 with Ex. xiv. 21 and vii. 14-21. That very same power is put forth to save us from our sins, which have been the cause of our being sold into bondage. Don't be afraid of confusing the spiritual and the literal. Every act of God is literal and also spiritual. If God only told us of what He can do, we should not have anything tangible to lay hold of; no foundation for our faith; for no matter how much we might be disposed to believe Him, our minds could not grasp the meaning; the reality, of what He said; so He gives us visible examples of His power to save, referring us to all His constant working in nature, and also to special working in the past. That is for the purpose of letting us know that the

power which He promises to exert on our behalf is so real that we can perceive it in our own bodies; we may know that He saves us.

Christ is the One "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. i. 30. Therefore it is He who speaks here. He is "the everlasting Father;" and the New Jerusalem is "the bride, the Lamb's wife." Rev. xxi. 9, 10. So we see that the prophecy of Isaiah is in perfect accord with that in Revelation. Unmistakable proof that it is Christ who is speaking in this chapter, is found in verse 6: "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not My face from shame and spitting." As we read what He says, we must remember that He suffered in our behalf, as the representative Man; His courage and victory are ours.

THE WISDOM OF CHRIST

The learned person is the one who has been taught, and who is still a disciple. So it makes no difference whether we read verse 4 as in the Revision or in the Common version; "the tongue of the learned" is "the tongue of them that have been

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taught." "I speak that which I have seen with My Father." John viii. 38. "The Word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me." John xiv. 24. It may be even so with us; for we read, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." John vi. 45. If we come to the Lord to learn, He will give us, as well as Christ, the tongue of the learned. But the learning does not come without labour. Learning of God is not a mere lazy assent to certain doctrines, not a sentimental yielding to Him, and a fancy that because we say that God is our Teacher, we are necessarily taught by Him. Many people have had good teachers, but have not profited by them, because they were too lazy to study.

It is often the case that people think to make their religion a substitute for real knowledge. They have an idea that if God is their teacher, they must never study anything. That is the reason why they should study a great deal more. Here is a man with a thirst for knowledge, but his opportunities are few. At last he has a chance of studying under a celebrated teacher. Ah, it is a rare chance, and he will exert himself in study to the utmost. One must not throw away such an opportunity as that! Even so it ought to be with those who have an opportunity of studying under God's teaching. No moment should be neglected; the Word of God, printed in the Bible, and spread out in all creation, should be studied with zeal and patience. The "royal road to learning" is laid down by the wisest of men in Prov. ii. 1-6. No person in the world ought to be content with his present attainments. We cannot exhaust the "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" that are hid in Christ. Dig for them, it is worth while.

What will God's teaching enable us to do?-To speak a word in season to him that is weary; not to speak empty phrases but words that "sustain the weary one." The One of whom we are to learn is "meek and lowly in heart." "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits." James iii. 17.

SOME WORD OF COMFORT

Listen to some of the "words" with which Jesus sustained the weary when He was here on earth. "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." Matt. ix. 2. "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." With many such words did Jesus sustain the weary ones; may we speak the same words to sorrowing souls?-Indeed we may, for we are ambassadors on behalf of Christ, as though God were beseeching by us even as by Christ. Sin is the cause of all tribulation, and God "comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." God sent His Son into the world, "that the world through Him might be saved;" and He says, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." We are therefore to be able, from personal experience, to speak words that will set at liberty the groaning captives of sin. But we must first receive a tongue from the Lord, and allow Him to control it.

THE LORD'S SUBMISSIVE SERVANT

The secret of success is submission. "The Lord God hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." This reminds us of the words of Christ in Ps. xl. 6: "Mine ears hast Thou opened." And this also reminds us of what is written in the law. When a servant refused to go away from his master when the year of release came, but said, "I love my master, . . . I will not go out free," the order was, "Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever." Ex. xxi. 6. That act signified that his ear was his master's, always open to hear his commands. We are the Lord's servants, if we yield ourselves to Him as His servants (Rom. vi. 16), and we are to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven, where the angels "do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." Ps. ciii. 20. Our ears are to be at the service only of God, and what we hear we are to accept as our "reasonable service." If we thus submit to the Lord, we may have the support, and the power to sustain others, that Christ had. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Christ was not rebellious. He had, as "the Man Christ Jesus," given Himself to be the Lord's servant for ever, and He was not rebellious, and did not draw back, even when the service involved the receiving of blows, and still worse treatment, and also the vilest insults. That was in the contract, when He made the bargain, and He did not back out. So it was with the Apostle Paul. God said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake;" and Paul submitted himself to be the Lord's servant for ever, knowing what it involved; and so when "bonds and afflictions" awaited him in every city, he could calmly say, "None of these things move me." Acts xx. 23, 24.

POWER GAINED BY SUBMISSION

The Master is responsible for the servant, and, knowing this, the Servant says, "The Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Even so Paul said: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." Acts xxvi. 22.

"Well, what is the practical use of all this to me?" some one will ask; I "am neither Jesus nor Paul, and cannot expect to do such work as they did, nor to be noticed by the Lord as they were." Why, my dear man, you are losing the benefit of the whole Gospel story. Do you not see that the strength of Jesus and of Paul was their weakness? Jesus said, "I can of Mine own self do nothing." John v. 30. "I do nothing of Myself." John xviii. 38. "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John xiv. 10. It was only when Paul was weak, that he was strong. God said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness;" and Paul exclaimed, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on me." 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. "The power of Christ" that rested on him in weakness, was the same power that rested on Christ in His infirmity. Now here is the comfort for you, whosoever you are: Are you weak, the very weakest of the weak? very good; then you afford the Lord the most excellent opportunity for manifesting the perfection of His strength. Christ's power was His submission to the Father; you certainly are not too weak to allow yourself to rest in the hands of God, that He may do what He will with you. If Christ dwells in your heart, you may, like Him, be "filled with all the fullness of

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God." Every experience of Christ may be ours. He says that the Lord God will help Him, and that therefore He shall not be confounded nor ashamed; and have we not but recently learned that "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end"? Then let us also set our faces like a flint.

OUR DELIVERER NEAR

God is "not far from every one of us." "It is God that justifieth;" therefore we may say with Christ, "He is near that justifieth me." And then we may be as bold as He, in saying, "Who will contend with me? let us stand up together; who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me." "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Ps. xxvii. 1. "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;" for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James iv. 7.

THE TRUE LIGHT

"But the way is so dark!" you exclaim. Very well; "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His Servant? although he walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." See margin of Isa. I. 10, R.V. So we can say with a humble man of old, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." "He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness." Micah vii. 8, 9. None that put their trust in the Lord shall be ashamed.

Take heed, however, not to manufacture a light for yourself. The sparks of your own kindling are a very poor substitute for "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." "This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." Our ideas, our opinions, whatever proceeds from us, is darkness, even though it seems for a moment to flash as light. The word of God is light and with that in our hearts we may successfully resist "the rulers of the darkness of the world." Eph. vi. 11-17. "The true light now shineth." Let us therefore give thanks to God, "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Col. i. 12.

"Physical Activity" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

There is certainly great power in physical activity to keep off the effects of old age. Idleness brings on decrepitude far more often than overexertion. The most active men and the busiest live the longest.

The evil effects of overwork may be partly overcome by maintaining activity of the excretory organs and by out-door exercise, during which an extra quantity of oxygen is taken in. The effects of bad dietetic habits and even of poisons may be counteracted in this way to some extent. But the evil effects of idleness cannot be counteracted while idleness still exists.

"For Little Ones. The Work of Moses" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

The little babe Moses that God saved in the wonderful manner that we learned of last week, grew up in the palace of Pharaoh into a strong young man, "mighty in word and deed." He did not forget or despise his brethren, the children of Israel, who were kept in cruel bondage by the Egyptians, but remembered always that God had raised him up so that he might help and save them.

But Moses had not yet learned the way of the Lord. He thought that it was by the strength of his own arm that Israel was to be delivered. All round about him in Egypt were the works of men's hands, the magnificent idol temples, and the grand works of Egyptian architecture. Some of these, the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid, can still be seen in the land of Egypt.

So it was natural that Moses should think a great deal of the power of man, and begin to try to do himself the work that God meant to do by him.

He often saw the Israelites very cruelly treated by their taskmasters. When he thought the time had come for him to begin his work of delivering them, he smote one of those Egyptian taskmasters whom he saw ill-treating an Israelite, and killed him. No one else was near at the time, and Moses buried his body in the sand.

He thought that this would show his brethren that he was willing to help them, and that they would all join him in fighting against the Egyptians. "For he supposed that his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not."

The next day he saw two of the Israelites quarrelling, and tried to make peace between them. He was sad to see them adding to their sorrows by being unkind to each other, so he said: "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another." The one who was in the wrong was angry with him, and said, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wilt thou kill us, as thou didst the Egyptian?"

When Moses heard this he was afraid and discouraged. He saw that his brethren did not receive him as the one sent from God to be their deliverer. Pharaoh and the Egyptians were angry with him for killing one of their people, and his own brethren would have nothing to do with him. So he fled from Egypt, and found a home in the land of Midian with Jethro, a worshipper of the true God. Here Moses spent a long, long time, forty years, -keeping and feeding sheep. What a change from his early life in Pharaoh's palace! But God saw that this was the best way to teach him the lesson that he must learn before he would be ready to lead Israel out of Egypt without upsetting God's plans by trying to do the work in his own way and by his own power.

Here in Midian, as Moses led the sheep among the mountains, the works of the Creator were all around him, and all the works of men's hands were shut out. God spoke to him in all His work, and taught him to trust the power and submit to the will of Him who made everything by His word, for "He spake and it was; He commanded and it stood fast."

The lessons that God taught during these forty quiet years, we are still learning to-day; for he wrote them out in the book we call Genesis, that all God's people might learn them too. Think, then, what a benefit these years of training were, not only to Moses, but to us and all the world.

In his work as a shepherd also Moses learnt many precious lessons of patience and gentleness, which helped him in after years when God "led His people like a flock by the hand of Moses."

But at last the quiet years of training were ending; the time for Moses' great work was come. As he led the flock in a desert place, God appeared to him in a burning bush that drew his attention because it kept on burning without being destroyed. God told him to go back into Egypt, and He would deliver the Israelites from their bondage, and lead them out, as He had promised.

But Moses was not so ready now to undertake this great work as he had been forty years before. He had lost all his old trust in himself, and he now thought that God could find a better instrument for His work.

When God still commanded him to go, he remembered the question that he had been asked before, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" and he asked God what he should say when they asked who had sent him.

God told him to answer: "The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you." And then, in case they should not believe him, and should say, "The Lord hath not appeared unto you." God gave him signs by which he could show that he was really sent of God. What these signs were, and how Moses was received in Egypt, and all the wonders that God worked through him when He led back the Israelites through the wilderness to the beautiful land of Canaan-all this you may read in the Book of the Exodus (which means, the going out), written by Moses himself.

Now I want you to notice particularly two or three things in the life of Moses, for we shall speak of them soon. First: as soon as he was born Satan, working through the Egyptians, tried to kill him. Then when he was grown up his brethren despised him, and would not receive him; and he was taken from them for a time. "But this Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer."

"Hollow Pillars" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

When engineers found that hollow pillars were stronger than solid ones, they only discovered a principle that is very commonly seen in Nature. A wheat-straw, if solid, could not support its head of grain.

"Temperance. Receiving the Life That Is Manifested" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

If the reader will take the trouble once more to read the article in last week's issue, entitled, "Health by Faith," it will help him very much in the reading of this article. Some, however, will not have had an opportunity to see that number, consequently we shall restate a few principles. No one will be the loser, for they cannot be repeated too often.

All life is from the Lord; "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." He "giveth breath unto the people" upon the earth, "and spirit to them that walk therein." In His hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." God's personal presence by His Spirit, doing for every person just what He did for Adam in the beginning, is that which keeps us all alive. This must ever be borne in mind.

This life-"the word of life" "which was from the beginning"-is very near to us, in order that every soul may "feel after" God, and find Him to his salvation. See Acts xvii. 27, 28; Rom. x. 6-10; Deut. xxx. 11-14. It is this life, freely given to all

mankind, that cleanses from all sin, whenever it is acknowledged, with humble confession of sin, as the only source of righteousness.

The life of Christ is not divided, even as Christ Himself is not divided; in giving us His life, Christ gives us everything; it only remains for our faith to grasp the gift. The same life that saves from sin, is the life that gives health, so far as men have it; there is no other source of life and health.

The case may be put in another way, that may make it still plainer. We are now alive; of that we are sure. But we did not bring ourselves into existence, neither have we power to prolong our life. "There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit." We do not create the air that we breathe, and we have no control over it; neither do we provide the food that nourishes our bodies; we simply take that which God has already provided. So then, we are alive, and alive by the power of God. Our life is not an accident, neither is our state of health, whether good or bad, an accident: but all depends upon our relation to the Giver of life. The fact that we have not perfect health is owing to our failure to recognise the Life that has been manifested, and to yield to it, so that it may have full and unhindered sway in us. The life is ours for everything that it was in Jesus, for "of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." If we are in possession of good health, that is not an accident, but is because, either consciously or unconsciously, we have been living in harmony with the life of God, or at least have not succeeded in holding it down by our wrong habits. Now when we admit that our life to-day is the manifestation of Christ's presence, it is evident that He can continue it indefinitely, since "He ever liveth."

Someone will ask, "Are we then to understand that if we fully recognise and yield to the life of Christ, we shall be immortal?" The answer is, Not until the coming of the Lord, for that is when immortality is bestowed (see 1 Cor. xv. 50-54); but we shall have the life of Jesus "made manifest in our mortal flesh." Christ has "power over all flesh," and by that power He is able to keep a man sinless even in sinful flesh, and to keep him in life and health, even in mortal flesh. This is the Gospel of Life.

What is the secret of this?-Simply this, to keep in constant, conscious touch with "the Author of life," and to allow the Word,-the Word of life,-to have free course.

With God is "the fountain of life" (Ps. xxxvi. 9), for He is "the Fountain of living waters." From Him flows the river of life throughout the world. The river of life, as we learned from the Scriptures last week, waters the earth, and makes it productive. God's heart beats for the universe; He lives not for Himself, but for His creatures. That river of life, "proceeding

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out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," from the heart of the crucified One, flows through us, through all mankind, through every living creature.

These things are real and true, and upon our grasp of them as living realities depends largely our health. If we believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, we shall forthwith proceed diligently to seek Him, and He will make known to us the way of life. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."

The question will at once arise, partly for enlightenment, and partly to cast discredit upon the truth here set forth, If the river of life from God flows through all men, and there is no life but from God, why is it that all men are not righteous and well? The answer is plain: Because Christ is not received by faith. Righteousness must be received voluntarily, and consciously; for God has only free men in His kingdom; therefore when the eternal life is not laid hold of by faith, it passes from us as though we had never had it; we have received the grace of God in vain.

The case can be made even plainer as regards health, for the outward manifestation of the life, in physical activity, is given as an illustration and a proof of the life for righteousness. Here is a fountain flowing clear and sweet from the rock. It forms a stream which runs down the mountain to the plain. On its way it receives the sewage of a town, and further on its flow is checked by a great depression in the earth, so that it becomes stagnant. You see a man about to drink from the pond or from the stream, and check him.

"Why must I not drink this water?"

"It is poisonous, and may cause your death."

"How can that be? is not this the water that flows from that rock in the mountain?"

"Yes; but remember that you are now a long way from the source; if you want to get the water perfectly pure, go higher up, to the spring itself."

That is reasonable, and that affords the explanation of why all men in whom the life of the Lord is are not perfectly healthy. It is because they are content to receive the life at second hand, laden with the curse, instead of taking it direct from the Fountain head. We live too far from the Lord, although "He is not far from every one of us." If we will draw near to Him, we shall find that He is near to us, "in all things that we call upon Him for." "The secret of life and health is to recognise the life that is manifested, and in every form that it appears, and to "lay hold of it with delight."

We have not space in this article to go into the particulars of how to lay hold on this life for everyday health; they will come in later. First we must be firmly grounded in the foundation principles, then everything will come easy and natural. But we may remind the reader of the fact that the main channels of life for our body are the air, water, and food. To these may be added rest and exercise. With this hint many will need no further instruction. They will see at once, for example, that we must allow God to breathe His breath into our nostrils direct, and not contaminate it, or allow it to become laden with poison before it reaches us; and that we must give it free course through all the passages that are designed for it in our body, and not hinder it by constricting the throat or lungs. The breath that God gives us is "the breath of the Spirit of life;" and if we knowingly shut it out from us, we are, just to the degree that we do so, deliberately rejecting the Lord.

But let no one forget that our life belongs to the Lord. If we seek the life of God merely for our own sake, we shall not find it. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The condition of life is that we are to be consecrated to God, the Giver of it, and that we are to desire life

only that He may "be magnified in our body." Only so will we fully accept it. He who desires health merely that he may *feel well*, must not expect to receive perfect life from the Lord; for he lives only for his own pleasure,-to gratify his own feelings, and that very fact will keep him from receiving the perfect life of God. If he doesn't at once *feel* any ill effects from any forbidden thing, he will continue in it. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Bear in mind that we cannot earn health by our works, any more than we can earn righteousness. Life, as well as righteousness, is a gift from God; our part is simply to recognise it, and receive it, and to place no obstacles in its way. If we will keep the channel clear, God will see that the stream is kept flowing. But great wisdom and constant watchfulness are needed in order that the channel may be kept unobstructed. Some of the ways in which we may do this will occupy our time in future studies.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

-Smallpox is spreading with alarming rapidity in the Berea district of Basutoland.

-Influenza is raging with great severity throughout the southern part of Lincolnshire.

-During the past year over eight millions sterling was deposited in the Yorkshire Penny Bank by the working classes.

-Japan has just placed an order with the Woolwich Arsenal Works for twelve 12-pounder guns, to be mounted on 25-pounder travelling carriages.

-An officer of the Italian artillery has invented a system of photography, whereby it is claimed photographs can be taken with distinct outlines, at a distance of ten or eleven miles.

-A Mrs. Gibson has just died at Levens, near Kendal, aged 102 years. She attributed her long life and uniform good health to her simple and temperate habits. Only a few days before her death, when a spoonful of whiskey was recommended with milk, she firmly refused it.

-The famine outlook in India grows worse every day. There are now over three and a quarter million people in receipt of relief. In Punjab, cattle, when not dying, are weak and starved, and the present indication is that this will soon equal the great famine of 1897.

-In a temperance address delivered a short time ago, Miss Jesse Ackerman, a W.C.T.U. missionary, said: "For every convert made by American missionaries in China, American liquor makes one hundred drunkards; and for every convert made by English missionaries, England makes a thousand slaves to the opium habit."

-It has recently been made public that a firm of dressmakers in Dublin has been supplying its lady customers with liquor, and charging the bill up as "trimmings." The Dean of the Royal Chapel visited and remonstrated with the offenders, telling them to be honest, and if they must call it by that name, it should be designated as "delirium trimmings."

-For some reason hostility is being shown by the Italian authorities to the pilgrimage to Rome in honour of the jubilee year. Three hundred and fifty pilgrims from Marseilles were recently stopped at Ventimiglia, and they were obliged to return home, since which time the pilgrimage from that place has been suppressed, and the matter referred to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

-Mr. Justice Darling, of London, has set an example that an exchange says "should strike terror into the breasts of dishonest solicitors," by making an order that the solicitor of a plaintiff who lost his case, and not the plaintiff himself, should pay the defendant's costs, on the ground that the case was so clear that the solicitor ought to have known that the action could not succeed, and must involve his client in heavy loss.

-Evidently the efforts to inoculate China with Western ideas is not received very eagerly, as, according to the dispatches, an edict has just been issued by the Dowager Empress, commanding a return to the old manner of study, according to the teachings of Confucius, for examinations for official rank, and orders the abolition of studies in regard to what are described as "new, depraved, and erroneous subjects," persons engaged in teaching these being threatened with various punishments.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

The number of employee in Woolwich Arsenal at the present time is over 20,000, which is twice as many as were employed during the Crimean War. Work is carried on nights and Sundays in all the departments. The weekly output of small arm ammunition from four establishments is 4,000,000 rounds.

The latest thing in "trusts" is a "Bible trust" in the United States. Not a trust in the Bible, sad to say, but a modern, commercial trust. The *Daily Chronicle* says that

"the Bible publishers of the country have banded themselves together to place the Word of God in the same category as petroleum, tobacco, sugar, or say of the numberless articles whose price is controlled by the financiers. Already, as the result, the price of the Bible has been advanced from fifteen to twenty per cent. So far, it appears, the trust has not eliminated the Eighth Commandment from the decalogue."

This last, fortunately, nobody can do, although too many eliminate not only the eighth, but all the other commandments, from their lives.

There are signs of not a little chafing under the shackles which the Roman Catholic Church binds upon the minds of all its adherents. The case of Dr. Mivart is not an isolated one. "The head of a family bearing one of the oldest Catholic names," writes that "the time has come when a public avowal is incumbent on the part of any Catholic who holds the conviction, as I do, that unrestricted independence of mind and freedom of judgment are among the essential attributes of real Catholicism, and are the inborn and inalienable rights of every human being." Such expressions will have the result of calling out from the Church a more emphatic statement of what Catholicism is. Unfortunately, this

"independence of mind and freedom of judgment" are for the most part exercised, not against Catholicism, but against the Bible itself, and so result in narrowness of mind, and perverted judgment.

Presumption has no manner of connection with faith in God. It is impossible for faith ever to be carried so far as to become presumption. Presumption connection in neglecting or rejecting the Word of the Lord. It is presumption to go contrary to one of God's precepts, or to fail to yield wholly to His will. Only in perfect trust and obedience is there perfect safety.

"Is It Peace?" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

Is It Peace? -The *Christian* says:-

The reign of the Queen is generally spoken of as a peaceful one; it, therefore, comes upon one with something of a shock to be told, as we are in the *Home Magazine*, that war and preparations for war in her reign have cost ? 2,500,000,000. We spend now ?42,000,000 a year on the Army and Navy. The present war will add an enormous sum to the heavy total already against us. War is, indeed, a game of "beggar-my-neighbour," if it may not be called "beggar-everybody." He loses who wins, as well as he who is defeated.

"The Reason for Ritualism" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

The Reason for Ritualism .-In the recently published biography of Dean Milman, there appears an explanation of ritualism, which seems to come very close to the root of the matter. He thought that young clergymen were in many cases "unequal to the strain of preaching some hundred and fifty sermons a year," so that they were driven to ceremonies as a substitute.

"Further than this, undistinguished (however good, active, and zealous they may be), poor, hardly able to keep their place in society, can we wonder that they invest themselves in their priestly dignity, and are tempted to console themselves for their inferiority in most respects by assuming the belief in their sacerdotal superiority?"

The explanation is not at all flattering to the ritualistic clergy. The real minister of Christ will never find it a strain to preach one hundred and fifty times a year. His charge is, "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season." He who has a message will never be at a loss to deliver it. But preaching is fearfully wearing as a "profession."

"How to Obey" *The Present Truth* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

In the "Soldier's Pocket Book," written for the use of military men, by Lord Wolseley, there is a paragraph headed, "The Obligation of Obeying Orders Implicitly," which may be commended to all who enlist under the banner of the Lord. He says:-

"An officer who designedly disobeys an order, because in his opinion the condition of affairs in his immediate vicinity at the moment he receives it are different from what he knows or presumes the writer of it imagined them to be, rendering it, he thinks, most necessary that he should act in a manner differing from the course indicated in the last order received, takes upon himself a responsibility so serious, that even the success of his own immediate operations may in no way justify his conduct. He may not know or fully grasp the great object generally aimed at by his commander."

If that is true with reference to earthly commanders, how much more ought it to apply in the case of the commandments issued by the Lord of hosts. Yet there are many who imagine that circumstances have so changed since the issuing of the last orders by the Lord,-the Bible,-that they are justified in ignoring them. They do not know that the Word of God "liveth and abideth forever," and that He who knows the end from the beginning, knew how to issue orders that would apply in every possible condition. He who ventures to disregard them, takes upon himself a most serious responsibility, which he will some day find too heavy for him. The angels that excel in strength "do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His Word," and so must we, or else we but mock when we pray, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

February 23, 1899

"Knowing the Doctrine" *The Present Truth* 15, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

It was the feast of Tabernacles, when every Jew was expected to be in Jerusalem. Every road that led to the city would be thronged with rejoicing multitudes going to the feast, glad of the opportunity of a whole week's holiday, and the chance to greet old acquaintances and to form new ones. It was expected to be an occasion of general enjoyment and relaxation from toil, while commemorating the wonderful deliverance which God had wrought for Israel, although, since mankind are always the same, we may believe that with many present associations, more than past mercies, and thought of God's goodness, were the cause of their good feeling.

With this crowd of merry-makers Jesus did not mingle. He was not anxious for more advertisement. He knew how to estimate the verdict of a crowd, and that popular clamour and popular applause are alike vanity. Even when Jesus worked and taught in the presence of multitudes, He would do so in quietness. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench." Isa. xlii. 2, 3. To minister healing to a single afflicted soul in secret was more to Him than to win the passing plaudits of thousands. So Jesus waited until the people had all gone up to the feast, and then He Himself proceeded to Jerusalem in the most quiet manner.

"About the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"

Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself." John vii. 14-17. Where did this Man get His knowledge? was the question asked by the people. The doctors and scribes had never had Him for a pupil, yet He taught with authority that the scribes had not. Ah, He had been taught from above. His teaching was not human speculation, but Divine revelation. It is not by searching that man find out God, but by opening their eyes and hearts to God a revelation of Himself.

Here is a school in which all may learn, and none are so poor that they cannot pay the price. If any man willeth to do His will he shall know the teaching. Whoever is willing to do the will of God, will certainly know that will. He will not only be taught, but he will know without doubt the source and authority of the teaching. God has set teachers in the church, whose business it is to assist people to see the light, to lead them to the truth, but God has never appointed any man to tell another what the truth is, that is, to be his authority for him as to what he should believe, and what he should not. To every man is the right and power given to decide for himself on the most momentous questions. The teacher may hold up the light; the man must for himself know that it is light. Open a man's eyes, and you do not need to go with him to tell him what is light and what is darkness.

While Jesus was teaching in the temple some of the people were listening and learning, but others were speculating, whether he was the Christ or not have the rulers settled that this is the very Christ? Has it become a part of "our faith," so that we may venture to believe it, without fear of arraignment for heresy? Never mind, we know all about this Man; "but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth

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whence He is." Then Jesus cried aloud as He taught in the temple: "Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am; and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not. But I know Him; for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me." Verses 27-29.

Yes; it was true that they know Him, and whence He was; and therefore they were without excuse for not knowing that He was the Christ; for the Scriptures plainly set forth the circumstances and place of His birth. Seeing, they did not see, and hearing, they did not understand. The same condition of things exists to-day. People pass by common things because they are so common, not realising that it is by such means, and not in some startling manner, that God reveals Himself. He who despises "the day of small things" will never stand in "the great day."

"Studies from the Gospel of John. The Test of Truth. John viii. 12, 31-36" *The Present Truth* 15, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

There is no uncertainty in the Gospel of Christ. The difficulties which men imagine they see in it are all in themselves, and these will vanish as soon as they

accept it. This assurance which Jesus gave is true: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii. 13. The light of life is the very essence, the perfection, of light; it is light which one has in himself even as he has life, because it is his life.

Life, light, and love, are three things that agree in one. "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." There is, however, no need for anybody to walk in darkness, "because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." 1 John ii. 8-11. Whoever walks in darkness walks only in the darkness that is in himself. "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Isa. lx. 2. If the darkness were primarily upon the earth, it would be deeper there than on the people; but inasmuch as the denser darkness covers the people, it is evident that the seat of darkness is in the people themselves. "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. xxiv. 12. When love waxes cold, the light goes out, and death comes.

"Love; is of God," for God is love. He is love because He is life and light. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." 1 John i. 5. Jesus Christ is "the brightness of His glory." Heb. i. 3. He is the true light that lighteth every one that comes into the world, because His light is His own life, and none live except by Him; the life is the light of men. John i. 4, 9. He is the Word, and so it is that the entrance of the Word of God gives light. But this light is the light of life and love, for His commandment is life everlasting (John xii. 50), and "this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." 1 John v. 3.

Note: how the words of Jesus are introduced: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world." When had He said this before?—At no time had He said it directly, that we have any record of, but He had said only the day before, "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John vii. 38. Believing on Him is receiving Him (John i. 12); thus the living water that flows from the one who believes on Him, is from the indwelling Christ, who is the fountain of living waters. We see therefore that since life is light, the water of life is the source of the light of those who follow Christ. How often we speak of "sparkling water." That may most truly be said of the river of life, because it is "a flood of light."

The blood is the life. We are saved by the life of Christ, that is, we have redemption through His blood. Everything therefore that is life to us is but a manifestation of the blood of Christ. We must not think that the blood of Christ is merely that portion that issued from the wound of His body on Calvary, and that it fell on the ground and was drunk up by it, so then all talk about being washed in the blood and drinking the blood is only figurative. Not by any means. His blood is incorruptible, and it is real. It is to-day the life of every man on earth. It comes to us in the food that we eat, in the water we drink, in the air we breathe, and in the light that warms and warms and cheers us. We must get rid of our narrow and gross ideas of Christ's life. His life is the Spirit, since the indwelling Spirit is

Christ come to dwell in the heart. God manifests Himself in an infinite variety of ways. We have in our own bodies proof of the fact that the blood of Christ-our life-exists in all things that support our life, for our blood is formed from the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the sunlight. If we would see and acknowledge Christ in all these blessings of life, we should be walking in the light as He is in the light, and the blood of Christ would cleanse us from all sin. Is not the Gospel indeed good news? It is the good news that to every man is salvation come in the life of Christ, which shines in the light, and which breathes in the air. Truly, he who is not saved has no cause of complaint against God.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John viii. 31, 32. Again we repeat that certainty accompanies the Gospel of Christ. Whoever wishes to do the will of God, shall know. By faith we understand. We are not to guess at truth, not to speculate about it, not to be ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, but to know it absolutely. Is it too much for a man to say that he knows that he lives? Do you chide a man for saying, "I am alive"? That is knowledge that a

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man has not to learn; he has not to go outside of himself for it; he does not need to ask anybody's opinion about it. But Jesus Christ is "the way, and the truth, and the life;" the life is the truth; the true light that lights every man is the truth itself. So every man may and should be able to know the truth as absolutely as he knows that he lives.

By what means can, it be determined that a man is alive?-By seeing if there is motion. If the heart beats, if we can detect the faintest flutter in any artery, showing that the blood is moving, we know that the man is alive. So even a dying man will demonstrate to us that life is not yet extinct, by moving a finger or turning his eyes. How much more can that man in whom there is abundance of life be sure of the fact. He can move his arms freely; he can leap and shout; there is free action in every muscle. He knows that he lives, and if some croaking sceptic should chide for his positiveness, saying, "You should not express yourself so confidently; you may say that you think you live, or you hope you are alive, but it is altogether too presumptuous for you to say that you know you are alive, at least until you have had a council of doctors," he would laugh in his face. This same joyous confidence may anybody have as to his absolute knowledge of the truth.

Just as we know that we live, by the working of life in us, so may we know the truth by what it does. It gives freedom. "Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin. And the bondservant abideth not in the house for ever; the Son abideth ever. If, therefore, the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." There is no bondage but sin, even as sin alone is death. But the truth is life, and the truth of life makes the conscious possessor of it free from sin. Truth is not a theory, a dogma, a creed, but it is life-*the life*. Whatever a man holds that does not make any difference in his life, is not truth; but everything that gives a man freedom from something that binds him, is truth.

The statement of truth is not the truth itself, any more than the recipe for making bread is food. A man might have a perfect knowledge of the proper food elements for the nourishment of the body, and might know how they should be combined, and might be able to tell just how every dish should be prepared, and might starve to death while telling it. Even no man may have a perfect theory of truth and yet not know the truth, because he has not yielded himself to its quickening influences; he may die while talking about life. A man knows only what he experiences, and experience is life. Only that man knows the truth, in whom the truth is that life.

There is no attempt in this to disparage statements of truth. It is well to have a perfect form; but the form of a man, without life, is nothing. A man may say, "I believe," and go on to recite a creed in which the keenest theologian or Bible student can detect no flaw, and still be densely ignorant of the truth. No creed or formula, however true it is, is *the truth*, for the truth is *the life*. For example, chemists tell us that the formula for sugar is $C_6H_{12}O_6$. That is, sugar is composed of six molecules of carbon, twelve of hydrogen, and six of oxygen. Now a person may know all that, and may repeat the formula a thousand times without once having a sweet taste in his mouth. That formula is not sugar; it simply stands to the eye of the chemist instead of the word; it is a description, but it is not the thing itself.

There is not a soul that has not been at some time conscious of being in bondage. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. v. 17. This is something real; it is no theory. When a man wishes to do something, and finds himself bound, or is compelled to do something that he does not wish to do, he is painfully conscious of the reality. Now if that which he holds as truth enables him to do the good that he would do, and to refrain from the evil that he would not do; yea, more than this, if it enables him to wish to do the good which before he shrank from, and to abhor the evil which he once loved, then to the extent that this is true, he has the truth. The truth makes free. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 17), "because the Spirit is truth." 1 John v. 6.

Let nobody rest content that he has all the truth, because he knows something of this freedom. Many a near-sighted man has supposed that he could see as well as anybody, until he put on spectacles. It is possible for a person to become so accustomed to a cramped position as to feel quite comfortable in it. To move from it may cause him pain, but when he is fully aroused he is conscious of a buoyancy and freedom that he did not know before. The ignorant man may think that he knows everything; but when knowledge actually comes to him, he knows it, and knows that formerly he was ignorant. A man may be mistaken in his ideas of knowledge and freedom while he is ignorant and in bondage, but when light and freedom come there is no mistaking them. "Always more to follow" is true of God's gifts; so let every soul know that there is always greater measure of freedom and larger measure of life yet before him.

Jesus Christ is the truth. Notice how He uses the words "the Son" as synonymous with "the truth." He says: "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My

disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." So just as one may know the truth, an may we know Christ. It is possible to make His personal acquaintance, and know Him better than we, know anybody else in the world. "We, know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." 1 John v. 20. He who knows not this knows nothing; he who knows this truth has the key to "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

God's promises are like the rainbow, high as the heavens, yet bending low, they touch our every need.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Strength Out of Weakness. Isa. xi. 1-9" *The Present Truth* 15, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XI. 1-9, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. But there shall spring forth a rod from the trunk of Jesse; and a scion from his roots shall become fruitful.

2. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him;
The Spirit of wisdom, and understanding;
The Spirit of counsel and strength;
The Spirit of the knowledge, and the fear of Jehovah.

3. And He shall be of quick discernment in the fear of Jehovah:
So that not according to the sight of His eyes shall He judge;
Nor according to the hearing of His ears shall He reprove.

4. But with righteousness shall He judge the poor;
And with equity shall He work conviction in the meek of the earth.
And He shall smite the earth with a blast of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked one.

5. And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins;
And faithfulness the cincture of His reins.

6. Then shall the wolf take up his abode with the lamb;
And the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
And the calf and the young lion, and the

fatling shall come together;
And a little child shall lead them.

7. And the heifer and the she-bear shall feed
together;

Together shall their young ones lie down;
And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8. And the suckling shall play on the hole of the
aspic,
And upon the den of the basilisk shall the
weaned child lay his hand.

9. They shall not hurt, nor destroy, in all My holy
mountain;
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge
of Jehovah,
As the waters that cover the depths of the sea.

It will be seen that this chapter is a continuation of something begun in the preceding chapter. Read verses 33 and 34 of chapter 10, and you will see that a general destruction is foretold. "Behold Jehovah shall lop the flourishing branch with a dreadful crash; and the high of stature shall be cut down, and the lofty shall be brought low; and He shall bew the thickets oft with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty hand." But, although there shall be this cutting off of the mighty trees of the forest, "there shall spring forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a scion from his roots shall be fruitful. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him," so that He shall do great things.

"There shall spring forth a rod." The Hebrew word here rendered "rod," occurs in but one other place in the Bible, namely, Prov. ix. 3. "In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride." A rod, a stick, only a stick, yet of more value than all the trees of the forest because of the Spirit of Jehovah resting upon Him. This also is for our learning and comfort. Did you never feel that you were but a useless stick? Never mind; it is with a stick, a rod such as one might cut as a useless thing, that God will judge the world. "I can of Mine own self do nothing." "I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of man, and despised of the people." This is what Christ said of Himself. No man can possibly feel himself more helpless and useless. But it is not what we are, but what God is, that determines what shall be done. He is. That is enough. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is."

"Yes, but I am so"-

Stop! It is not you are, but He is. If you come to God believing that He is, you will not straightway begin to say of yourself, "I am."

"But hear me out. I was only going to say that I am nothing at all."

Of course you are not; that is embraced in the statement that He is. As long as He is, you don't need to be. Let Him be what He is,-everything,-and then you will find your happiness in the fact that you are nothing. But don't forget that the only proper way for you to declare that you are nothing is to acknowledge that God, and God only, *is*.

The Spirit of Jehovah shall abide upon Him. The same Spirit is given to us, that He may abide with us for ever. He will be to us all that He was to Jesus, for

He is "the eternal Spirit." The spirit of man is the life of man, since "the body without the spirit is dead." So the Spirit of God is the life of God. "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." When the Spirit of Jehovah rests upon one, that one has the power of the life of Jehovah,—"the power of an endless life." What can be done by that one then (Mind, it is not what that one can do, but what can be done through him. See Acts ii. 22), is measured only by God's own purposes for him. When the life of Jehovah animates a person, it matters not how insignificant he is,—he is then the instrument of Almighty power. When God breathed His life into a lump of earth, the clod became a man having dominion over all the earth.

How diversified are the manifestations of the Spirit? Here are set forth at least six of "the seven Spirits of God." The Spirit of God is pre-eminently wisdom and power for eyes are a synonym for perception, and horns indicate power; and the slain Lamb in the midst of the throne has "seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." Rev. v. 6. Why are they sent forth into all the earth? Is it to spy upon people!—By no means; they are sent forth to be our wisdom; for Christ is to us "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

"The Spirit of wisdom and understanding; the Spirit of counsel and might." Wisdom is practical, not theoretical; it is real, and not simply a conception. The wisdom of God does not exhaust itself in formulas and statements. That which God in His wisdom counsels, He does. The counsel of peace is between the Father and the Son, and Christ our peace has come making peace for us. "He layeth up

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sound wisdom for the righteous." Prov. ii. 7. This word, "wisdom," and also in Job xii. 16, "with Him is strength and wisdom," are the same as the words "substance" and "working" in the following texts: "Thou dissolvest my *substance*." (Job xxx. 22), and "the Lord of hosts. . . wonderful in counsel, and excellent in *working*." Isa. xxviii. 29. There is in His wisdom the performance of the thing. "He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion." Jer. x. 12. This is the wisdom that God gives us. It is the wisdom that succeeds. It is not the wisdom of man, which plans, and then tries the plans to see if they will work; God's plans always work. His plan works itself. Why need any man fall? He cannot, if he accepts the free gift of God. The wisdom of God and the power of God must overcome everything; and they are ours in Christ. Of the man who walks in the counsel of God, it is said that "whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Ps. i. 1-3.

"And shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." The two words "quick understanding" are from a single Hebrew word, the verb meaning "to smell." It is the verb from which comes the Hebrew word for wind, air, spirit. It is the name word that is rendered "smell" in Gen. viii. 21, "the Lord *smelled* a sweet savour," in Ps. cxv. 6, "noses have they, but they smell not," and in other places. So we may read this verse, "The Spirit of the Lord shall cause Him to smell the fear of the Lord." But one smells by breathing, drawing in the air. So we have the most literal rendering by Segond, "Il respirera la craintede l'Eternel,"—He

shall breathe the fear of the Lord. That is to say, the fear of the Lord is His life, He breathes it in with every breath. And since it is only because of our breath that we are able to have any pleasure, and breathing is itself a delight, we can see in the text the rendering also of the Revised Version: "His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord."

Remember that Jesus is the representative Man. The one here referred to is from "the stem of Jesse." Christ was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. Rom. i. 3, 4. Therefore it is "the Man Christ Jesus" upon whom this Spirit of understanding rests. Therefore in Him the same gift is ours. Every one whose delight is in the law of the Lord, shall have prosperity in everything; and the Spirit of God is given in order that we may have our delight in the fear of the Lord. If in the air that we breathe we recognise God's own Spirit of life, life itself will be a greater pleasure than ever before, and the delight of our life will be the presence of the Lord. So it was with Jesus.

Can the breath of God make a man good?-Most certainly. Christ breathed upon the disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John xx. 22. In the beginning God made man of the dust of the ground. The man was perfect in form, but there was no life in him. As a man he was good for nothing. Then God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul-a "very good" man. As soon as God had made the man perfect by breathing into him, He saw everything that He had made, and, behold, "it was very good." But that could not have been said of man before the breath of God was put into him. Therefore it was the breath of God that made man good-very good. But it was the breath of God-that made him good, and it is by that that we are saved. See Rom. v. 10. As freely as the air is the Holy Spirit given to us, and He comes to us in the very gift of the air. God gives us air, breathing it moment by moment into our lungs, in order that we may live. But He expects us to live righteously, and He gives us the means whereby to live righteously, for the life which He gives to all men is His own life, and His life is righteousness. If we but recognised the Lord as He is, we should breathe in righteousness with every breath. The Spirit of God would be our life, so that we should be wholly spiritual. See Rom. viii. 9, 10. The Spirit would be our wisdom and our power. We should know the will of God, because God would do our thinking in us, thus working to will; and we should do His will, because He would at the same time work to do of His good pleasure. There are infinite possibilities before the man who accepts the Spirit of God as his life. What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and what the mind of man has never conceived, God hath revealed unto us by His Holy Spirit.

He shall not judge according to appearance nor according to hearsay. But that is just the way men judge, and the only way they judge. Note the contrast: "He shall not judge after the His eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness shall He judge." That is to say, He judges with righteousness because He does not judge after sight nor hearing. Therefore to judge after the sight of one's eyes, and after the hearing of one's ears, is to judge unrighteously. But since this is the only way by which judgment in the world is rendered, it follows that there is not on earth any such thing as righteous judgment. A well-known London magistrate said to a man who came to his court

seeking justice: "You must know that law and justice are two entirely different things; you can get the law here, but not justice." This is so, not because there are no men yet in the world who have right desires, but because the best human judgment must be faulty. It is absolutely impossible that there should be a perfectly just human government.

"With righteousness shall He judge." He Himself is righteousness; His life is righteousness. He judges with righteousness because He judges by Himself. It is personal experience with Him. He has passed through every possible phase of human experience. Although in Him was never any sin, He was made to be sin for us, and as a sinner He experienced the punishment due to sin. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him." Now He was made to be sin for us, in order "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him;" therefore when this purpose is fulfilled in us, we do not come into judgment at all (see John v. 24); but if not, then we experience the punishment that inevitably follows the rejection of His life. When in the judgment it appears that God's perfect, eternal life has been given to all men, each soul will pronounce sentence on himself, and declare that God is just. No one can say that it is unfair in God to give us exactly what He gave His only begotten Son.

With the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked one. Compare 2 Thess. ii. 8. "Our God is a consuming fire." His life is constantly working to consume evil,-all that tends to death,-else we could not live. The life of God in the sunlight, the air, and the water, is continually at work to purify the earth. Waste products are consumed. This shows us how God a Spirit is working for our cleansing. But if, in spite of the goodness of God, we cling to evil, so that we ourselves are evil, then at the last that life which is given us for our support, and which works for our good by consuming that which is corrupt,

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will necessarily consume us as plague-spots on the earth. So the slaying of the wicked at the last day is by the life of God, and is in keeping with the working of God to preserve life. The working of the life will result in the destruction of death, by destroying every cause of death.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; the cow and the bear, and their young ones, shall feed and lie down together; so gentle will these beasts be that a child can lead them at pleasure; and the now venomous beasts will be the harmless playmate of the prattling babe: "they shall not hurt nor destroy," because the whole earth will then be full of the knowledge of the Lord; and "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." James iii. 17.

See what a change is to take place in the nature of the now ferocious beasts; but do not suppose that this involves any new plan; it is only the restoration of that condition of things which existed at the beginning. God never made one beast to prey upon another. In the beginning, when God gave to man his diet of fruits and grains, He said, "And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so." Gen. i. 30. The wolf, the

leopard, and the lion, were therefore vegetarians in the beginning, just as the ox is.

God is the Good Shepherd, who feeds His flock, watching over it for its own good, and giving His life that the sheep of His pasture may have life. He does not tend His flock in order that He may live off them. Satan is the roaring lion going about seeking whom he may devour. From him man has learned to destroy life in order that he may live, and by so doing has shortened his own life; for destruction can never produce life, any more than the wrath of man can work the righteousness of God. And when man, creation's lord, began to develop the Satanic instinct of preying on animals that were placed under him for protections and care, they also themselves developed the same traits, the strong devouring, instead of shielding, the weaker. Thus the earth became so full of violence that God was compelled to cleanse it by a flood of water. Now after so long a time is the condition that existed in those days returning (Matt. xxiv. 37), so that God will be compelled to cleanse the earth again by a flood of fire. "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field, and the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever;" and God's "people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Isa. xxxii. 16-18.

From all this it is easy to see that in the new earth, which will simply be the earth as it was first made for the abode of man, there will be no flesh-eating among men. Slaughter houses will be unknown. No streams of blood will flow, and no beast will groan out its life to satiate the instincts of its cruel master. Man will then rejoice to live as God designed that he should. Life will be sustained by life, and not by death, and so life will be perfect.

There is probably no one who will dispute this. The most ravenous devourer of flesh would not think, if he should stop to think, of slaying and eating in the abode of God, when "the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." Rev. xxi. 3. But cannot all see in this a reason for now leaving off the use of flesh as food, and adopting in its stead the abundant bill of fare which God gave man? This time is given us in which to prepare for the future world. We must now begin to live the life that is to continue to eternity. No man would think that he should continue to indulge hatred and envy, expecting God to change his character to love and peace at His coming; then why should anyone think that any other habit is to be continued, which will not exist in the perfect state.

Some one may urge that the beasts still prey upon one another, and that the nature of animals will not be changed until the coming of the Lord. True; and that very thing contains a reason why men should correct their habits. Men are not beasts, but are made with moral natures, so that they may be associates of God. If man were not endowed with a free will, which allies him to God, then he would have no responsibility, and would depend on God to effect all changes in him, without his co-operation; but as it is, man must perfect holiness in the fear of God. What a humiliating thing for any man to admit that he is waiting for God to effect changes in his character, just as He does in the beasts. God's kingdom is to come, and His will be done in earth as it is in heaven, by the yielding of

individuals at this present time to the perfect will of God. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

**"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Flowers" *The Present Truth*
15, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

FLOWERS

How we love them, and how eagerly we watch for the first blossoms of Spring! Think of the love of God in giving us the flowers. So many of the things that we have talked about together, He has provided to supply some *need* of ours, something that we could not live without, and the air which brings us the breath of life, the sunshine, and the food that He brings for us out of the earth. But have you ever thought that

"God might have made the earth bring forth
Enough for great and small,
The oak tree and the cedar tree,
Without a flower at all.

"Our outward life requires them not;
Then wherefore had they birth?
To minister delight to man,
To beautify the earth."

Yes, our Heavenly Father, when He prepared a home for His children, did everything that could be done to give them pleasure. He made things "pleasant to the sight," as well as "good for food." And think, too, of the delightful odours of so many of the Spring flowers, the sweet breath of the violet, the hyacinth, and the cowslip.

All this God has done on purpose for us His children; for as the great and good poet George Herbert has truly and sweetly sung:-

"Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight or as our treasure;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure."

It is told of the great naturalist Linnaeus that when he first came to England and saw our common gorse or furze bush in its blaze of yellow flowers, he fell on his knees and thanked God for letting him see such a beautiful sight.

Is not a flower a beautiful gift for one friend to give to another? For not only is it so sweet in itself, but we love it all the more because of the kind thought of the giver; of whom it makes us think every time that we look at it.

Now if you will take each one of the sweet blossoms of Spring as just what it is,-a gift to you from your Heavenly Father, how much sweeter they will be to you than ever before. Then every time you see one you will think of Him who made it with His own hands for you, who painted it with lovely tints of colour to please your eyes, and scented it with delicious fragrance for you to smell. Then every

flower you see will preach the Gospel to you, for is it not "good news" that your Father in Heaven loves and thinks of you so much?

Let me tell you one thing more about the flowers. Not only has God made them for you, but in them He is giving Himself to you. The life that the flowers have is God's own life, their beauty is "the beauty of the Lord."

When in the beginning God said, "Let the earth bring forth," "the Spirit of God moved" upon the earth, and His living Word sprang up from it clothed in all these beautiful forms. God wanted His children to see His loveliness, so that they might be attracted to Him and learn to love Him more and more.

Now as you "consider the lilies, how they grow," they will teach you how you, too, may grow in grace, and show forth the beauty of the Lord, so that others may see and learn to love Him.

It is just by hearing His Word, by letting His Word, which He says is "Spirit and life" come in and move upon your heart, and work there as you can now see it working in the earth, making the grass and flowers to spring up from it.

If you keep the precious and powerful words of God in your heart, this good seed will bring forth in you all the sweet graces of His Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance.

"Sweet is the opening flower
Which just begins to bloom,
Which every day and every hour
Fresh beauties will assume.

"But sweeter that young heart
Where faith and love and peace
Blossom and bloom in every part,
With sweet and varied grace."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

-Over 60,300 oil wells have been sunk in the United States.

-In India the average duration of life of the natives is 24 years as against 44 in Britain.

-A serious hitch has occurred in the Anglo-American negotiations, and complete failure is anticipated.

-An emu, kept by a gentleman at Lyndhurst, died from swallowing a packet of tobacco, which it had extracted from the pocket of a workman.

-The German War Minister stated in the Reichstag that the French Army was now equal to the German. It was voted to increase the infantry to 625 battalions.

-Iloilo has been captured by the American troops after being bombarded. The rebels set fire to the place before leaving it, and considerable damage was done.

-The most wonderful astronomical photograph in the world is that which has recently been prepared by London, Berlin, and Parisian astronomers. It shows at least 68,000,000 stars.

-During the recent blizzard in New York, when 10,000 persons were declared to be actually starving, and 60,000 more were on the verge of destitution, a

banquet costing \$14,000 was given by a municipal official to the Mayor and forty friends. A saloon of the Waldorf Hotel was fitted up as an Arcadian glade, and the guests, like those at the feasts described by Horace, sat and plucked overhanging grapes, peaches and nuts from vines and trees.

-Hygienic Bibles have been provided for police courts in New York. The covers are glazed, set easily disinfected.

-Mr. John Keneit has been asked to contest Mr. Balfour's seat at Manchester when the next Parliamentary election is held.

-Colonel Kitchener's dying column has reconnoitred the Khalifs's position, and found it to be a strong one on the shore of Lake Sberkella. The column has returned to the Nile without encountering the enemy.

-A man employed at a City club accidentally cut off his nose while sharpening a knife. The nose was replaced and stitched on by a doctor half an hour afterwards. The union is said to be perfect, only showing a slight scar.

-Nearly the whole of the Thames Valley has been seriously affected by the recent heavy rains. At Oxford there is forty-four inches above high water, and there is every probability of a much further rise.

-A feature of the Paris Exhibition next year will be a moving pavement. The proposal is to have two pavements working in opposite directions, one on each side of the roadway. Pedestrians will be able to slip on and off without inconvenience.

-The introduction of the Imperial penny post is already beginning to take effect. Letters between India and the British Isles have increased to greatly during the last few weeks that the sorting staff on the mail steamers is hardly able to get through its work.

-Ten years ago Russia occupied the seventh place among the iron-producing countries; now she has advanced to the fifth place, her output during 1897 exceeding that of Austria-Hungary and Belgium. During the year 1897, Russia produced 2,043,000 tons of iron.

-A correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* states that during 1898, 124,800 cases; or 3,207 tons of cheap gin were shipped to the territory controlled by the Royal Niger Company, from Rotterdam and Hamburg. He says that the cost of the gin is threepence per bottle, and it is sold to the natives at a profit of 100 per cent.

-The United States have been visited by a terrific snow-storm and blizzard, which extended over 1,000 miles, as far south as Florida. Railway and steamship traffic was suspended, and the large cities were completely cut off from the surrounding country, with the result that the price of fuel and provisions rapidly doubled. A number of large liners were unable to enter New York, owing to the blinding snow.

-In New York a boy of sixteen was charged with attempting suicide, but was dismissed by the magistrate who said: "I believe in suicide. When a man is through with this world let him shuffle off. When I am no longer useful to anyone else or to myself that's what I intend to do." Magistrates stand as much in need of the saving power of the Gospel as the poor wretches who are brought before them, and the magistrate who does not trust in the Lord is as badly off as any

criminal, although it does not appear so plainly in every case as it does in this one.

-Some consternation has been caused in the United States by a statement of a high official that Congress has been entirely too prodigal in voting away money, and that unless greater economy were exercised a bond issue this summer would be inevitable. At present the deficiency is at the rate of \$32,000,000 a fiscal year. This did not include \$4,000,000 for the obligation assumed in the peace treaty, or the extraordinary expense for the Army and Navy, to say nothing of the appropriation for the construction of the Nicaragua Canal.

"Introduction to the Study of the Bible" *The Present Truth* 15, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

Introduction to the Study of the Bible .-There is a popular idea, fostered, and indeed fathered, by the theological schools, that the Bible is so difficult a book that one must needs study almost everything else before beginning it. Even then the student must have what is called an "Introduction to the Study of the Bible," which is a book telling him what to expect to find in the Sacred Book, and how much credence he may venture to give each particular portion of it.

Now the best way to introduce two men is to bring them together as soon as possible, and let them become acquainted, and not spend months biasing the minds of each about the other. So the best way to introduce one to the study of the Bible is to open its pages to him, and bid him get acquainted as quickly and as thoroughly as possible. Let the Bible tell its own story, and reveal its own character to the enquirer, instead of diverting his mind from it to yourself.

This is just what is done in a book of nearly seven hundred pages, entitled "The Great Empires of Prophecy," recently published by the "Review and Herald Publishing Company," Battle Creek, Mich., U.S.A. The author is A. T. Jones, with whose name and writings the regular readers of PRESENT TRUTH have become familiar. In the language of the Bible itself, together with contemporary history as recorded on the monuments and tablets, the history of the various empires mentioned in prophecy is given in connected order and in full, and the reader is enabled to see their relation to the great purpose of God for this earth. Many maps, made especially for this work, help to fix the mental picture made by the text. The book is intensely interesting, and no one who begins to read it will wish to leave it unfinished. By its history is made more of a living thing than is usually the case, and not so much a matter of mere records.

This book, together with its companion, "Empires of the Bible," published by this same author two years ago, may be obtained at this office. It contains 696 pages and the price is 8s. 6d.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

Count Leo Tolstoy has written a long letter to the *Daily Chronicle*, in which he points out the futility of expecting that the forthcoming Peace Conference will do anything to lessen the risk of war. He asserts that it is not within the power of any

government to control or arrest the forces which make for war, and that the only hope is in the moral enlightenment of individual consciences. He says:-

At the very time when the Russian Government was making known to the whole world its quasi peace-loving measures, it was torturing, ruining, and exiling the most peaceable and peace-loving people in Russia, simply because they refused to do military service. All the European Governments have acted in the same way, and do still sit towards those who refuse to serve in the army. The Governments know very well what is important to them and what is not. Therefore they gladly allow crackling speeches and Socialistic demonstrations, knowing that all these are very useful phenomena, because they drew the attention of people from what is really dangerous to the business of governing-namely, the means of liberation. But more than everything else in the world do they fear the awakening in individual persons of the sense of human worth, and, as an immediate consequence of this, the refusal to take part in military service.

It may be wondered why we refer so frequently to the suggested Peace Conference. It is because this is one of the signs of the last days. The second chapter of Isaiah, which describes the pride of man and his confidence in the works of his own hands just before the coming of the Lord, when He alone is exalted, shows in the second verse that the Church and the world are one in spirit at this time.

In that time all will join in professing peace, and saying that the nations shall beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and God shall rule over them all. Why not? Have not all the nations flowed into the Church? Yet at that very time God has forsaken His people, because they get everything, not from Him but from the east, and are become soothsayers like the Philistines.

The present situation and cry of peace do not entirely fulfil this prophecy, but they show that it is on the road to fulfilment. Where do men get those pleasing visions of a peaceful future? They get them from the soothsayers. A soothsayer is one who has a spirit of divination, a Spirit which it is the work of Christ's followers to cast out. See Acts xvi. 16-18. Instead of doing this professed Christians themselves become soothsayers, and so are led to cry, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace. In this connection, it is interesting if not instructive, to notice that the man who is most prominent in the work of the "peace crusade" in this country, Mr. W. T. Stead, is the editor of a Spiritualist magazine, and openly avows himself to have dealings with a spirit, to whose guidance he submits.

"Elusive Peace" *The Present Truth* 15, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

The Czar's peace proposals are still attracting attention, but there seems to be no definite idea as to how they are to be carried out. Each nation would gladly be relieved of the strain imposed upon it by the steady increase of its armament, but none has sufficient confidence in the pacific intentions of any other to be the first to begin the work of disarming, or even of stopping the increase. The

following paragraph from the *Daily Mail* shows how the matter stands. After recounting the proposals, it says:-

There are, however, great practical difficulties in the way of carrying out those proposals. England, for instance, has not as yet fully replied to the enormous Russian cruiser programme of last year, while she has also to make up the ground lost during the strike of 1897. Then she has to meet the great French and Russian increase in outlay on ship-building, which has marked their programmes for 1897. When she has done this, a work absolutely necessary for her safety, she will be ready to agree to no further increase if other and rival powers will do so too-indeed to make a substantial decrease.

But when England has met Russia's increase in cruisers, it will doubtless be discovered that she has more than met it, by a few hundred tons, and Russia will again be forced to build, and this will again be regarded by England as an additional Monaco. Indeed, Russia has already placed new orders for a new first-class cruiser, and two torpedo boats, to be ready in 1900, and plans are ready for several new ironclads. The sum to be devoted to armaments this year by Russia, exceeds that of last year by ?5,000,000.

So it appears that while they talk peace, they prepare war. For this they must not be taxed with insincerity. They mean what they say, but they have no confidence in one another. Now where there is no mutual confidence there can be no peace. But there is nothing in human nature to inspire confidence. Only in Christ, who is our peace, can there ever be any perfect peace. But people do not put on Christ as nations, but as individuals, and the mass will ever reject Him. So it is impossible to hope for peace until after the battle of the great day of God has been brought, in which all who do not accept the Gospel will suffer everlasting destruction. Then "the meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

March 1, 1899

**"The Gospel of Isaiah. Everlasting Righteousness Our Salvation. Isa.
li. 1-8" *The Present Truth* 16, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. LI. 1-8, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. "Hearken unto Me, ye that pursue righteousness,
Ye that seek Jehovah.

Look unto the rock from whence ye were hewn;
And to the hollow of the cave, whence ye were digged.

2. Look unto Abraham your father;
And unto Sarah who bore you:
For I called him being a single person,
And I blessed him, and I multiplied him.

3. Thus therefore shall Jehovah console Sion;
He shall console all her desolations;

And He shall make her wilderness like Eden;
And her desert like the garden of Jehovah;
Joy and gladness shall be found in her;
Thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

4. Attend unto Me, O ye peoples;
And give ear unto Me, O ye nations;
For the law from Me shall proceed;
And My judgments will I cause to break forth
for a light to the peoples.

5. My righteousness is at hand; My salvation goeth forth;
And Mine arm shall dispense judgment to the peoples;
Me the distant lands shall expect;
And to Mine arm shall they look with confidence.

6. Lift up unto the heavens your eyes;
And look down unto the earth beneath;
Verily the heavens shall dissolve, like smoke;
And the earth shall wax old, like a garment;
And its inhabitants shall perish, like the vilest insect;
But My salvation shall endure for ever;
And My righteousness shall not decay.

7. Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness;
The people in whose heart is My law;
Fear not the reproach of wretched man;
Neither be ye borne down by the revilings.

8. For the moth shall consume them, like a garment;

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And the worm shall eat them like wool;
But My righteousness shall endure for ever;
And My salvation to the age of ages."

The reader cannot fail to notice the difference between Lowth's translation and the ordinary rendering of verse 6, and some may wonder what warrant there can be for so much difference, and how we can be sure of anything when translators differ so widely. What similarity can there be between "in like manner" and "like the vilest insect?" The matter is easily explained. It is well known that in our own language there are many instances of words spelled alike, yet having entirely different meanings. We have no difficulty with them, because the connection always tells us which meaning is intended. Even so it is in the Hebrew. The word of "thus" or "so" is spelled the same as that for "gnat" or "fly." All other translations of which the writer has any knowledge, read, "the inhabitants shall die like gnats," and this rendering is suggested in the margin of the Revised Version of the English. A moment's thought is sufficient to show anybody that "like gnats" is much more striking than "as so," which our translators preferred, and that it is evidently what the Lord really says. It is not a vital matter, but is worthy of note.

ABRAHAM AN EXAMPLE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Here we have a call direct to those who would follow the Lord,-to those who seek righteousness. There are many who are seeking it in the wrong way. "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." Rom. ix. 31, 32. We are therefore directed to Abraham, for an example of how righteousness is obtained. "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Rom. iv. 2-7.

"The Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith." Abraham was a Gentile, brought up a heathen. See Joshua xxiv. 2, 3, where we have almost the exact language as in our lesson in Isaiah. He was but one, yet God gave him a numerous posterity through faith, for "if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii. 29. Look to him, and learn the power of faith. Learn how God can work against all human probabilities. Look also to Sarah, who by faith "received power to conceive seed when she was past age, since she counted Him faithful that promised." Heb. xi. 11. "Thus therefore shall Jehovah console Sion." In that way, and by that means, will God build up and restore Jerusalem; by the preaching of the Gospel among all nations, will God from among the Gentiles raise up a faithful seed to inherit the land of promise, even as He raised up Abraham in the first place. And herein is comfort for the individual, for it matters not how lonely and weak a man may be, God is able to multiply him and make him great.

THE MERCY OF GOD'S JUSTICE

It is common for people to look upon the law of God with dread. They regard it as a terrible thing, the instrument only of wrath. That depends wholly upon how they receive it. Out of Christ, it is but an instrument of death, but if we receive it in Christ, it is "the law of the Spirit of life." The throne of grace, to which we are invited to come with boldness, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Heb. iv. 16), is the very same throne out of which proceed "lightnings, and thunders, and voices." Rev. iv. 5. But we must not forget that it was even so at the cross, were we look for salvation. All the terrors of Sinai were there, yet it is from the cross that all our comfort comes. And the cross was the throne of God, having God's law as its basis, with the stream of life flowing from it. The law is not opposed to the Gospel, and does not even have to be reconciled with it; but the law of God in Christ is the Gospel. Justice does not

have to give way to mercy, nor even to be blended with it; but it is the justice of God that justifies the ungodly. Rom. iii. 24-26.

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice,
That is more than liberty.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

But God's heart is just, for God Himself is just. Therefore, because God is just, and His law is His own life, people will learn to trust and hope in it, and will walk in the light of it. God's law is to be loved and delighted in, instead of to be feared and rejected. God's law is salvation to every one who accepts it in Christ.

God says, "My righteousness is near." Yes, for God Himself is "not far from every one of us," and He is our righteousness. Christ is of God made unto us righteousness and sanctification and redemption. His righteousness is near, and His salvation has gone forth. His life is righteousness and salvation, and it has been given freely for all. The gift has been bestowed, and we have not even to ask for it, but only to take it. What a blessed thing it is to know that we may trust on the arm of Jehovah! "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

GOD'S LAW EVERLASTING

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away," says Christ. Matt. xxiv. 35. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 17, 18. "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke xvi. 17. Everything that can be shaken will be removed; but God's law will stand for ever; it is unchangeable, for it is God's own righteousness, and He is "from everlasting to everlasting." It is the expression of God's will (Rom. ii. 17, 18), therefore "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John ii. 17.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE LAW

That God's righteousness is His law, is seen from verse 7. God says, "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law." That is to say, the people who know righteousness are the people in whose heart God's law is. If this were the only statement of the kind in the Bible, it would be sufficient to show that there can be no righteousness where the law of God is not; but it must

be there by faith; for this perfect righteousness of the law is found only in Christ, and He dwells in the heart by faith.

This verse shows another thing also, and that is that no one can know the law except by experience. It is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness. One may be able to repeat the commandments as glibly as he can the alphabet, he may discourse beautifully about "the plan of salvation," but he knows nothing of God or His righteous law unless he has experienced the power of His salvation. We know what we have lived, and nothing more. All the rest we have merely heard about.

"Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth." Ps. cxix. 142. It is the law of God, therefore, that is to be the shield and buckler of God's people in the time of trouble. See Ps. xci. 4. The law of God will be the defense of His people. It is the one enduring thing, therefore we are exhorted, "fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool." Why then should anybody be afraid of the reproaches of men? They have all fallen on Christ, and He has deprived them of all their sting. It is no shame to be reproached with Him. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." 1 Peter iv. 14. Ancient Egypt was a wonderfully rich country, and Moses was well acquainted with it; for he had been brought up at the court; yet he esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Heb. xi. 26. If the reproach of Christ is so wondrously rich in blessing, what must the unveiled glory be?

Review these verses, and note how much stress is laid upon the fact that God's righteousness and salvation are for ever; they cannot be abolished. This constitutes all our hope. Many professed Christians seemed to think that it is their duty as ministers of the Gospel to teach people to disregard the law of God. They forget that in so doing they are ranging themselves with the heathen, who vainly say, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." At all such feeble efforts as these God will laugh. And we should laugh also, for in the stability of God's law is our salvation. If God's law could be abolished, that would show that His Government is weak, and that He is not able to protect those who put their trust in Him. Therefore we may say, "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage," and also, "O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day." And well it may be, for God's commandment is "exceeding broad," and contains more than the mind of man can fathom even in the ages of eternity. If we long for God's salvation, He will open our eyes, that we may behold wonderful things out of His law.

SALVATION THAT LASTS

"My salvation shall be for ever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished." Remember this; it will help you all your life through. When you are inclined to doubt if you can endure unto the end, and you think that sin and sickness must necessarily overtake you once in a while, recall these words of the Lord. His righteousness is an everlasting righteousness; it cannot be abolished. His

salvation, the health and strength of the body and soul, that He gives, is for ever. You are well today; is it an accident? or is your health from God? From God undoubtedly. Well, then, since He has given you health today, can He not continue it indefinitely? You say that He can if He will. Well, do you think that He wishes anything else than that you should be well? The leper said, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean;" and Jesus said, "I will." He has said through His beloved disciple, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper, and be in health." 3 John 2. Be sure, then, that the Lord does not wish that you should be ill. It is no credit to Him to have His children in poor health. If then He wishes you to be well, what can hinder it? You say, and rightly, too, that your ignorance of the laws of health will hinder it. So it is really an accident that you are well today; because you have accidentally come into harmony with the law of your being. But Christ is the law of your being, and for you to say that you do not know the laws of life, is the same as saying that you do not know the Lord. Then get acquainted with Him. Study His life as revealed in all creation, and learn how to come into harmony with it. Then that which happens once in a while accidentally, will be the rule. And likewise with your soul. The life that keeps you from the power of the devil today, will, if yielded to intelligently, keep you every day, even through eternity. "His Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." 2 Peter i. 3. So "the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

"Keeping the Tongue" *The Present Truth* 16, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." This is a test that ought to be repeated over and over with increasing emphasis, for evil speaking has come to be the bane of society, and the curse of the church. With many, even professed Christians, it is so easy to listen to and circulate an evil report against their fellowmen. It may or it may not be true, but whether true or false it has the same blighting effect.

Evil speaking emanates from the "father of lies." He is the "accuser of the brethren." Not so Christ. Though persecuted and slandered and insulted, He uttered no retaliatory word in reply. When He was reviled, "He reviled not again."

How restful and satisfactory it is, when one at the close of day, can look back over it and feel that in his intercourse with the people, no word of censure or criticism or evil speaking has passed his lips. As the flesh which the children of Israel ate in the wilderness was to them a momentary gratification, but with it came leanness of soul, so while it no doubt does afford a morbid pleasure to gossipers to revel in the weaknesses of a brother, yet the one who indulges in it is soon shorn of his spiritual strength. If one can not speak well of a person, it is best to say no ill of him, at least. An evil-speaking tongue is a sure index to a low state of religion. The apostle James says, "If any man among you seemeth to be

religious and bridled not the tongue, but receiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain."

"Come" *The Present Truth* 16, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

"Come out of her, my people." What marvellous power there is in the Lord's word, "Come." When He walked upon the sea, He said to Peter, "Come," and by the power of that word, Peter came. There is power in it to overcome the flesh. In our spirits we ascend into heaven, but the flesh keeps us here. But God said to Elijah, "Come," and he went into heaven. By the same power the trumpet voice of the archangel will call to the sleeping millions in their graves, "Come forth," and they will obey. And that same word, when spoken to God's people in Babylon will cause them to come forth out of it, conquerors over the king of Babylon-Satan,-as the three worthies in Babylon of old were conquerors over king Nebuchadnezzar.

"He Giveth Snow" *The Present Truth* 16, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

As you have lately seen the pure white snow falling, and clothing the earth with a soft garment, you have no doubt been reminded of some of the beautiful words of Scripture concerning it.

Have you remembered that "He giveth snow like wool?" This will teach you much about the snow: where it comes from; what produces it; and what is God's purpose in giving it.

Notice first that it is God who gives both the snow and the wool; and He gives both in the same way, for "He giveth snow *like* wool."

You know what it is that produces the snow. It is the cold, which causes the water to freeze into the tiny crystals that we see in the snow-flakes. God sends the cold, for it is "by the breath of the Lord frost is given."

Did you know that it is also the cold, which causes the wool to grow on the backs of the sheep? In very warm countries where there is no cold winter weather, the sheep have no wool, but long, silky hair coats instead. The colder the climate the thicker the wool grows; there is even a difference in the same sheep according to the severity of the winter; in very cold winters the wool grows thicker than in mild winters. The cold affects the skin in a way that causes the wool to grow more plentifully.

You will see in this the goodness and loving care of God for His creatures. For in cold weather the sheep of course need a thicker coat, and so God provides it for them by the very thing that makes them need it, the cold.

It is for just the same purpose that He sends the snow, to provide a warm garment for the earth to keep the ground from freezing and to save the seeds and plants from perishing. For when the cold is intense enough to injure these things it also affects the water, and causes the falling rain to crystallise into the snow that makes a warm coat for the ground and plants. So you see that the

purpose of the wool and the snow are the same, and God gives both in the same way, by the cold which makes them necessary.

But not only the ground and the animals find in the effects of cold a protection from the cold. In our picture you will see how useful the snow is to the people who live in Arctic regions, for they do all their building with it in the winter. It is the warmest material that they can have to make their house of. They pack it into hard blocks, and shape these little round huts from it. Here they manage to keep warm and cosy all through the cold weather.

God gives to all His creatures exactly what they need in the circumstances in which He has placed them. He knows just the needs of all, and provides for them; for "the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."

"Not the Peace of God" *The Present Truth* 16, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

Not the Peace of God .-The *Christian World* says: "Ministers, like other men, know what it is to find the vexations of life melting Away into oblivion under the solace of a quiet pipe. But sometimes this oblivion covers what ought to be remembered," and then relates the case of a clergyman who, under the influence of the narcotic, utterly forgot a funeral which he was to attend, and upon which, bemuse of other engagements, he had enjoined strict punctuality. After waiting in the bitter cold for more than half an hour, the mourners sent a messenger, who found the clergyman before a good fire, oblivious of everything but the fumes of his tobacco god. One cannot help wondering if he pointed the mourners to tobacco as a solace for their troubles. Christ said to His followers, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but "in *Me*" they are promised peace; how can any man who finds his peace in tobacco profess to be a minister of Christ? Christ gives peace by imparting the strength of His life, which makes a man "of quick understanding," and not by benumbing the senses. The peace of oblivion, we are happy to know, is not the peace which God gives. He quickens the sensibilities; only the devil gives men "happiness" in oblivion.

March 2, 1899

"Spiritual Drink" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." John vii. 37. Suppose that some poor traveller, just arrived in Jerusalem after a long wearisome tramp, all dusty and travel-stained, and parched with thirst, had heard that call, and had taken Jesus at His word; if he had come to Him expecting to find real water, that could actually quench his thirst, would he have been disappointed? Did Jesus mean what He said? Could He have supplied a drink of pure, sparkling water to a thirsty man, and given him real refreshing? His words were, very plain, and He was speaking to a plain people-to the common people, who are accustomed to take things very literally; had they a right to take Him at His Word? Let us see.

The ancestors of this same people were at one time wanderers in a desert, where there was no water. "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them." Ps. cvii. 4, 5. God told their leader to go to a rock and strike it with his staff, saying that water would come forth, so that the people might drink. And it was so. "He smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed." Ps. lxxvii. 20. So the fathers "did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that went with the; and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. x. 4, margin. Jesus Himself stood upon the rock, and it was from Him that the water came. The rock that the people saw was but the visible agent of the invisible Christ. The Christ that furnished that water in the wilderness, real water, which quenched the thirst of man and beast, - was the same Christ that stood in the temple and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." He was as able to provide water for a thirsty man in the temple as He was to provide it for a thirsty multitude in the desert, for He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Heb. xiii. 8.

Some one will say, "I thought it was spiritual water that Jesus offered; I didn't suppose He meant to be taken literally." So it was spiritual water that He offered; even as the water that flowed from the rock in the wilderness, to the refreshing of thousands of thirsty men and cattle, was spiritual drink. The spiritual is not imaginary, but very real. It is only by the things that we can see, that Jesus makes known to us the reality of the things that we cannot see. Everything that God has created is designed to teach us the reality of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; "for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible, and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Col. i. 16, 17. He is the image and the fulness of the invisible God, and is wholly spiritual; therefore everything that comes from Him, and is in Him must be spiritual.

Did you never drink water from the same Source that the Israelites drank from in the desert? - No one ever drank water from any other source. God is "the fountain of living waters." Isa. ii. 18. Stop a moment, and think where the water comes from that you drink. It comes from the earth, from springs, or wells that have been dug. Now when you see a spring of water gushing forth from the rocks, you see just what the children of Israel saw in the desert. They did not see Christ, and few of them ever believed that He had anything to do with providing it. They died in unbelief. They saw no more than you see when you drink water from a spring or a running brook.

Can you not see back of that well or spring? Do you not know that the spring is only the aperture whence the water emerges; it does not furnish the water, any more than does the tap in your bath room. There are bodies of water stored up in the earth, yet the earth does not produce it, and if it were not continually replenished, the stock would be exhausted. The clouds, however, pour out water abundantly upon the earth, and so we have a constant supply. The streams flow on in undiminished rate year after year. But the clouds do not manufacture water; they are simply floating bodies of water gathered together by evaporation and

condensation. The earth supplies the clouds, and the clouds supply the earth. You say therefore that there is no new

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supply of water, but only that which was the beginning.

That which was in the beginning, however, was from Christ, "who is the Beginning." Col. i. 18. That which was from the beginning, was the Word of life. 1 John i. 1. Out of Eden there went a river, which, unlike any rivers now on this earth, divided into four parts, going toward the four points of the compass, and so watering the whole earth. That Eden, with its tree of life, is now in heaven, God's dwelling place. There, from the throne of God, flows the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. Rev. xxii. 1. It is from this river of God's pleasure (Eden) that God allows those to drink, who seek shelter under the shadow of His wing. Ps. xxxvi. 7, 8.

As that river, flowing right from God's dwelling place from God Himself furnished moisture to all the earth, even so it is still. "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it; Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water. Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided it." Ps. lxxv. 9. So the water that refreshes the earth, and gushes forth from it to renew the life of mankind, is direct from God Himself. We never drink a glass of water without unconsciously complying with Christ's invitation, "If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink!" But because men do not realise whence the water comes, they do not receive the fulness of life that is in it. They drink unworthily, not of faith, not discerning the Lord.

All the visible gifts of God are His means of conveying to us, and enabling us to lay hold of, His invisible gifts. The water of life proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb, and which Christ offers freely to all who thirst and will come to Him, is the Spirit of God. It is God's own life, for "the Spirit is life." But "the blood is the life," Christ gives us His life, in that He sheds His blood for us, and the cleansing through the blood is the salvation by His life, which is but the quickening by the Spirit. See Rom. v. 10; viii. 10, 11. So "there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one." 1 John v. ii, R.V. To drink from the water of life, which comes from the throne, is to drink the blood, the life of Christ; for in the midst of the throne is the slain Lamb (Rev. v. 6), from whose side flow the water and the blood that agree in one. But the rain that falls from heaven refreshing the earth, and giving life to all, is from the river of God, we may know that when we receive this gift as God bestows it on us, recognising Him in it, we are receiving the Spirit of life in Christ, and are drinking His precious blood, which cleanses from sin. Thus "the skies pour down righteousness." Isa. xlv. 8.

This is veritable, living truth, not fancy. In Christ old things are passed away, and all things are become new, so that through the familiar things of this earth we can see even now the living realities of the new earth. How this should admonish us to take God's good gifts just as He gives them to us in their purity. The life of Christ is perfect; we should therefore avoid those things which savour of the curse, which have in them anything of death. If one takes the pure water that God gives, and puts into it any death-dealing drug, as alcohol in any form, tea,

coffee, etc., is he not unconsciously doing despite to the Spirit of God? He is rejecting God's perfect gift, and saying that something less than the perfect life of Christ-some admixture of death-is good enough for him. What a terrible thing it is, how ungrateful, to take God's rich gift of life, and mingle with that which tends to destroy, before we receive it. Let us receive the life just as He gives it to us, and take it by faith, discerning the life, and the victory over death will be ours.

"What's in a Name?" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

Few people realise what wonders can be accomplished-in the imagination-by a mere change of name. The story is told of a rascal who proposed to a simple-minded neighbour that they would go and *steal* a horse. No, indeed; the man would hear nothing of any such proceeding. He was an honest man; he would not steal, not he. Then the wily fellow proposed to him that they go and *filch* a horse. The other didn't quite like the word; it had a suspicious sound; no, he wouldn't filch for anything. "Well, then," said the rascal who didn't try to persuade himself that he was anything else, "let's go and *nim* a horst." To this the other readily agreed, and they proceeded to take to themselves a horse belonging to another man. But they didn't steal it; oh no! they only *nimmed* it.

Unto this day the United States of America poses before the world as the pattern of all the national virtues. It would never enter upon a war of conquest, like "the effete monarchies of the Old World." It is true a good section of the United States once belonged to Mexico, and was acquired at the close of a war in which the latter country was defeated; but then the territory was bought and paid for. To be sure, Mexico was not offering the land for sale, and didn't want to sell; but that made no difference; the United States wanted to buy, and Mexico was not in a condition to refuse. She had to sell out, or else suffer. It was better to sell than to have the property go for nothing, so the bargain was completed. The United States came into virtuous possession of a valuable lot of territory, and continued to read homilies to the wicked nations of the Old World, which would persist in the old way of waging wars of conquest.

At last came the philanthropic war with Spain. The United States had no enmity to the Spaniards, but killed them nevertheless. It was done for the good of the people. The war was entered into with the most disinterested motives, so we are assured, and at its close the United States Government, greatly to the surprise of all the people, found themselves in possession of all the Spanish territory in the West Indies, and of some islands in the Pacific Ocean. These possessions were modestly accepted as the reward of virtue. How could they neglect what Providence had so

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unexpectedly given them to protect? Thus reasoned the religious press. And so the honour of the country is maintained. Who said anything about wars of conquest?

But now comes a little hitch. The inhabitants of the Philippine Islands were fighting against the Spanish yoke, because they thought themselves capable of self-government, when the United States stepped in and claimed possession.

Now the Philipinos object to the United States rule as vigorously as they did to Spanish rule. Will the United States prove false to its traditions, and now enter upon a war of conquest, for the possession of the Philippines? Not by any means. Never shall an American school boy read in his history that his country did such a medi?val deed. President McKinley said in his recent message to Congress: "It will be the duty of the commander of the forces to announce and proclaim in the most public manner that we come not as invaders or conquerors, but as friends." "All persons who, either by active aid or by honest submission, co-operate with the Government of the United States to give effect to these beneficent purposes will receive the reward of its support and protection. All others will be brought within the lawful rule we have assumed with firmness, if need be, but without severity, so far as possible." Finally, the assurance is given that "the mission of the United States is one of *benevolent assimilation*."

What a nice-sounding term that is! The inhabitants of the Philippines are not to be conquered, but *benevolently assimilated*. To be sure they object to being assimilated by the United States, and a distinguished citizen of that country has declared that "the Philippine people have long passed that stage in development when civilised nations have a right to appropriate them and their territories, and govern them against their will; "but that makes no difference. Suppose the lamb does object to be eaten by the lion? What can so silly an animal know of what is good for it, in comparison with the king of beasts. Besides, the lion doesn't have any ill-will to the lamb; his object toward it is only one of "benevolent assimilation." To be sure the lamb disappears in the process, but the lion has gained by the benevolent action. So what if the Philippine people are all destroyed in the process of "benevolent assimilation;" their land will still be left, and that will be sufficient solace to the United States for its disinterested benevolence.

It is with just such cant phrases that many people will seal their own eternal ruin. A *form* of godliness, nay, even the *name*, without the power thereof, will be accepted by thousands as an equivalent for the genuine article. Men deify names. Call Sunday the Sabbath, and with the majority of people it is the same as if it were such. By and by Satan, who is transformed into an angel of light, will come professing to be Christ, and thousands will accept him as such, and will share his destruction. "Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness." Isa. v. 20. Only one name is given under heaven, whereby salvation may be obtained, and that is the name of Jesus. That name saves, because it is the very life of Him who bears it. There is in it nothing of fraud or deceit. Beware of being deceived with names. Sin and oppression are iniquity, no matter what they are called. A profession of virtue will court for nothing if wickedness is practiced under it. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'The Lord My Banner.' Isa. xi. 10-16" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XI. 10-16; LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

10. And it shall come to pass in that day,
The root of Jesse, which standeth for an
ensign to the peoples,
Unto Him shall the nations repair,
And His resting-place shall be glorious.

11. And it shall come to pass in that day,
Jehovah shall again the second time put forth
His hand,
To recover the remnant of His people
That remaineth, from Assyria, and from
Egypt,
And from Pathros, and from Cish, and from
Elam;
And from Shimar, and from Hamath, and
from the western regions.

12. And He shall life up a signal to the nations;
And He shall gather the outcasts of Israel,
And the dispersed of Judah shall He collect,
From the four extremities of the earth.

13. And the jealousy of Ephraim shall cease;
And the enmity of Judah shall be no more
Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah;
And Judah shall not be at enmity with
Ephraim.

14. But they shall invade the borders of the
Philistines westward;
Together shall they spoil the children of the
East;
On Edom and Moab shall they lay their hand;
And the sons of Ammon shall obey them.

15. And Jehovah shall smite with a drought the
tongue of the Egyptian sea;
And He shall shake His hand over the river
with His vehement wind;
And He shall strike it into seven streams,
And make them pass over it dry-shod.

16. And there shall be a highway for the remnant
of His people,
Which shall remain from Assyria;
As it was unto Israel,
In the day when he came up from the land of Egypt.

The first glance at the text composing this lesson will show the student that he must go back in order to get the connection. "It shall come to pass in that day." In

what day?-Evidently in the day when the rod springs forth out of the stem of Jesse. Let the whole of the eleventh

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chapter of Isaiah be studied in connection, and it will be seen that it covers the entire period from the first advent of Christ till His second coming and the restoration of all things. The chapter is, however, divided into two sections. The first nine verses cover this entire period, and then, beginning with verse 10 the same period is covered again, with some additional details.

Compare verse 10 with John xii. 32: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." So the verse before us says that the nations shall repair to "the root of Jesse, which standeth for an ensign to the peoples." The Lord is the banner, and it is "Christ and Him crucified" that constitutes this ensign, round which the people are to gather.

It is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal. iii. 13. The cross was the sign of ignominy and reproach. It was the most humiliating death that could be imposed on anybody. Yet this very ignominious death is Christ's glory. By the cross, which was supposed by the men of His time to be the miserable end of an adventurer, Jesus was elevated to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. The badge of disgrace was the crown of glory. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Gal. vi. 14.

What is the lesson in this for us?-Just this, that there is the brightest hope for the lowest and most despised of mankind. The banner round which God proposes to gather "the outcasts of Israel" is the Christ crucified, that is, Christ despised and rejected of men. If He took His stand in some exalted place, in a halo of glory, and from there called the poor outcasts to Him, they might well hesitate; but when the very rallying place is the lowest point of degradation, there can be no doubt that "whosoever will" may come. The way is adapted to the lowest and weakest; it must necessarily be in order that none be shut out; but where the lowest and weakest can come in, the highest and strongest cannot possibly be excluded. They can easily humble themselves and come down, if they will; but the others could not possibly lift themselves up.

The Jews thought that they were inflicting the most crushing defeat on Christ,-that they were degrading Him to the uttermost,-whereas they were really lifting Him up. He was lifted up from the earth, even to the height of heaven. The way to heaven lies by the cross. This world consists of pride and self-exaltation,-"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,"-so that the cross does in reality lift one up and away from this earth.

"His rest shall be glorious." The cross gives rest. Jesus calls, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28. This rest is Sabbath rest,-the rest which God took when He had finished the six days' work of creation. The cross creates: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" or, "there is a new creation." The cross restores what was lost in the fall. The fall deprived man of the glory of God; the cross restores it. The cross creates anew, doing the same work that God did in the beginning. The cross represents a perfect work completed-for on it Jesus said, "It is finished." Now

finished work means rest; it can mean nothing else, therefore the cross of Christ must give rest to all who come to it.

Moreover, since redemption is identical with creation,-is creation,-restoring that which was lost, it is evident that the rest which it brings is identical with the rest which followed the finished work of creation in the beginning. In the cross of Christ we find the Sabbath, the rest, of the Lord. See how people have reversed God's order. They find in God's Sabbath only a cross; to rest on the seventh day of the week, "according to the commandment" when the majority of men make it the busiest day of the week, seems to them too great a cross to be borne. Well, if that is the way they look at it, they will find no rest in it. But let them come to the cross of Christ, accepting it without any reservation. Let them not take a part of it, rejecting another portion, but let them take the cross with the whole life of Jesus; then they will find perfect rest-God's Sabbath. And then it will be a joy to indicate the perfect rest which Christ gives, by resting from their labours on the day which He has given as the memorial, the sign of His power to redeem.

"It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people." This will not be a small affair, but will be a gathering "from the four corners of the earth." And since it is "the remnant" that are to be gathered, it is evident that this work is the last thing that will be done in connection with the people of God. This is the closing work of the Gospel. It is by the Gospel that God's Israel-overcomers-are to be gathered. On this matter of the setting of God's hand "the second time" to gather His people, read the first article entitled: "The Time of the Promise," which appeared on the first page of PRESENT TRUTH for December 29, 1898, in connection with the first of lessons in Isaiah.

The last verses of this chapter indicate the power that is to accompany the closing work of the Gospel. "There shall be an highway. . . like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." Read the account of God's wonderful leading then. It was not by any human strength, but by the strength of Almighty God, that the deliverance was effected. Think of the marvellous miracles in Egypt, and the dividing of the Red Sea. Yet while all this was but the manifestation of God's own power it was all accomplished through a human agent. He led His people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron. Ps. lxxvii. 20. It was always by the stretching out of the rod in the hand of Moses, that these signs were wrought. Now just that answer must be manifested in the presence of the Gospel before the Lord comes. The power that divided the Red Sea and will be seen in the work when the Sabbath-the sign of Jehovah's creative power-is given its rightful place among God's people. God's rest will be seen to be glorious, and by it the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

"Studies from the Gospel of John. How Not to Believe" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

A wonderful contrast is presented in the ninth chapter of John between the simplicity of faith and the bewildering windings of unbelief. A man who had been born blind had had his sight given to him by Jesus, and the short work that this man made of all the sophistries and arguments of the Pharisees, showed that Christ's miracle had given him clearness of mental as well as physical vision. The spirit which rested upon Jesus, making Him "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord" (Isa. xi. 3), was the same spirit by which He was anointed for the "recovering of sight to the blind" (Luke iv. 18). Christ's work for man is not a partial one. All manner of blindness is the work of Satan, and "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

As Jesus, with His disciples, passed the blind man, they asked Him, saying, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

We may learn from these words why sickness or infirmity is allowed to come upon men. It all comes because of sin, but not in any spirit of vengeance or retaliation. The object is not to punish, but in order that the works of God should be made manifest in us. This appears clearly in the case of the blind man. The works of God were finished from the foundation of the world (Heb. iv. 3, 4), and one of those works was to cause the light to shine out of darkness. What made the light shine in the beginning? We have the answer in John's record, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." But in being the light of the world, Jesus was working the works of Him that sent Him; therefore, we know that when God said, "Let there be light," the light shone because God Himself is light.

That same light is not only for the eyes but for the spiritual sight also. The same "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iv. 6. And in both cases, the operation it performed in the same way. God Himself is light, therefore He shines, Whoever sees the sunlight sees the light which shone out of darkness, and so sees the shining of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God." But whoever recognises the shining of God in the light opens his heart to the same shining, and it shines in his heart as spiritual light. But God is a Spirit, therefore is spiritually discerned; so that whoever worships Him in spirit and in truth, goes as much more in the shining as the spirit excels the flesh in the ability to discern God. While the natural eye can only see the brightness, the shining into the heart gives "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Thus is realised the blessed truth that it is Jesus Christ who is the light of the world. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 6, 7.

All this was given to men when the light shone out of darkness in the beginning, for the works were finished from the foundation of the world, but

because of unbelief men failed to enter into the rest which the completion of God's works secured to them; therefore it was necessary, over and over again, "that the works of God should be made manifest." Just

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as God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, by letting the shining of His own life appear, so in all His works He was simply revealing Himself. The work of creation was simply the fuller manifestation, to created intelligence, of His own existence. Therefore all that Christ had to do to work the works of God was to live the life of God.

All His wonderful works were simply the revelation of that life. So when He gave sight to the blind man, He simply showed what He was, the light of the world. Thus only can we work the works of Him who has sent us into the world, as He sent Jesus Christ. The Jews said to Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John vi. 28, 29. To believe on is to receive. Let Jesus abide in you, and you, too, just as He did, will do the works of God. Be sure that He dwells in your heart by faith, -and you may be sure, for He stands at the door of every heart and knocks for admittance, -and the works of God will certainly appear. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." John i. 12.

In giving light to the world God gives Himself, but men ignore the gift, so that it becomes necessary for Him to manifest it more emphatically. He does not withdraw the gift because His goodness is contemptuously despised, but seeks to impress men with the value of that which He bestows. Therefore men are permitted sometimes to experience the horrors of darkness, that they may be led to appreciate more highly the inestimable blessing of light. The man in this lesson was born without sight that he might one day see with joy the light which his countrymen would blind their eyes to. Had it not been for his many years of blindness, he, like them, might have despised the light of the world; but, as it was, the wonderful work of God was made manifest in him.

Notice how the stubborn unbelief of the Jews entrenches itself behind the unanswerable question, "*How* did Jesus make the blind man to see?" They could not deny the fact, although they sought to do so, but again and again, they brought up the same difficulty, which was no difficulty at all. "*How* was it done?" See verses 10, 15, 19, 26. It was the same with Nicodemus, "*How* can a man be born when he is old." No man can know how God works. If we were infinite, we would know how the world was created, and how the Son of God became a babe, and rose again from the dead, but not being infinite we cannot tell how any of God's works are done. We cannot tell how the grass grows, and we cannot tell how God can dwell in human hearts, but we may know that He does it. We may be like the man in the lesson: "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." We cannot know how God shines into our hearts the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Christ, but since He has so shined unto all, and only the minds of those that believe not are darkened (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4), every one may know surely that He has so shined; and that whereas we were blind to that wonderful light, now we see.

The faith that God asks of men is reasonable, for it deals with facts. God does not ask us to exercise what some people understand by faith, a mysterious form of mental exercise which is supposed to be able to evolve something out of nothing. He just asks us to accept existing facts, to rest on the works which were finished from the foundation of the world. It is unbelief that is unreasonable. If some clever satirist had attempted to depict the follies of unbelief, he could not possibly have heaped more ridicule upon it than the Jews, who figure in the ninth chapter of John, heaped upon themselves for evermore when they sought to overthrow the simple fact that Christ had given sight to the blind. As a lesson in how not to believe, it stands unsurpassed. If any wish to escape the clearest evidences of truth, they may be recommended to this example, and to the arguments employed on this occasion.

Observe how thoroughly the ground was covered. First, the Pharisees asked how the miracle was done. When told of the means employed, they pronounced the miracle impossible because the Healer was out of harmony with their conceptions of God, and the proper observance of the Sabbath. Then when the man expressed his belief that Christ was a prophet, it suggested doubts of his veracity, and they refused to believe that he had been born blind. Having agreed to excommunicate whoever should confess that Jesus was the Messiah, they next questioned the man's parents, but these, although declining to commit themselves as to the work of Christ, were clear that their son had been blind and was now able to see. Assuming a deep piety, and recognising at last that the miracle was beyond question, they again saw the man and endeavoured to inspire in him a holy horror of the sinner who had restored his sight. But sinner or no, he had a decent gratitude to his benefactor, and queried why they should so anxiously concern themselves unless they intended to become Christ's disciples. "Then they reviled him." The light that had shone into this man's life was Christ Himself, and this was made manifest, for this man spoke with the clearness and wisdom that Christ Himself displayed. Then the Pharisees used their last, crowning argument, and excommunicated the man. The light was revealing itself in him, but they hated the light, and banished it from them.

If any man chooses darkness rather than light and desires to know how to encourage and strengthen unbelief, let him be like the Jews. Refuse to acknowledge any fact, however indisputable, unless the means can be explained to your satisfaction. Believe nothing that you cannot understand. When others, in their simplicity, believe the Word of God and find, in it healing and power, refuse to accept their testimony unless they call explain how it was done. If this does not shake their confidence, then revile them. It is probable that they will not be affected by this, and, if not, as far as your power extends, excommunicate them. There will always be plenty to side with you, indeed you may safely reckon on a majority of the disputers and the wise of this world, and when you finally discover yourself with the "unbelieving" (Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 15), on the wrong side of the "wall great and high," which surrounds the city of God, you may find a last consolation in the reflection that the redeemed inside the city cannot explain how it is that they are there.

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Bees" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

"The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all those that have pleasure therein." So let us look a little closer at the flowers, about which we were talking last week, and seek out some more of the secrets of His love that our heavenly Father has hidden there for us.

See how busily the little bee gathers the sweet store of honey that God has put thereon purpose for it to feed on! But there is something even more sweet and precious hidden there for you,-the loving thoughts of God, which show how "His tender mercies are over all His works."

The Psalmist sang, "How precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God." And as he thought upon the ways of God which His works made known to him, he said, "My meditation of Him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord."

Let us learn from the bee to gather all that we can of the sweet secrets of God's love, from the flowers and all His other works, and store them up in our hearts to supply not our own needs only, but those of others also.

Where have the bees been biding all through the cold winter months? You have not seen any flying about, for there have been no flowers, and so no honey for them to gather. They have been safe and warm in their hives, where they have been drowsily resting, and feeding on the honey stored up in the wonderful little cells of wax of which their combs are made.

But no sooner does the mild spring weather cause "the flowers to appear on the earth," than the bees appear also, fresh and bright after their long rest, and ready for another year's work.

"To give you some idea of how well

"the little busy bee

Improves each shining hour,"

a gentleman who has made a special study of them, and watched them very carefully, tells that "if you bring a bee to some honey, she feeds quietly, goes back to the hive, stores away the honey, and returns with or without companions for another supply. Each visit occupies about six minutes, so that there are about ten in an hour, and about one hundred in a day." And another, to show us how quickly the bees work, says that he has watched them visit twenty flowers in a minute.

In the long summer days the bees work overtime, to make up for the months when they do not work at all. Right up in the North, where the winters are longest, the summer when it does come is almost continual daylight, and the bees are able to work nearly all the time while the warm weather lasts. A gentleman who lately visited Finland, says that he noticed the bees out gathering honey at ten o'clock at night.

We spoke last week of the beauty and fragrance of the flowers, but now we can see something of their *usefulness* also. For through them God is providing food for the bees, butterflies, ants, flies, and millions of tiny insects. And even we ourselves like to make use of the stores that the bees have gathered from the flowers, for "What is sweeter than honey?"

But while it is true, and has always been easily seen, that the bees need the flowers and could not live without them, it is just as true, though not so easily seen, that the flowers need the bees just as much, and many kinds would die out altogether if it were not for the bees, butterflies, and other insects.

Some seed from the Red Clover plant was taken over to New Zealand and planted, but no seed came from it, and it died out. At last some Humble Bees were taken over and some fresh clover planted, and from that time it flourished and bore seed just like it does here. So you see that the life of the clover depended on the Humble Bees. Do you wonder how this can be? Let us see.

You must have noticed in a full-blown rose, the golden heart of the flower made up of little yellow grains, and in almost every flower you will notice something like this. Sometimes the yellow dust from the flowers is blown about, by the wind. You have often seen it, but did you know what it is, and what it is for?

This fine yellow flower dust is called "pollen," and though you may have thought it only useless dust, the very life of the plants depends upon it. For if some of the little grains should not reach the newly formed seeds in the little pod at the bottom of the flower, the seeds would not be any use at all, as they would have no power to bring forth say new plants and flowers. This dust is to fertilise the seeds to make them fruitful.

The strongest and best plants come from the seeds which have been fertilised by the dust or pollen from another flower of the same kind, and so in many plants it is

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not possible for the dust of a flower to fall upon its own seed.

But just when the pollen is ripe and ready to fall, a part of the flower is filled with sweet honey, which attracts the bee or butterfly. As he pushes his way in to get it, he brushes against the part of the flower that holds the dust, and carries some of it away with him to the next flower that he visits, where he leaves it behind to make the little seeds able to bring forth new plants.

You will see that this is not for the good of the plant only, for if there should be no more flowers, what would the bees do next year? So the Lord is really using them to help to provide the honey for another year. But they know nothing of all this. They go on their busy way, doing their day's work without any idea of how much depends on it, for the flowers, for themselves, for the baby bees at home in the hive, and for us, for what would the earth be without its flowerw?

The bees like bright colours and sweet scents. These attract them to the flowers, and the stripes and bands show them just where to find the honey, and so save their time. The largest blossoms, with the brightest colours and sweetest perfumes, are sure to be visited and fertilised by them.

The gardener improves the flowers of the garden by taking seed from the finest flowers, and the bee is an unconscious little gardener, helping to make the woods and fields beautiful by taking the dust from the finest flowers to the seeds of the finest flowers, so that the new plants shall be strong and healthy.

You will soon hear the hum of many bees in the gardens, fields, and woods, and as you hear them and watch them at their work think of all these things, and

as much more as you can find out of all that God is doing through these tiny insects.

Think of this wonderful little circle of blessing and helpfulness,-a wheel within a wheel,-the flower giving its honey to the insects, and thus really working for its own fruitfulness and increase; the bee serving and fertilising the flower, and thus providing a future store of honey for itself and other bees.

Then besides the sweet lesson of the love and wisdom of God who is really doing all this, who puts the honey in the flower and guides the bee to it, I am sure you will learn at least this lesson also: Our own greatest blessing, happiness, and prosperity, come through letting God use us to bring blessing and happiness to others.

"Nothing in Vain" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

About one hundred years ago, a German named Sprengel noticed a number of very small hairs inside the flower of a certain kind of geranium. He began to wonder what these tiny threads could be for, for he was sure that "the wise Author of nature would not have created *even a hair* in vain."

As he was one of those who "have pleasure" in the great works of God and seek them out, he set himself to find out the use of these hairs, and found that God had put them there to protect the honey from rain.

Now that Sprengel's attention had been called to this, he carefully examined numbers of other flowers, and this led to his discovery of the wonderful way in which God uses the bees to fertilise the flowers.

Other naturalists noticed that the meadows which were visited by numbers of bees had healthier and finer glowers than those where the bees did not go. They also noticed that the honey was found in the flowers just about the time that the seeds were getting ripe; but they did not know how to put these things together and explain the wonderful and beautiful work of God that was really going on.

So you see that what really led to this discovery was Sprengel's knowledge that "God had made *everything* for its own end"-that each thing He has created, even a tiny hair, has its own special use.

As far as you are able, try to find out the meaning of everything that you see of the works created around you. Ask Him for His Holy Spirit to "guide you into all truth," and He will show you "great and mighty things that you know not."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

-The Swedish mile is the longest mile in the world, being exactly 11,700 yards.

-At the beginning of the eighteenth century people were hanged in Great Britain for the manufacture of salt.

-The lightest tubing ever made is of nickel aluminium. Three thousand feet of this tubing weighs only one pound.

-Only two rulers of Russia since Peter the Great have died a natural death-Catherine II., and the father of the present Czar.

-An awful train accident is reported from Brussels. Several carriages filled with passengers were smashed to pieces, the engine falling on the top of them. Twenty-one were killed and about 100 injured. The spectacle was simply appalling.

-Notices, with illustrative diagrams, have been posted in all Paris barracks, warning the soldiers of the evils of alcoholic indulgence.

-According to the Supplementary Estimates lately before Parliament, the combined cost of the Army and Navy exceeds £50,000,000 for the current year.

-Funeral horses come mostly from Holland, where they are bred. About 800 come over to this country every year, and cost on an average £16 apiece.

-A conflict has occurred between the Russian and Chinese at Tellenwan. About a hundred of the Chinese were killed. The question of taxes is reported to have led to the collision.

-The present year forms the centenary of the imposition of the Income-Tax. It was started in 1799 at 2s. in the £, and realised six millions. Last year a tax one-third of that rate brought in 181 millions.

-Owing to differences which at present appear to be irreconcilable, the Anglo-American Conference has adjourned. It may re-assemble at mid-summer. The Alaskan boundary dispute one of the principal causes of disagreement.

-Sir Robert Gillen, in a paper read by him at the Colonial institute, said the British Empire was a territory of 11,500,000 square miles, or 13,000,000, if Egypt and the Soudan were included; and in that territory was a population of 407,000,000, or 420,000,000, reckoning Egypt. Of these 50,000,000 were of English speech and race.

-Owing to the sudden death of the President of the French Republic, a new President was elected last week. As he returned to Paris, he was met with roars of abuse, and loud shouts of "Resign!" The President was hooted all the way to this official residence. Rioting followed in which fifty people were wounded and women were trampled under foot.

-A Russian paper has had its privilege of street sale cancelled for publishing an address to the Czar which referred to the possibility of a failure of the Peace Conference. This, and many other like incidents, tend to show how peace will be secured, if it comes at all. The Roman empire compelled almost universal peace, but it took more fighting to secure it than the peace was worth.

-Russia has taken action in Finland which is taken to mean that all Finnish rights of home government are destroyed, and that the country is to be completely absorbed by Russia. One Scandinavian paper says: "The Russian giant is now in closest touch with Scandinavia. It is high time that Sweden and Norway should cease to quarrel and prepare to defend their liberty." In view of the Czar's action, it is generally thought in Sweden that his invitation to the Peace Conference should not be accepted.

-A serious epidemic of influenza is raging. In London last week the deaths directly attributed to the malady numbered 74. At Crewe there are 700 cases. The troops are suffering severely at Aldershot. In Vienna every family is infected,

and all the hospitals are full. The *Lancet*, describing the malady, says the symptoms often set in very abruptly with characteristic pains followed by prostration. One great point in the treatment is the thorough ventilation of the sick-room and the house in which cases occur.

-The claim of the Pope to be represented at the Peace Conference is placing the Dutch Government in a dilemma. As host it has to issue the invitations. If they invite the Pope Leo will decline an invitation. If they do not invite him they will be regarded by the Vatican, assuming an attitude of active hostility towards the Pope. . . wishes to shift the responsibility on to the . . . of Russia, and regard itself simply as the agent of Russia in the matter, but Russia persists in regarding Holland as setting on its own initiative.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

It has become quite popular during the last few years for ministers and other, to declare what would happen "if Christ came to London." One noteworthy feature of all these excursions into the realm of imagination is that they seem to utterly ignore what Christ did do when He came to this earth. The latest "unauthorised programme" of this kind was given at Finsbury Park the other day when the minister, after enumerating some of the social and political reforms in which the Saviour would engage, said

He would summon the nations of the earth to a round-table conference over the Czar's Rescript and lay His doom solemnly on all those who wished for war.

In the first place, none of the nations wish for war. They would be only too glad to know that there was no danger of it. The nations arm themselves in self-defence and because they dare not trust themselves to the tender mercies of the others. But it is not long since there were those who wished for war. Ministers of religion made the country ring with their urgent appeals to the Government to declare war against the Turk, and by their own admission this desire for war deserved a solemn condemnation.

But Jesus knew better than to gather the nations of the earth to a round-table conference when He wished to accomplish, anything. The Concert of Europe is not the most potent weapon of reform, or the most venerated institution, known to modern history. Jesus was not deceived by the idea that, while one man may be nothing of himself, if multiplied by a million He becomes something. "All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity." Isa. xl. 17. Jesus came to give peace, but He did it by giving Himself. The nations were then, as now, fired with the lust of conquest. They had no peace in themselves, and so could not give it. It could not have helped matters to denounce them for not diffusing what they lacked. It is the work of Christ's followers still to proclaim peace to all who will hear the message. Those who do not know that this is their work, and who are calling upon the nations to do it, show by their misconception of the Saviour's commission that "if Christ came to London," they themselves would reject Him as the religious leaders of Jerusalem did.

A correspondent sends us a clipping which some one has handed to him for the purpose of demonstrating that it is impossible to keep the Sabbath of the Lord. The extract asserts that the expression "a month of Sundays" is founded on fact because "Christians worship on Sunday, Greeks on Monday, Persians on Tuesday, Assyrians on Wednesday, Egyptians on Thursday, Turks on Friday, and the Jews on Saturday." Assuming that these statements are correct, what have they to do with obeying the Fourth Commandment? It is a strange anomaly that men can keep their own so-called "holy days" without difficulty on any day of the week, but when confronted, with the duty of remembering to keep holy the day which God Himself has sanctified, the seventh day of the week, a multitude of arguments and difficulties springs up to justify disobedience. The essence of the true Sabbath is that it is God's rest (Ex. xx. 11), and neither Christian, Jew, nor Greek, nor any other division of the family of man for whom God made the Sabbath (Mark ii. 27), can transfer God's rest day from the day on which He rested to 9, day on which He did not rest.

In the same clipping, the statement is made that there may be three sabbaths in a week because one man travelling round the world eastward would gain a day, another travelling westward would lose a day, and both arriving at, say London, on the same day would find the inhabitants keeping a day which did not coincide with either of their reckonings. If a large majority of the inhabitants of the world were in the habit of circumnavigating the earth once a week, of course this would be a serious difficulty, but inasmuch as the course of the day, with its beginning and end, have long been established by unanimous agreement, no one can travel round the world in either direction without finding numerous opportunities for adjusting his reckoning of time.

We notice these objections by request, not because there any argument of weight in them, but because we know that, lacking any real ground of opposition, they are just the kind of excuses that too many frame to excuse their disregard of God's gift of the Sabbath. Instead of seeing in this what it is, the very substance and crowning revelation of the Gospel of Christ's work in them, they regard it as a grievous infliction to be evaded on any pretext. Yet such difficulties fire never urged against the observance of Sunday, although they have every whit as much application to the first day as the seventh. The time draws near when every one shall give account of himself to God, what he has done with the blessings offered to him. No one will dare then to urge the flimsy arguments which so easily content them now. They will be without excuse. So let no one now be content with any excuse which cannot present with confidence in the hour of judgment, "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be, good, or whether it evil." Eccl. xii. 13, 14.

That which brings men into bondage is fear. It is not that they are bound, for they are not. Christ died that He might "deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 15. Since He died for all and rose again that we might live also, death conquered for all, and there is no occasion to fear it. But all the weakness and evil consequences that come from sin are summed up in death. Therefore since Christ has delivered us from death

there is nothing left to fear, and all the disheartening experiences and forebodings need discourage us no longer. Christ came preach deliverance to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that bound, and so no kind of bondage can chain the believer. "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

No man is bound by anything stronger than his own unbelief. If he will listen to the Word of God and believe it, he may be free. If he prefers to sit in darkness and in the shadow of death it is his privilege to do so, but it is entirely unnecessary. That light shineth in darkness, and death, is conquered. For those who know this to be true, the shadow of death has no power nor terror. The human weakness that is the shadow cast by death serves but to show the perfection of Christ's strength.

March 8, 1899

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 16, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

-The number of persons now on the famine relief fund in India is over four million.

-An ordinance issued by the Maritime Board of Health at Rome declares Australian ports to be infected with bubonic plague.

-A fire, February 25th, on premises near Paris, where 8,000 pipes of alcohol and much petroleum, were stored, resulted in the loss of about 200 lives.

-The Shah of Persia, who is about to make a European tour, has accepted the Queen's invitation to visit England either in July or August. The last Shah visited England twenty-seven years ago.

-Lady Georgiana Grey, daughter of Earl Grey, the famous reform statesman, has just entered upon her 100th year. She is the oldest resident at Hampden Court and is in excellent health.

-The alternate rains and frosts lead to serious landslips in the quarries near Rochester, hundreds of tons of chalk carrying away a road and blocking up a railway.

-The sea is encroaching on the East Coast to an alarming extent. Over one hundred feet of the beach near the lighthouse at Lowestoft has been swallowed up. The lighthouse at Pakefield is also in peril.

-A Reuter's telegram, dated Aden, Feb. 23, says that six cases of plague and one death from the disease have been discovered there. Drastic measures have been adopted and the infected area has been isolated.

-The number of deaths from influenza in London the last week in February was fifty-two, the smallest number of any week since December. The deaths in London from influenza alone in ten weeks numbered 1,576.

-There is a proposal to erect a gigantic statue of Jesus in the Bay of Naples, which will be visible for miles around. The formation of His image in the lives of the builders of the statue would be a real honour to Him, and would be visible much further.

-The last half of February has been marked by heavy storms, and severe floods. The Thames has been very high, and towns upon its banks have been flooded. Oxford and Windsor have specially suffered. In North Yorkshire the most extensive flood known for twenty years has prevailed.

-As an evidence of the animus of the Dowager Empress of China against reformers, an edict has been issued by her orders commanding Li Hung Chang to desecrate and destroy the tombs of the ancestors of Kang Yu Wei, the reformer, and a reward of 100,000 taels is offered for his capture dead or alive.

-Detectives have to attend fashionable weddings in London to deal with pickpockets. One of these "fashionable" thieves charged at Marylebone pleaded for mercy as, although he had been at the business for years, he had been very unsuccessful, and his previous convictions had only been for "attempting."

-The proportion of women students now attending the universities of Switzerland is remarkable. At the six universities there is a total number of 3,723 students and 888 hearers. Of these 1,026 are women, making nearly one-fourth of the whole, and 624 are students, not merely hearers. Five hundred and forty-seven of them are foreigners; from Russia alone, 422, of whom 326 are studying medicine. France does not contribute one.

-It is stated that the Russian Minister of War elaborated a plan for occupying Herat, thus opening the way to the British possessions in India, and informed the Czar that if it were pleasing to him it would be carried through without a hitch. The Czar is reported to have replied that it was contrary to his habit to profit by the difficulties of any friendly State, and he concluded: "It is my intention to maintain the strictest neutrality throughout the war, notwithstanding the display of popular sympathy towards the Boers."

-Now that the weather is getting warmer, there has been a fall of 2s. per ton in the price of coal. The advance in the price of coal in extreme cold weather is simply a tax upon the poor, who cannot buy their winter's fuel in the summer. That the advance in prices has not been due to shortage in the supply, but was solely to take advantage of the necessities of the poor, is shown by the fact that mild weather invariably brings a reduction. God has an account to settle with those who thus "grind the faces of the poor," and it is none the less certain because it is not presented at the close of each month or year.

March 9, 1899

"An Assured Welcome" *The Present Truth* 15, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

In the parable of the prodigal son, the Saviour sets forth some of the principles which guide His dealings with repentant sinners. There is no depth of wretchedness or degradation so vile that it is beyond the reach of His divine compassion. It is true that all, like the son in the parable, have no rightful claim upon the Lord. They have already received all that He had to give, and have wasted their substance in riotous living. But God's gifts are immeasurable. Men may think within themselves that they have surely exhausted the love and

forbearance of God, but it is not so, for "His mercy endureth for ever." They believe He loved them once, but that was in a time when they were comparatively innocent. If they would approach Him now, they feel that only anger and condemnation would meet their advances.

Many who, like the poor swineherd of the parable, have come to themselves, feel that they dare not approach the Lord as they are. They doubt the sufficiency of His love to pardon the sins which have become horrible in their own eyes, and Satan seeks to instill into their minds a fear to approach unto God until their own vivid impressions of guilt are somewhat dispelled. But if they listen to his cunning suggestions and wait, in the vain hope of presenting themselves in less unworthy form, that which deadens the consciousness of sin will also take away the desire to return to the Lord.

God knows us for what we are. He is not disappointed with us when we discover our own unalterable weakness. "I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously," He says, and the love which could foreknow our treachery, and yet love us, provided for our being girded with faithfulness. Isa. xi. 5. We may come boldly, just as we are, to the throne of grace and find mercy for our need, because He who is our High Priest above, and who was tempted in all points like as we are, is not ashamed to call us brethren. He does not deal with us according to our merits, or the multitude of our transgressions, but "according to His mercy He saved us."

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When the prodigal son ventured to think of returning home, he dared not hope that he would be accepted as a son. If he might only be a servant, his lot would be incomparably superior to his present situation. It did not dawn on his mind that he was still regarded as a son. God does for us more than we can ask or think. His mercy is great unto the heavens and His faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Though we believe not, yet He abideth faithful. "I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away." Isa. xli. So every one who is anxious to return to the Lord may come with confidence. God has given to all such the words to say, and this fact is assurance that the word will not be spoken in vain. "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously." The promise to those who make use of these words in faith, is, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for Mine anger is turned away from them." Hosea xiv. 3, 4.

And what is the position of those who thus return to the Lord, on His own invitation? It is given in the words of the father to the older son: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." The Lord has promised that He will never leave us, or forsake us, and He makes us, as His children, His heirs, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. And the wonder of it is that this position of inconceivable blessedness and unending delight is not merely for those who have never wandered from the Father's side, but is offered freely to all who are now in the depths to which their sins have brought them, who are feeding on husks and in need of all things. All these may arise from their degradation, and go unto their Father with the full assurance that, while they are yet a great way off, the Father Himself will meet them with loving welcome and full forgiveness.

"Studies from the Gospel of John. The Good Shepherd. John x. 1-16"
The Present Truth 15, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

John x. 1-16

In excommunicating the man whose sight Christ had restored, the Pharisees showed that the motive which ruled their actions was a jealous regard for their own dignity and honour, rather than a tender concern for the true welfare of the people who looked for spiritual guidance. Mankind are often referred to in the Scriptures as sheep, and in habits and disposition they show the fitness of the comparison. The Lord recognises it Himself, and He desires to be to us what a faithful shepherd is to his flock, "He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." Ps. xcv. 7. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters." Ps. xxiii. 1, 2. "And ye My flock, the flock of My pasture are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." Ezek. xxxiv. 31.

The Shepherd Himself was now come to seek and to save that which was lost. Those to whom the care of the flock had been committed, had too often proved themselves thieves and robbers, and the sheep had been scattered. "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered." Ezek. xxxiv. Because of this the Lord says, "Behold I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out."

In the performance of this work the Good Shepherd was brought into conflict with the false shepherds. Those who retain their control of the flock, not that they might do them good, but for the sake of the influence which their position procured for them. They were hirelings, only caring for the emoluments of their office, and ignoring its duties and responsibilities. Christ came to reveal to all the character of the true shepherd. Although every one, like sheep, had turned each to his own way, still all were sheep, and the Shepherd came not to condemn but save. Yet none could be saved unless they should turn from the evil of their way and live.

Jesus proclaims Himself to be the one door by which the sheep may find entrance to the fold. He is the way, the truth and the life. So He is the living way,

and He is the living door. No one can enter into the fold who does not live the life of Christ. Whoever can say, like Paul, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in Me," is in the way, and can go through the door. "He shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture."

But this is not the end. While we are always the flock of Christ, when we have His life in us, we are also to be shepherds to others, that they too may be led to enter through the door. "He that entereth by the door is the shepherd of the sheep." This responsibility rests upon every soul. We cannot say like Cain, unless we share his spirit and his destiny, "Am I my brother's keeper?" and Christ has answered for every one the question those that are willing to justify themselves, "Who is my neighbour?" We must either gather with Christ or scatter

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abroad. We are either true shepherds, or false ones.

There is only one way of becoming a true shepherd, and that is by receiving the life of Christ. This does not merely consist in agreeing verbally to what the Lord says. The life of Christ is as real as our physical life, for it is only by His life that we live at all. Our lives are just what we are in word, deed and thought. The life of Christ is just what He is, in every detail of His life. Whoever receives Christ's life will live as He does, in thought, word and deed. Whoever comes short of that life commits sin, which is coming short of the glory of God. Rom. iii. 23. Whoever comes short of the glory of God, no matter how high his profession may be, is living a sinful life. But Jesus came to save His people from their sins therefore, He came that we, might, in our lives, be filled with all the fulness of God, and not come short of His glory. Our own thoughts and words and deeds are not to appear. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Rom. vi. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Rom. viii. 10.

Jesus makes the issue a very plain one. The shepherd who lives to himself, or by himself at all, is not one who may develop into a true shepherd. He never will. The command to men is not to train and discipline their thoughts, but to forsake them. Isa. lv. 7. Let the wicked forsake his way. Christ is the living way, and no man comes into the fold except by that way. Christ did not come to combine Himself with men, but to save them from themselves. Light has no fellowship with darkness. Everywhere shepherds are feeding the flock with their own words. They themselves are not properly identified with Christ, but self is allowed to appear. Christ says of all such that they are thieves and robbers. Only the one who is emptied of self and lets the mind of Christ guide him entirely can feed the flock with unselfish, Christ-like care.

Notice some of the characteristics of the true shepherd, and remember that these, and every other feature of Christ's life, must be reproduced in the under-shepherds, because the only way for them is the way of Christ's life.

The sheep hear His voice. The true shepherd will not speak of himself, but as the oracles of God. Jesus' life was just the Word made flesh, and His followers are to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. In this way,

the word will be the spring of all their actions, not of a few, but of all. The words of God are not merely articulate sounds, but being alive, they are things. Our food, which grows by the creative power of the word, is the word made food, and in our lives, the word is to appear as a living thing, taking its shape from us, but having all the life and power in itself. We are to be the word made flesh, and through us the word will speak to the scattered and wandering sheep in words and deeds of tender love and helpfulness. The sheep will recognise the voice of the Shepherd, and will follow the loving call. Let the word of God dwell in us richly in all wisdom so that there is nothing in our lives which is not the working of the word, and Christ, being lifted up, will draw all unto Him.

"He calleth His own sheep by name." Successful work does not consist in dealing with the multitudes, but with individuals. The work is not given to a favoured few. It is "to every man his work." Self-love and self-seeking prompt a desire for the most public place where all may see and admire. The true shepherd leaves the ninety and nine and goes after that which is lost until he find it. So will it be with all who have the true shepherd heart that all receive who enter the sheep-fold by the way of Christ's life. He "leadeth them out and when He putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him." The true shepherd does not delegate to others the difficult and unpleasant parts of the work. He goes before them. Christ is to them not merely a set of regulations, but a life. So far as men may be to others what Christ is to them, His followers are to be to those to whom they minister, not merely words of instruction but a living example. The true shepherd lives before his flock the truths which he proclaims. He is foremost in every good word and work. He does not preach and expect others to practise, but he preaches mainly by his practice.

The likeness between the Chief Shepherd and the under-shepherds is not to stop at any point. The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep, and those who share His life will also give theirs. The Lord promises all who thus partake of His sufferings that they shall share His joy. Through them He will perfectly manifest Himself to the flock. "I am the good Shepherd, and I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father." The closeness of the relation between Christ and the Father sets forth the intimate relation which Christ will establish between Himself and His flock. As they two are one, so all His people are to be one with Himself and each other. When this is true they will be successful as soul-winners. The Lord will be able to reveal Himself through them as the true Shepherd, and to bring in by their means the sheep which are outside the fold, so that there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

"The Worth of a Man" *The Present Truth* 15, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

The Lord, speaking of the day when He "will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity," when He "will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible," says, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir."

The Apostle Peter, speaks to those "who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time," and who are in heaviness through manifold temptation, and yet are rejoicing in hope, that the trial of their faith "being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire," will be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter i. 5-7. And in the same connection, he adds, "Ye know that ye were not redeemed by corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Verse 18.

A man shows his estimate of the value of a thing by the price which he pays for it. So God shows how He values His people, by the fact that He has purchased the church with His own blood. Acts xx. 28. In this case, however, the price does not indicate the value of the things purchased, but what can be made of it. God says, "Ye have sold yourselves for naught, and ye shall be redeemed without money." Isa. lii. 3. In selling ourselves for naught, we have made ourselves

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worth nothing; but in purchasing us with His own blood, God has provided the way for us to be made worth as much as He is, if we will but accept the terms.

We often hear an estimate of what a man is worth. One will be said to be "worth ten thousand pounds;" another will be set down as "worth a hundred thousand pounds;" while another will be envied because he is "worth a million." But "the day that shall come" will declare not only every man's work, of what sort it is, but will also demonstrate the value of every man. Then it will be found that the man whose worth can be estimated in pounds, shillings, and pence, is absolutely worthless, no matter how many figures it takes to estimate his wealth. The man who is "worth his millions" will then be on a level, as to value, with his neighbour who is "not worth a penny."

"In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isa. ii. 21, 22. That will show that even the men who have spent their lives to amass money will regard it as worthless; but whoever makes an idol is like unto it. Ps. cxv. 3.

The reason why money will be of no value then is that it will not; it cannot continue. But even now it is uncertain, and cannot by any possibility deliver a man's soul. The man, therefore, who has not accepted "the unsearchable riches of Christ," namely, His own precious blood, which is incorruptible, will have no life. He will become "as though he had not been." It will be a sad time for a man who is worth no more than can be measured by gold and silver.

What a marvellous thing, that a man may be made worth as much as God Himself, because purchased with His life. "God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." His design for us is that we shall continue as long as He does, because filled and clothed with His own incorruptible life, and not that we should perish as a worthless thing. Whoever

keeps the faith that is tried in the fire, also keeps the life that is unconquerable, and whose value cannot be estimated in earthly coin. Happy is the man whose value is in himself, that is, in the life that is in him, and not in something which can be stripped from him, leaving his soul naked and ashamed.

**"The Gospel of Isaiah. The New Song. Isa. xii. 1-6" *The Present Truth*
15, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XII. 1-6, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. "And in the day thou shalt say;
I will give thanks unto Thee, O Jehovah; for
though Thou hast been angry with me,
Thine anger is turned away, and Thou hast comforted me.
2. Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid:
For my strength, and my song, is Jehovah;
And He is become my salvation.
3. And when ye shall draw waters with joy
from the fountains of salvation, in that
day ye shall say:
4. Give ye thanks to Jehovah; call upon His
name;
Make known among the peoples His mighty
deeds;
Record ye, how highly His name is exalted.
5. Sing ye Jehovah, for He hath wrought a
stupendous work;
This is made manifest in all the earth.
6. Cry aloud, and shout for joy, O inhabitants of
Sion;
For great in the midst of thee is the Holy
One of Israel."

This is a most wonderful chapter, and everybody ought to study it so thoroughly that the words will be forever impressed on the mind. Such passages as this, full of comfort and encouragement, should be perfectly familiar to every person. They should not be studied mechanically as a school-boy studies his spelling lesson, so that they can be repeated parrot-like, but intelligently and thoughtfully. It will not take long to fix the chapter so thoroughly in the mind that the words will come naturally in their proper order. When this has been done, we can study the Bible at any odd moment, and can feed on the living Word, which is always fresh.

It will be noticed that this chapter is a continuation of chapter eleven. "In that day." In what day?-Why, in the day when the root of Jesse stands for an ensign to the peoples; when the Lord sets His hand the second time together the

remnant of His people-the outcasts of Israel. In short, now, for "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." It is not in the future, immortal state that this song is to be taken up and learned. Now is the time for men to say, "Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation;" "I will trust, and not be afraid."

Take notice that this song is identical with that sung by Moses after the crossing of the Red Sea. Compare Ex. xv. 2. When the redeemed stand on Mount Zion, they will sing "the song of Moses the servant of God, the song of the Lamb" (Rev. xv. 2, 3), and it will be this very song; but they will have learned it before they get there. Moses was yet in the wilderness when he sang his song of triumph. There was no water in the desert where the children of Israel were when they joined in the chorus. But it was right for them to sing it. The trouble was that they stopped singing, and that stopped their progress; for "the redeemed of the Lord

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shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be on their head." Isa. li. 11. The "new song" of the redeemed is that which they have learned on earth, inspired by the love of God, which, though everlasting, is always new. The "new commandment" is the old commandment that was from the beginning. When God brings a man up out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay, He puts a new song in his mouth. Ps. xl. 1-3. So,

"When in scenes of glory,
I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story
That I have loved so long."

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid." Why not? How could one fear, knowing God Himself to be his salvation? It is not merely that God saves, but He Himself is salvation. Having Him, we have salvation, and are not merely looking forward to it, and hoping for it. He is our salvation,-from what?-From everything that we need to be saved from. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Ps. xxxiv. 4. That is the best of all. God not only saves us from death, but from the fear of death. Heb. ii. 14, 15. Many things that we fear, exist only in our imagination; but the trouble is just as great to us as though the danger were real; our fears are as oppressive. Now God saves us from all these fears. God says: "Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken." "Whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." Prov. iii. 25, 26; i. 33.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." 1 John iv. 18. Remember that God is near at hand "in all things that we call upon Him for." Deut. iv. 7. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 25, 28. And He is Almighty; there is none able to withstand Him. 2 Chron. xx. 6. "Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." Ps. cxv. 3. And His thoughts towards us are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, so give us an expected end. Jer. xxix. 14. Is it not clear, therefore,

that every fear, no matter what kind of a fear it is, nor what it is that we are afraid of, is evidence of distrust? We either distrust His care or His power. If we are afraid, that shows that we do not believe that God is at hand, or else we do not believe that He cares for us, or else we do not believe that He is able to save us. Give this sober thought; think how often you have been afraid, and how often you are seized and controlled by fear; and then decide whether you do really love and trust the Lord.

"God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Though the waters thereof roar and beugh the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Ps. xlv. 1, 2. Some one will say, "No; I don't expect to be afraid in the last great day; I shall then be confident in the Lord." Why will you be more confident in the Lord." Why will you be more confident in the Lord then than now? Will He at that time be more trustworthy than now? Do you not know that if you do not get acquainted with the Lord, and learn to trust Him now, you will not trust Him then? Jesus is coming to take vengeance on them that know not God. 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. Now all those who know the name of the Lord put their trust in Him. Ps. ix. 10. Therefore those who are saved when the Lord comes will be found trusting.

"But there are so many little things that startle me, and make me nervous; I am not afraid of great things; I know the Lord will protect me then; but I can't expect Him to keep me from nervousness at sudden noises, or from being timid and afraid to speak a word in meeting, or from being anxious at sea, or for those who are on it." Why not? Do you not see that this is a virtual shutting out of God from all the ordinary affairs of life? He is a God nigh at hand as well as afar off. Jer. xxiii. 23. He who does that which is greatest, is abundantly able to do that which is least. Fear in little things is evidence of distrust in God, just as much as fear in great things. It shows that we do not believe that God is very near, or that He is great enough to look after details. The true child of God, who is living a life of constant trust in Him, need not, cannot, be afraid of anything in the world. He who is not afraid of God, cannot be afraid of anything; for nothing is so great as He.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Ps. xxvii. 1. He is "the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea." Ps. lxxv. 5. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Deut. xxxiii. 27. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday." Ps. xci. 1-5.

This perfect confidence is the result of acquaintance with the Lord. Because one has learned to trust the Lord in all things, proving that nothing is too small for

His attention, he can trust Him in the great trial. "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." Isa. xxx. 15. When the perfect love casts out all fear, then perfect rest must remain. This is the rest that remains to the people of God. It is the perfect keeping of the Sabbath. It is this blessed rest that the Sabbath of the Lord makes known. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;" but the keeping of the Sabbath is not by any means met by resting from manual labour on the last day of the week. The ceasing from our work on that day is but the sign of our perfect rest in God-of the committing of our souls to God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. 1 Peter iv. 19. But perfect rest must be constant; to trust one day and be anxious and fearful the next, is not to rest in God. So in the message of the Sabbath of the Lord, which is the message that prepares for His coming, we find that revelation of God as Creator and Lord, that will keep us from ever being afraid again. What a glorious message!

"My strength and my song is Jehovah; and He is become my salvation." Just see what one gets in return for acknowledging that he has no strength: he gets

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the Lord for his strength. All the strength of the Lord is his. Thus he is "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power." Col. i. 11. This is far better than the utmost that anyone could hope for, even at the highest estimate of his own strength.

"With joy shall ye draw waters from the wells of salvation." When?-Now; whenever you are thirsty for salvation. Jesus cried: "If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink." John vii. 37. "Let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17. God is "the fountain of living waters." Jer. ii. 13. "In Him we live;" therefore we are continually drawing water from the wells of salvation, whether we know it or not. Recognise the fact, and the drinking of the water of life will be a joy.

"Make known among the peoples His mighty deeds." This is the proper occupation of all men. Nobody has any right to talk to another soul about his own weakness. Our sole business is to speak of the glory of God's kingdom, and to talk of His power; "to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom." Ps. cxlv. 12. Say unto the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" We don't, as a general thing, need to tell people very much about our own weakness and insignificance; they usually have a fair knowledge of that without our taking special pains to point it out. It does them no good, and it increases our own discouragement, when we talk of our own weakness. But when we speak of the power of Jehovah, we have an endless theme, and one which strengthens and encourages both speaker and bearer.

"Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High; God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved." Ps. xlv. 4, 5. The presence of God in Zion renders it immovable; so the presence of God in the midst of His people assures their safety. God's presence recognised in a man makes him "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58. Why shout?

because you are so great?-No; because God is so great, and He dwells in us. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." 1 John iv. 4. "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. The Hope of Glory" *The Present Truth* 15, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

Here is something else that flits among the flowers, and feeds on their honey, as well as the bees that we talked about last week. The butterflies-how pretty they look as they soar in the air like tiny birds, or rest for a moment to sip the honey from the flowers, looking almost like their own bright petals. In fact, when their wings are closed, the butterflies can sometimes scarcely be distinguished from the leaves of the plants on which they settle.

But while you watch them and admire their beauty, do you ever think of their wonderful life story? They were not always as you see them now, but in their short lives they have passed through marvellous changes, before they became the perfect and beautiful butterflies that you see.

If you should keep some of the tiny eggs that the butterfly lays, and watch them, would you see little baby butterflies with tiny wings come from them, expecting to be fed with honey? No; little insects not at all like their mother,-little grubs or caterpillars,-would crawl out, eat up the shell of the egg, and begin at once to feed greedily upon the leaf where the eggs had been laid. For although the butterfly herself feeds only on honey, and knows nothing about caterpillars and their food, she always lays her eggs in just the place where the little caterpillars will find the very food that they want.

This is very wonderful, for different kinds of caterpillars feed on different plants, some on cabbage leaves, some on the leaves of the nettle, and some on other plants. But the mother never makes a mistake; she always leaves the eggs where the young ones will find the right kind of food ready for them. See how carefully and lovingly she provides for the young ones whom she will never see; for almost as soon as the eggs are laid, the butterfly dies.

How can she have such wisdom and intelligence, you will perhaps wonder. But this wisdom belongs not to the butterfly, it belongs to the *life* that she has, which is not her own, but God's life in her, as it is in all His works, guiding each one in the right way. It is the life which holds the earth in its place and guides it in its path round the sun, that guides it in its path round the sun, that guides each tiny insect in just the works that God has appointed for it.

We have been learning about the plants that they are not perfect at once, but come forth, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." And it is just the same with these little insects; there is first the grub or caterpillar, then the chrysalis, and at last the perfect creature,-the butterfly.

The caterpillar is a very hungry little thing, and spends nearly all its life feeding, for it needs a great deal of food to enable it to do the work for which it is getting ready. It grows very fast, and when its coat gets too small, it casts it off and appears in a new and larger one that has been growing underneath.

After living in this way for some weeks or months, the caterpillar builds or spins a little house for itself like a tiny coffin, and wrapping its body in a beautiful silken shroud that it spins for this purpose, it passes into the state of rest called the chrysalis state, in which it eats nothing at all, and shows no sign of life. Some even bury themselves under the ground, but others fasten their little houses to the leaves or twigs of plants.

Those that pass into the chrysalis state in the autumn, stay in this condition all the winter. But when the warm sunshine comes back again, the time of their rest and burial is over, the little prison houses burst open, and out come, -not the old creeping caterpillars, but beautiful soaring butterflies, with large painted wings covered with delicate feathery scales, able to soar like the birds, and as beautiful as the flowers.

What a change! What a wonderful transformation! Think, then, of the glorious possibilities wrapped up in each little creeping caterpillar that you see. When its short life of toil is over, it passes from sight, and there seems to be an end of it. But is it so? Oh, no; when its appointed times comes, it awakes clothed with a more beautiful garment, with new powers, to a new and fuller life.

Is not this a wonderful chapter of the Gospel of the Spring?-the Gospel of Hope, "the hope of glory," we may call it: for this is the message of the Spring season, and through all the ages it has been teaching the same beautiful lesson.

The patriarch Job, who lived 4,000 years ago, asked, "If a man die shall he live again?" and then he answered his own question by saying, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till *my change* come." He had seen the seeds that were buried in the ground spring up at the appointed time in freshness and beauty; he had seen the caterpillar passing away into the chrysalis, waiting all the days of its appointed time till its wonderful change should come. The spring flowers, and the butterflies that flit among them, are teaching us the same beautiful lesson that Job had learned, a lesson of life and hope.

But there is one thing that I want you to notice particularly: This change, the bursting forth of the perfect insect, which seems so sudden, is really only

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the end of a work that has been going on for a long time, in fact ever since the little caterpillar was born the butterfly has been gradually forming within it. But now it comes forth so that the hidden and wonderful work that has been going on can be clearly seen.

All this is to teach us something of the wonderful "mystery of the Gospel." The Apostle Paul when he speaks of this mystery, tells us what it is; he says that it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

"The hope of glory" for the caterpillar is the beautiful butterfly forming within it, which by and by will transform within it, which by and by will transform and change its whole body. "The hope of glory" for us is "Christ formed within us,"-the

power of His life working in us now to take away our old sinful nature, and change us into His image.

And by and by it will be clearly seen who are those in whom this change has been going on, for when Jesus comes there will be "a *manifestation* (a revealing, or showing forth) of the sons of God." Then their whole bodies will be changed, and "fashioned like unto His glorious body."

As you see the caterpillar crawling on the ground and on the plants, think, dear children, of the wonders going on in its tiny frame, and ask Jesus who is doing this work, to work in you also by His power, and change you into His image, so that you may be among those who "shall be like Him," when "they shall see Him as He is?"

"Better than a Fairy Tale" *The Present Truth* 15, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

A gentleman living in St. Fernando, Chili, about twenty years ago, was charged with witchcraft, and arrested by the authorities, because he had some caterpillars that turned into butterflies!

You will, no doubt, be astonished to hear of such ignorance, for almost every child now knows that caterpillars turn into butterflies.

And yet to one who does not know and consider the wonderful works of God, this transformation seems so strange, and so like a romance or fairy story, that it is no wonder that they were at a loss to account for it.

Goethe said: "I would call these transmutations wonderful, if the wonderful in nature were not that which occurs every moment."

The works of God that are going all around us are much more wonderful than any of the fairy stories that people make up out of their own minds, and much more beautiful too, because they are all true.

Is it not then, dear children, much better for us to "consider the wondrous works of God," and so get our minds filled with truth and beauty, than to waste our time filling our minds with the lies that people spin out of their own imagination?

"I love to tell the story,
More wonderful it seems
Than all the golden fancies
Of all our golden dreams."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

-The deaths due to influenza mounted in the last week from 74 to 113.

-The Johannesburg policeman who shot a British subject last December, has been acquitted.

-An illicit still has been raided by the police in the east-end of London, who found six casks, each holding thirty-six gallons, full of the raw spirit.

-It is announced that the Italian Government has obtained the sanction of the Tsung-li-Yamen to a ninety years' lease of Sanmun Bay, a large bay on the east

coast, containing several islands, under the same conditions that similar concessions have been granted to other European Powers.

- A Berlin watchmaker has invented an instrument which will measure time to the 1,000th part of a second.

- The loss occasioned to underwriters by the late disastrous storms in the Atlantic are estimated, for ships and cargo alone, to amount to ?365,000.

- The loss to foreign merchants by the destruction of Iloilo is estimated to amount to nearly a million sterling. It is intended to claim compensation from the United States government.

- There has been more fighting between the Americans and the Filipinos, but the latter seem to be getting discouraged. Large numbers are expressing their desire for American government.

- France has passed safely through the crisis of a Presidential election. One or two political agitators, who attempted to stir up a military insurrection, were arrested and will be prosecuted for treason.

- A photographic film nine and a half miles in length is somewhat of a novelty, even in this age of big things. Three of them are now being made for use in a cinematograph. The cost is about ?200 a mile.

- Another little encounter has taken place between French and English interests. The Sultan of Muscat, who is subsidised by England, granted a coaling station to France, but under pressure of a threat of bombardment from the British Admiral, the concession was publicly revoked.

- Both in Samoa and the Philippines German relations with the United States are believed to have reached a delicate stage. This fact is contested in the minds of the American public with Admiral Dewey's cabled request that the battle ship *Oregon* be sent to Manila "for political reasons."

- At Madrid a thousand soldiers lately returned from Cuba and the Philippines held an open air meeting, asking for payment of the arrears due to them. They dispersed peacefully on an official promise that they should receive relief. A commission is to be appointed to investigate the conduct of the commanders engaged in the late war.

- The German navy is now experimenting with a submarine boat of its own. The boat obeyed the steering apparatus well, maintained a fair speed, and was able to remain under water for some hours. If these experiments result in the strengthening of modern navies by submarine vessels, a new and terrible element will be added to naval warfare.

- The Norwegian and Swedish newspapers agree that the Czar's crushing of the Finnish constitution will make it impossible for small nations to take part in the Peace Conference, for it shows that the Czar cannot be trusted. Reports from St. Petersburg state that the Czar is in a state of physical prostration, and that he signs documents without any real understanding of their import.

- A large number of bank robberies have recently been committed. The newspapers on one day last week had four fresh ones to report, involving thousands of pounds. There is only one place to lay up treasure in with the absolute security that thieves will not break in and steal. All treasure invested in

worldly institutions will be lost, if not by the default of the institution, by the death of the investor.

-Some excitement has been caused by the report that the Khalifs had re-organised his scattered forces, and was marching on Khartoum with 20,000 men, defeating friendly tribes *en route*. The rumour is not considered sufficiently serious to call for any extensive movement of troops, although suspicions are entertained in some quarters that the Khalifa is receiving support from the Emperor Menelik of Abyssinia.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

The Gospel does not depend in any way for its success upon what man can contribute to it, either in his own case or any other. It is simply and solely the power of God (Rom. i. 18), and "there is no power but of God." Rom. xiii. 1. The Gospel is good news, not because it reveals to man any strength or worthiness in himself, but because it declares that God has chosen the weak things of the world in which to display His saving power.

God's purpose is that "no flesh shall glory in His presence." 1 Cor. i. 29. By faith, boasting is entirely excluded. Rom. iii. 27. The true circumcision are they "which worship God in the Spirit [not in the flesh, which is enmity against God] and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil. iii. 3. All who are saved in the kingdom of God will realise that they have not travelled one step of the way in their own strength or wisdom. "Thou shalt know that I am the Lord, that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." Ezek. xvi. 62, 63.

If Christians would only recognise this now in its fulness, the lamentation that is so often heard over the weakness of the church would soon be turned into joy. Why is not the Gospel as great a power now to save sinners, and convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment as it was on the day of Pentecost? The Gospel is still the power of God, and His arm is not shortened, nor His ear heavy; He changes not: why then may we not expect that the same fulness of the Divine, Almighty power be manifested?

The hindrance is in the professed children of God. They do not remember that all power and wisdom is of God. God has worked through every man more or less in the past, and has displayed His wisdom in them to some extent. But those through whom He has thus manifested Himself assume that all the power and wisdom revealed is their own, and the more of these things God has shown in them, the more they pride themselves. Even those who are praying for the outpouring of the Spirit make this mistake. They realise that some things are too great for them, and so they seek special help for these, promising the Lord, as they plead, that "Thine shall be all the glory," but when the prayer is granted and the special help bestowed, the man too often gets to think, and allows others to think, that the success than attained was due to some special qualities of his own.

Suppose such a man should receive the full outpouring of the Spirit of God, so that he could work great signs and wonders. Who would get all the glory? He might honestly intend at the outset that God should be glorified, but his old habit of accounting for success by attributing it to his own cultivated abilities, would lead him to think that he himself must be a wonderful man to be privileged so much more than others. Praise and congratulation would sound so sweetly in his ears that these would be sought, and his power would be used to serve those who pleased him most in these respects. Such a man would feel less dependent than ever on the Lord, and the gift of the power in his case would prove his eternal ruin.

But this can never happen in the case of the power of God. Only those can receive the outpouring of the Spirit who acknowledge themselves to be nothing. The man who thinks there is any power in himself at all will not come to God for that power. He glories in himself, perhaps not much, but he feels that he is a little independent of God, because there are some things he has acquired strength and wisdom to do for himself. So, of course, He does not come to God for the power, or acknowledge that he gets it direct from the Lord. Those who are not faithful in little things would not be faithful in great. If a man fails to acknowledge God as the giver of a small amount of power and wisdom manifested in his life, it is certain evidence that he would show the same unthankful spirit whatever God did for him.

"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what; hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. These words are comprehensive, and they show that all the things in which men boast themselves, are simply gifts, which render the receivers debtors to their fellows. No man has anything at all of himself. It is because of the disregard of this truth that men do not receive the Spirit in the measure for which they ask. They divide the Christian experience up into classes, and label one "the higher life." Any ordinary Christian can live the lower one, but special grace is needed for the higher, and so those who are ambitious to excel, pray for the outpouring of the Spirit. This is not considered necessary for the lower class of Christian. He is urged to seek the higher, but is considered perfectly safe if he remains content with the lower. The fulness of the Spirit is regarded as a kind of a luxury, not altogether essential to the Christian life, but a very desirable thing, and a most distinguishing addition.

But the Scriptures know nothing of these false distinctions between different kinds of Christian life. They warn us, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Rom. viii. 9. The Spirit is an absolute necessity to every Christian. Without it he is no Christian at all. When men realise that they *need* the outpouring of the Spirit for their very existence, and ask for it, not as something, which they can do without if necessary, but as the only means whereby they can be saved from the hateful power of sin, not as something which they can do without if necessary, but as the only means whereby they can be saved from the hateful power of sin, God will not be found indifferent to the sense of need. The one argument that never fails with Him is the need of the suppliant, and He will speedily satisfy the desire of those who seek Him with the whole heart.

When the working of the Spirit, which is wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of God, is acknowledged in the things, even the smallest, for which men have taken credit to themselves, it will open the way for the Spirit to do much more in men, without lifting up their souls unto perdition. When we cease trying to draw a line between what we can do for ourselves and what we must ask God to do for us, realising that without Him we can do absolutely nothing, and giving Him the glory for the smallest, most common-place and unconsidered parts of our lives, we shall not run the risk of taking the glory of greater achievements to ourselves. Then God can display all His greatness without danger to us, and the days of apostolic power and blessing will be revived, the Gospel can go as an adequate and faithful witness to all nations, and then shall the end come (Matt. xxiv. 14), for then it will be possible for the Lord to cut short His work in righteousness and make a short work in the earth. Rom. ix. 28.

March 16, 1899

"Incorruptible Seed" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

The Gospel is just as simple as God can make it. That there may be no misunderstanding about it, He has revealed its principles and working in nature, and the birth and growth of the plants teach us the way of life. "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." Rom. i. 20.

Men are to be born again, as children of God, just as the plants are. The seed which is sown in us is the Word of God. "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and beideth for ever." 1 Peter i. 23.

It is not credit to the earth that the seed is sown in it, because it is by the will of the sower that it is done. So it is with men. "Oh His own will begat He us with the word of truth." James i. 18. It is sufficient for us to know that God wills to make us His children. If we feel devoid of all desire to be such, this should not keep us back. If we will only let the seed be sown, we shall be filled with God's will. That does not change. Ours does. Many get discouraged because of their weak, inconstant will to do right. That is because they do not recognise that it is not by their own will that they are born again, or kept, but by God's unchanging purpose.

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 13. Those who keep this in mind can always be confident, because God's will does not waver. The thought that He is not discouraged or shaken will fill us with courage.

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Since then our Christian life is due to the fact that God begets us by the word of truth, how shall we grow? By continuing to hear the Word. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear." James i. 19. Be slow to speak,

slow to wrath, because these things work not the righteousness of God. Therefore when we are exhorted to be swift to hear, it must be because this does work the righteousness of God. "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness ["Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." John xv. 3], and receive with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save your souls." James i. 21.

The only reason why any who make a good beginning in the Christian life fail to keep it up, is because they depart from the simplicity of the way. It is not because the way gets harder, for it does not. At the outset faith came by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. x. 17), and that same faith, coming in the same way, will always overcome sin. We are not to be forgetful hearers, but to look into the perfect law of liberty and continue therein, and since faith works, because the living Word works, we shall be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving our own selves.

"Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts xx. 32. All that is possible in Christian life, and the attainment of the inheritance, is for those who hear the Word, and for them alone. The Word itself does the work. If men were required to do it they could not, and this truth is taught us in the growth of the plants. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." Mark iv. 26, 27.

This is not only true, as far as our own experience is concerned, but it applies to anything we may seek to do for others. No one can give anything to another, unless he has it himself, and, because men in themselves are nothing, no man can give anything to another in any other way than he gets it himself. "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. iii. 5.

So it is clear that everything depends upon our hearing the Word of God all the while, not occasionally or in small measure, for man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. "All things are possible to him that believeth" and "faith cometh by hearing." "Wherefore, let every man be swift to hear." "Hear, and your soul shall live."

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

"Clothed with Strength" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

God does not give as the world gives. His thoughts are not as ours. Therefore it is a mistake for the Christian to take counsel with himself, or his knowledge of the ways of the world, when considering what he may expect from the Lord. Before every believer there are trials and conflicts, but not one of them, however severe, will reveal any weakness in the Divine provision for his continual triumph. All the way along he will find that God does for him exceeding abundantly above all that he can ask or think. The victory over every foe is given him at the outset, and he may shout his triumph just as safely before the battle as after it. Indeed, it

he does not there is danger that there will be none to shout over. "For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith." 1 John v. 4.

The call to those who will hear it is, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." These words are addressed to those who have sold themselves for naught, and whom the Lord redeems without price. Isa. lii. 1-4. It is not His fault, or His intention, that His people lack strength or beauty. These are provided for all who will put them on. Just as the guest who came to the marriage supper, but failed to put on the clothing provided (Matt. xxii. 11-14), was speechless when asked, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" so would every one be speechless and without excuse to whom the Lord should say, "Why art thou not clothed with strength and beauty?"

The garments are not to be acquired during the course of the Christian's experience. It is true that their beauty is to be made manifest, but this could not be unless it were already there. Too many feel that while the Lord gives them garments of salvation, He expects that they will put into the garments the beauty and the strength by their own efforts. Repeated failures to do this make them discouraged and faint-hearted, whereas the blessed truth is that God gives the beauty and the strength to begin with, and all that the Christian has to do is to let these qualities appear. This is easy enough for the weakest if they are only there, and they are by the Lord's own handiwork.

When the temptation comes to try the faith of the Christian, unless he holds fast his confidence, he is apt to forget that the Lord has clothed him with strength, and to go out trembling against the enemy in his own strength which is but naked weakness. Of course, the tempter prevails, and then tries to instil doubts as to whether there is any real strength in the armour of God, seeing it failed him then. Of course it did. All the armour in the world would not protect a man who did not make use of it. The trouble with the tempted soul was that he did not put on his strength, or rather that he allowed Satan to persuade him to leave it off for a little while.

Whoever knows, by believing God's statement, that he is clothed with strength and beauty, will meet the enemy with confidence, knowing that it is God's strength, and "the beauty of the Lord" with which he is clothed. He will not wonder how he can strengthen or beautify his life, because He will know that God has done this for him freely in a measure that he could not ask or even think. It is for him to rejoice and find rest in the accomplished fact.

Jesus counsels us to buy of Him "gold tried in the fire." Rev. iii. 18. The riches that God bestows, whatever they are, do not have to be tested to see

whether they will wear; they are already tried in the fire. The Christian need not wonder how long they will last when he receives them, for they endure for ever. They are given just as freely and fully to the believer of a day's standing as to the man who has been in the way for many years, and the former may, by simple trust in their sufficiency, be preserved as safely as the latter can be. It does not matter how severe the tests may be. They will only bring out more clearly the

beauty and strength and the riches of the life of Christ, which is given to all who receive Him by faith. "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Heb. iii. 14.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Judgment upon Babylon. Isa. xiii. 1-22"
***The Present Truth* 15, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XIII. 1-22, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

2. Upon a lofty mountain erect the standard;
Exalt the voice; beckon with the hand;
That they may enter the gates of princes.

3. I have given a charge to my enrolled warriors;
I have even called My strong ones to execute
My wrath;
Those that exult in My greatness.

4. A sound of a multitude in the mountains, as
of a great people;
A sound of the tumult of kings, of na-
tions gathered together!
Jehovah, God of hosts, mustereth the host for
the battle.

5. They come from a distant land, from the end
of the heavens;
Jehovah, and the instruments of His wrath,
to destroy the whole land.

6. Howl ye, for the day of Jehovah is at hand;
As a destruction from the Almighty shall it
come.

7. Therefore shall all hands be slackened;
And every heart of mortal shall melt; and
they shall be terrified;

8. Torments and pangs shall seize them;
As a woman in travail, they shall be pained;
They shall look upon one another with as-
tonishment;
Their countenances shall be like flames of
fire.

9. Behold, the day of Jehovah cometh, inexor-
able;
Even indignation, and burning wrath;
To make the land a desolation.
And her sinners He shall destroy from out of
her.

10. Yes, the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof,
Shall not send forth their light;
The sun is darkened at his going forth,
And the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

11. And I will visit the world for its evil;
And the wicked for their iniquity;
And I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud;
And I will bring down the haughtiness of the terrible.

12. I will make a mortal more precious than fine gold.

Yes, a man than the rich ore of Ophir.

13. Wherefore I will make the heavens tremble;
And the earth shall be shaken out of her place;
And in the day of His burning anger.

14. And the remnant shall be as a roe chased;
And as sheep when there is none to gather them together;
They shall look every one towards his own people;
And they shall flee every one to his own land.

15. Every one that is overtaken shall be thrust through;
And all that are collected in a body shall fall by the sword.

16. And their infants shall be dashed before their eyes;
Their houses shall be plundered, and their wives ravished.

17. Behold, I raise up against them the Medes,
Who shall hold silver of no account;
And as for gold, they shall not delight in it.

18. Their bows shall dash the young men;
And on the fruit of the womb they shall have no mercy;
Their eye shall have no pity even on the children.

19. And Babylon shall become, she that was the beauty of kingdoms,
They glory of the pride of the Chaldeans,
As the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah by the hand of God.

20. It shall not be inhabited for ever;
Nor shall it be dwelt in from generation to
generation;
Neither shall the Arabian pitch his tent there,
Neither shall the shepherds make their fold
there.

21. But there shall the wild beasts of the desert
lodge;
And howling monsters shall fill their houses;
And there shall the daughters of the ostrich
dwell;
And there shall the satyrs hold their revels.

22. And wolves shall howl to one another in their
palaces;
And dragons in their voluptuous pavilions;
And her time is near to come;
And her day shall not be prolonged.

This is "the oracle concerning Babylon which was revealed to Isaiah the son of Amos." Isa. xiii. 1. The lesson may seem to be very long, but the principal point that needs consideration is, What is Babylon? When this point is understood, the chapter as a whole is very simple, for it consists simply in plain statements concerning the fate of Babylon; and therefore we could not well consider it except as a whole.

The origin of Babylon is given in the eleventh chapter of Genesis. After the flood the people came to a plain in the land of Shinar, and said to one another, "Let us build a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." The Lord saw what they "imagined to do," and confounded their language so that they could not continue to build. Thus that which they thought to avoid came upon them: They were scattered abroad. The name of the city which they began to build was called "Babel," which means "

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confusion," because their language as well as their lofty ideas was confounded. Since Babel, or Babylon, means confusion, it is evident that the term is not limited to a particular spot or city, but that wherever there is confusion there is Babylon.

"Where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." James iii. 16. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain." 1 Cor. iii. 20. He therefore provided the spiritual weapons that are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. God's way is perfect, because His thoughts are perfect and they alone endure to all generations. Only the mind of God can think right thoughts, even as God alone can do righteous acts. "There is no power but of God." Man has no more power in himself to think than he has in himself to live and to move. Just as every attempt of man to act for himself

results in erratic movements, so every attempt of man to think in opposition to God must come to nothing; that is, will be utterly confounded. We see, therefore, that Babylon exists as extensively and as long as there is opposition to God.

As long as the ancient city of Babylon stood, it was the embodiment of boastful exaltation against God. The fourth chapter of Daniel sets forth this spirit. In Isa. xlvii. 8 we read of Babylon, that she said, "I am, and none else beside me." This spirit has characterised every nation since the day when Belshazzar's blasphemous boastings were cut short by the destruction of his kingdom by the Medes.

Babylon was a universal kingdom. Dan. ii. 37, 38. The kingdom as a name, ceased with the death of Belshazzar and the capture of the city by the Medes; but in reality it has existed to the present day. That this is so is evident from the chapter before us, for it tells of judgments upon Babylon, yet these are evidently none other than the final judgments upon the whole earth. Thus we read that the Lord "mustereth the hosts of the battle from the end of heaven, and the weapons of His indignation to destroy the whole land." Verses 4, 5. "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel, both with wrath and fierce anger to lay the land desolate, and He shall destroy the sinners out of it." The Lord says that at the time of this judgment of Babylon, He will punish the world for their evil and the wicked for their iniquity, and will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. He will shake the heavens, and the earth shall be removed out of her place in the wrath of the Lord of hosts and in the day of His fierce anger. Compare this with the second chapter of Isaiah, where we have the account of the judgments of God upon every high tower and every fenced wall when the loftiness of men shall be bowed down and the monuments of men shall be made low and the Lord alone shall be exalted.

By comparing Isa. xlvii. 8, 9, with Rev. xviii. 7, 8, we see that the prophet John, a century after Christ, used exactly the same language concerning Babylon that is used by the prophet Isaiah seven hundred years before Christ. This shows that the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah was yet in the future in the days of John, yet the city that was built in the plan of Shinar, had been levelled to the ground long before. We do not need to resort to the idea that one was literal Babylon and the other spiritual or figurative Babylon, for the language of John refers to just as literal a city as does that of Isaiah; but we do see that Babylon was not by any means confined to the city of brick and stone that was embellished by Nebuchadnezzar, nor to the people known as Babylonians. It still exists and its destruction will be the final judgment upon the earth when sin and sinners shall be destroyed out of it, and rebellion against God be made to cease for evermore.

The question may arise, if this threatened judgment upon Babylon, Isa. xliii., refers to the final judgment upon the wicked, how is it that the Medes are referred to as taking part in this retribution? The answer is very simple. It is because judgment upon Babylon began twenty-five hundred years ago, when the Medes captured the city and destroyed Belshazzar in the height of his insolent pride. The desolation of that proud and wicked city is a proof that everything that exalts itself against God shall be destroyed.

With these facts in mind, this chapter is very simple. With a knowledge of what Babylon is, not only this, but a great portion of the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel is made plain. God calls His people to come out of Babylon where they have been to a large extent ever since. They were carried captive because of their haughty rebellion against God. Every one whose soul is lifted up is in Babylon. A man can come out and be free at any time by allowing the mind of the Spirit of God to take the place of his carnal mind, which is enmity against God. Now is the time to hasten from Babylon; for "Her time is near to come, and her day shall not be prolonged."

"Studies from the Gospel of John. Saved and Kept" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

The utter helplessness of men is often insisted upon in the Scriptures, but it is never intended to produce discouragement. The Saviour told His disciples that He sent them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, but they were not to be alarmed over this, for the assurance is given, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, which hath given them unto Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one." John x. 27-30. Not their own weakness but the strength of the Father and the Son is the measure of the security which the sheep enjoy.

What is it that causes men to be numbered among the sheep? It is the relation they sustain to the Shepherd. They may be like the sheep, naturally stupid, easily led into danger, and entirely unable to look after themselves in the absence of

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the shepherd, but if, with all these natural weaknesses, they trust implicitly to the guidance and protection of the True Shepherd, they will be delivered from the evils into which they would fall if left to themselves. "My sheep hear My voice. . . and they follow Me." So long as they sustain this relation, the promise is theirs: "They shall never perish and no one shall snatch them out of My hand." That which precludes the possibility of the sheep being lost is the fact that they hear the voice of the Shepherd and follow Him. Thus they experience what Christ declares to be the portion of His flock: "I am the good Shepherd; and I know Mine own, and Mine own, know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father." Verses 14, 15. Unspeakably close and tender is the between the Saviour and those who follow Him. Nothing can be compared with it except the wondrous love that unites in one the Father and His only begotten Son.

A great many people who claim for themselves the promise that they shall never perish, show that they have no real appreciation of its meaning, and that they do not know it in the only way it can be known, by practical experience. Yet such generally claim for themselves that they have entered upon a plane of spiritual life, which is far above the average Christian experience. In many

instances when the true Sabbath of the Lord is brought to their notice they refuse to listen to the voice which spoke from heaven the ten commandments, although they claim to be His sheep. If it be pointed out to them that disobedience to God's commands is sin (1 John iii. 4), and that the wages of sin is death (Rom. vi. 23), they reply that it will not be so with them, because they have been born again, and Christ has promised that they shall never perish. Thus they take the promises of Christ to strengthen themselves in continuing to transgress His commandment, after the sin has been brought to their knowledge.

Almost invariably the people who use these arguments hold also the view that a person who has once been saved can never be lost, and they base this idea on the words of Christ that no man shall pluck His sheep out of His hand. A young lady who believed thus said recently that it would take away all her peace of mind if she could not believe that whatever she did she would never be finally lost.

This shows a pitifully narrow view of God's character and great work of salvation. This is not of so precarious a commit nature that no one can rejoice in it unless he feels that God has somehow committed Himself, so that He cannot cast a person off even if, on account of subsequent developments, He should wish to. There is assurance enough in God's own love to render salvation secure to anyone who can possibly be saved. The theories we have referred to are an invention of Satan to keep people selfishly content not to know the depth of God's love, which does not need to be tied down to the task of saving a person, but, freely and gladly, does more for men than they can ask or think. As usual, when men thus pervert the Scriptures, the comfort which they think they get so much more certainly by their own interpretation turns out to be no comfort at all. No one can deny that both in the Scriptures, and in private life, men who have once served God, turn from Him and die impenitent. You ask a believer in the theory of "once in grace, always in grace," how he reconciles his views with these undoubted facts, and he will reply, "Oh, they were never really born again, or they could not have fallen away." "But while they were professing Christians, they themselves and all about them believed that they were born again. How can you be any more sure than they that you are not mistaken and that you also will not fall away? They were as positive as you are now that they were born again." The divine warning is given, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." It is clear, therefore, that this certainty is no certainty at all, and can give no real comfort.

People who take such a position, in doing so give evidence that they are not born of the Spirit, for their very attitude springs from a carnal mind. This same spirit is manifested in many who want to be saved, but who find in the world and the flesh attractions which exceed the drawing power of Christ over their hearts. They wish that the Lord would take them by force and save them all at once, in such a way that they would not have power to yield to temptation in the future. They would give anything if this could be done for them. They would be willing to hand over their future to the Lord if He would deal with it by one operation. They do not like the process of being continually saved from sin, because often their own inclinations are uppermost, and it means a struggle to them to allow the Lord to save them from the sin they want to commit.

But there is perfect freedom with the Saviour. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." The Son makes men free; there is no slavery of any description where He reigns, for He will reign by love or not at all. The Lord never presumes on anything that has gone before. He does not say to Christians, "No, I cannot allow you to commit this sin. I have taken too much pains with you, and suffered too much to think of allowing you to do as you please now, unless you do as I please. You promised to follow Me, and I intend to hold you to your promise now, whether you like it or not." If a Christian should say, "When I promised to follow you, I did not know how attractive the world could be. I really prefer in this instance to go my own way," the Lord will not compel an unwilling obedience. In the Lord's service every soul is perfectly free to go on or turn back. Jesus has the satisfaction of knowing that every soul who follows Him, does so simply and solely because He prefers His company to anything else. There are no vows to bind them, after the love has waxed cold. The one tie that unites Christ to His people is love. In this freedom consists the joy of the relationship. The gladdest thought of the redeemed is that they are the chosen of Christ, and as He looks over the hosts of the redeemed, His own infinite love finds satisfaction in the thought that there is not one among them who would not freely sacrifice all for Him.

How much more encouraging is the promise that Christ actually makes to His sheep. The foregoing is not written to minimise in the least the confidence which the Christian may feel in his final salvation, but only to show how much more secure God's promises make it than men's ideas can. There is no lack of assurance for the future. Paul declares that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. Rom. viii. 38, 39. "For all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's." 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. But the Scriptures also make known that the hope of these things is a living hope. Therefore the life of them is

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now ours to enjoy, and whatever power the future will reveal in the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, that power is for us now, if we lay hold of the hope. Thus among the things which go to make up the privileges of the Christian, we read of "the powers of the world to come." Heb. vi. 5.

So we read concerning Christ's sheep, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." To perish is the very opposite of having eternal life. God gave His Son that believers should not parish but have eternal life. John iii. 16. How does Christ give the eternal life? "The words that I speak unto you they are Spirit and they are life." John vi. 63. "My sheep hear My voice." In speaking to us, Christ gives us eternal life, and those who thus receive eternal life shall never lose it, "they shall never perish." In this way we may know for certain whether we have eternal life, for we may know whether we receive His Word or not. And just as long as we want to retain eternal life, we may be sure that we are retaining it by continuing to hear His voice.

Men do not value the Word of God as they should, because they do not sufficiently appreciate how different it is to all human speech. Unlike the words of men, it is full of eternal life and power. This is why it is able to build us up and give us an inheritance among the sanctified. Acts xx. 32. Those who receive it as it is, not a human word but the all-powerful Word of God, find that it works mightily in them. They, by receiving the Word, receive into themselves the power of God, so great that none can pluck them out of His hand. Only the reversal of the process which brought them into the Father's hand can take them out of that protection. Unbelief will hide the power of God from them, and leave them helpless, but self-doomed victims to Satan.

In the hand of God men are safe from all harm. That hand will lead them and hold them in safety and righteousness. It is so strong that it does not need to grip them in a vice-like clutch to preserve them from evil. Its clasp is an infinitely tender and loving one. "Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in Thy hand: and they eat down at Thy feet; every one shall receive of Thy words." Deut. xxxiii. 3.

Mourning over present troubles makes us forget past blessings.

"Confession" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

A motion was lately made in the House of Lords that a report be provided showing the number of cases in which confessional boxes have been introduced into the Church of England. Lord Salisbury, while agreeing to the request, pointed out that whatever steps were taken by the Government, they were powerless to deal with any spiritual evil. He said:-

If there are any means of repressing or discouraging the practice of habitual confession they would deserve all our consideration. I fear, however, that you are undertaking an effort to coerce consciences, which greater powers than the British Parliament have failed to effect, and that you are more likely to increase the disease than to stop it. But allow me to point out that this return will not tell you one hundredth part of the evil. If there is to be confession, which I most earnestly deprecate, I would rather have the open box in the church than the secret interview in the vestry. It is between these two that you have to choose, and my fear is, in the first place, that you will not get an accurate return of the boxes there are, because everybody who returns the existence of a box returns a confession that he has broken the law. You will not get people to do that; they will simply put your circular in the fire. And beyond that you will be giving a vicious stimulus to a certain mistaken spirit of religious courage which will most undoubtedly, and I think unfortunately, induce a more extended practice of the evil which you so justly deprecate. I greatly fear that if men wish to confess to men or-perhaps I should put it more accurately-if women wish to confess to men, all the power this Parliament possesses will not avail seriously to arrest the process. It is for them to teach their flocks-they cannot do it too earnestly and too often-the evils which may attend habitual and systematic secret confession. But let us be careful lest we hinder their work, and prevent them from doing that

which it is their proper charge to carry out, by bringing in the arm of the flesh which never yet beat down a religious error, and has often made the evil worse than before.

Lord Salisbury recognises that it is the work of the Church to attend to matters of religion, and that the "arm of flesh" never yet mended matters. If the Church is corrupt and powerless for good, it is only by reason of its unlawful connection with the world, and the first step in reform must be a separation from this entangling and corrupting alliance. If the Church neglects its work, the State cannot take it up. It should not be necessary for a statesman to remind the Church of this truth.

A merely political disestablishment will not suffice to correct the evil. The forbidden connection with the State arises out of a lack of faith in the power of the Word, and a sinful yielding to worldly influences. The friendship of the world is enmity with God (James iv. 4.), and the duty of every believer in the Church is to repent and do the first works, not trusting in the arm of flesh, but returning to her first love. Rev. ii. 4, 5. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, and the Church which loyally recognises its obligation to its Lord will, forsaking all others, cleave only to Him, content with the riches and the power which He bestows.

The fragrance of Christianity is not disseminated by force.

A common task may become a holy service by doing it to please God.

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. Some Warning Lessons" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

When God's great Book of Nature, out of which we have lately been learning these beautiful lessons of the Gospel of the Spring, was first made, it did not have in it all the things that are now to be found there.

Here is a picture that never would have been seen if sin had not brought destruction and death into the world. For if the spider weaved his beautiful silken web in the beginning, it was certainly not for catching flies and other insects to kill and eat them.

No; at that time all was sweet peace and harmony, for every living thing was filled with and guided by the Spirit of God,-the Spirit of love, for "God is love."

"Perfect love casteth out fear," and so no living creature was afraid of any other, but all lived peacefully and happily together. This was because "love seeketh not her own," but is always seeking to do good to others.

So every creature lived and worked, not for its own good, but for the service and good of others. As long as this happy state lasted, the Book of Nature taught but the one sweet lesson of love, the love of God, which was the life of every living thing.

Why, then, do we now see such a different state of things, the earth full of fear and violence, the animals preying one upon another, and even the tiny insects taking the lives of others to preserve their own.

It is because there is another spirit working and ruling in the earth, the spirit of Satan, which is the spirit of selfishness. When this first got into the heart of man,

he began at once to look out for himself, instead of for others, to try to exalt himself. And as he was the king and ruler of everything in the earth, all living things soon began to be ruled by this same spirit of selfishness; each began to "seek its own," instead of the good of others. This has been so plainly seen ever since that it has passed into a saying that "*self-preservation* is the first law of nature."

Because the whole Book of Nature is so changed and marred by sin, we cannot rightly read it, and see God's law of love so plainly written there, as in the beginning. So God has given us His Holy Word to guide us in our study of it. But those who try to read God's wonderful Book without His written Word for their guide, are sure to go astray, and to be deceived by that other spirit, and the spirit of Satan, that is working there.

But when we let the Word and Spirit of God guide us, even in the saddest pictures and the darkest pages of His Book of Nature He will teach us the most precious lessons of His love.

Then, too, since Satan began his work of death in the earth, God's children have needed other lessons than they would have if it had not been for this. So in letting the curse come upon all His works, God is making each one of them teach us just the lessons that we now need. He is letting us see Satan's ways of working, and the sad results of them, so that we may learn wisdom, may learn to be on our guard, and to take refuge in Him from all the Snares of Satan.

Even in these little insects that we have been learning about, there are many warning lessons for us. There is the caterpillar, we talked about him last week you will remember, and how he is gradually changed by the power of God into a beautiful butterfly.

It was noticed that some caterpillars instead of changing into butterflies, seemed to give birth to numbers of little flies which flew out from the dead caterpillar. This was a great puzzle to naturalists for some time, but by close watching it was found that these flies really came from eggs which a certain fly, called the ichneumon fly, deposited in the caterpillar's body, piercing a hole through the skin for this purpose.

When these tiny eggs are hatched, the little grubs that come from them feed on the caterpillar's body, and eat up what would be the butterfly, and keep it from changing into the perfect creature that was meant for.

Think well over this, and see what you can learn from it of Satan's work in the hearts of little children like you. Is he not always trying to drop little seeds of evil into your hearts, that will grow, and eat up and crowd out all that is good and pure so that you can never be changed into the perfect and beautiful image of Jesus. Watch, and ask Jesus to keep you, so that he may not take you unawares, and get these deadly seeds into your heart.

But even if he has already done so, you know there is something in your heart that Satan has put there, something that is keeping down and destroying the good that the Spirit of Jesus has put within you Jesus can save you from it even now if you ask Him, for He has "*power over all the power of the enemy.*"

Then there is the cunning spider, using the wisdom and the wonderful powers that God has given her, to lay traps and snare to catch and devour other little

living creatures that are not on their guard against her. And lest the poor little struggling fly should escape after all, and how she binds it with thread after thread until it has no power left, even to struggle.

What a picture this is of Satan, who God made "full of wisdom, and perfect

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beauty, yet who has bent all the powers of his master mind" to deceive and ensnare and destroy. He is still busy weaving webs in which to catch little boys and girls, as well as men and women.

Sometimes he makes his web look very bright and pretty, as the spider's web does when the sun is shining on it, so that you may be tempted to go near to look; but before you know it he will have you tied up in it, with no help but in the power of Jesus to come and set you free.

We shall not be able to talk this week about these webs that he is weaving for you, but you will be able to think of some of them yourself, and if you ask your mamma she will tell you of others.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

-Fifteen hundred miners have come out on strike at Bilbao, Spain, and there have been serious disturbances.

-It is stated that 90 per cent. of the common contagious diseases are carried from house to house by the domestic pets of the world.

-Three Prussian officers accomplished a balloon voyage of 420 miles in six hours, which is the quickest rate of speed ever attained by a balloon.

-The doctors of Sweden never send bills to their patients, the amount of their remuneration being left entirely to the generosity of the latter.

-There would not be sufficient space London cemeteries to bury London's dead for the next five years if each person were buried in a single grave.

-The Government proposes to compete with the National Telephone Company, and will attempt to popularise the use of the telephone by charging only 3 per annum, and a small additional fee for every call.

-Italy's application to China for the lease of Sanmun Bay has been refused, the Italian Minister's note being returned to him. By way of reply the Italian warships have landed several companies of marines, who have practically taken possession of the bay.

-A professor in a German Catholic University who has been teaching and writing views which were not in harmony with the dogmas of his church, had his writings placed on the *Index Expurgatorius*. It was expected that the professor, who had been expounding his views to crowded audiences, would prove firm, but he has quickly abandoned his defiant attitude, and promised to bring his teaching into harmony with the Church of Rome. He maintained that independent scientific investigation was consistent with orthodoxy, and that the Scriptures should be placed freely in the hands of laymen.

-A boot-blackening machine has lately been patented, the model of which shows a suitable framework, a rest for the foot, a reservoir to contain liquid blacking,

and brushes that automatically apply it to the boot. The machine can be worked by electricity, or with a spring, or on the penny-in-the-slot principle.

-Owing to the increase of feeling against England on the Continent, special precautions are being taken to secure the Queen's safety during her visit to Nice. A large number of detectives will watch all suspected persons in the vicinity, and if thought advisable expel them temporarily. During the two past years while the Queen was at Cimiez, more than one hundred suspects were ordered to leave the town.

-The Act recently passed in the French Chamber to bring the Dreyfus case before the whole Court of Appeal has again come into operation. This time the appellant is a sailor, who was sentenced to a month's imprisonment for desertion. The report on the case came before the Criminal Chamber, but as that tribunal was unable under the new law to deal with it, the whole forty-six judges of the court will have to meet.

-The anti-Romanist movement, which aims at securing German protection for some of the German-speaking provinces of Austria, is making great progress. Recently 2,500 Catholics in one, Bohemian parish declared their conversion to Protestantism. In another several hundred Catholics signed a similar declaration. The movement meets with great sympathy in the German Fatherland, and is largely fostered, particularly in clerical circles. Subscriptions are arranged clandestinely, and secret emissaries with funds are sent to Austria to support the agitation

-Forty tons of smokeless gunpowder exploded in a magazine at Toulon, killing over fifty persons. The scene of the explosion looked as if a volcanic eruption had occurred. For two miles the country was swept almost bare, the fields were devastated and covered with stones and fine black dust. A carriage which was nearly 100 yards away was blown into the sea and two of the occupants were drowned. The discovery of some dynamite on carriages in the neighbourhood has given rise to the belief that the explosion was an Anarchist outrage.

-The press in Finland is now subject to the strictest censorship, and the cases of censure have increased fivefold. A writer who defends Russia's action says that the exemptions and privilege enjoyed by the Finns were a standing grievance to the other Russian provinces. He continues: "The building of an empire is at times necessarily hard upon the minor States absorbed into the mass, but the minor State in the end often benefits by its incorporation. The major State certainly does, and it is not likely to forego its great advantage in order to consider what may or may not be of advantage to the minor."

-Still another "trust" is announced from New York, more gigantic than any that have gone before. This time it is a proposal to buy up all the mining railroads. The capital is to be \$180,000,000. A report from Washington says, "The extent to which new trusts are being formed is so tremendous as to attract general attention. Not day passes without an announcement of from one to half a dozen new trusts. To-day the papers announce the formation of five new trusts, with an aggregate capital of nearly \$40,000,000, with several other trusts in process of formation. Every trust is capitalised at fully double its actual value, which means that dividends have to be earned on millions of watered stock. Conservative

financiers fear that the country has gone trust mad, and that in a few months there will be a frightful smash, which will produce widespread ruin."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

In spite of the supplementary estimates for naval defence, which were approved last August in view of Russia's proposed expenditure, Mr. Goschen's estimates for the coming year show a further increase of nearly ?3,000,000. The reason given for the increase is that other countries are increasing their naval budgets. Mr. Goschen said,

I have thus far seen no reference to the approaching conference in the naval or military estimates or programmes of any of the great countries of the world. I have examined the programmes of other Powers, and that study has not been very reassuring. I have caused to be added up the amount of warships under construction by the six chief naval powers, and I find that there are 685,000 tons of men-of-war building, besides 225,000 tons which are projected.

England is willing to cry a halt if the other Powers will do the same, but otherwise the struggle must go on to the bitter end.

I have now to state on behalf of Her Majesty's Government that if the other great naval Powers should be prepared to diminish their programmes for shipbuilding, we should, on our side, be prepared to meet such a procedure by modifying can.

The International Peace Conference has now been appointed to meet on May 18th, at the Hague. The prospects of peace are worse than ever, and even if the English army should be disbanded, and should go so far as to enter the Church, it would find ample occasion for all the fighting spirit it had. To judge by the daily papers, and the correspondence in the religious journals, the different sections of the Church regard each other as deadly enemies.

People sometimes find fault with Christianity because it declares that there is only one Name given among men whereby we must be saved. They say, Look at such an one who made no profession of religion, yet he did more good than many who are called Christians. This only illustrates the impossibility of judging anybody. God does not accept professions. He, "without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work." 1 Peter i. 17. The name of Christ is not a mere formula, the utterance of which will save men. It is a life; and it will manifest itself as such, or by its absence prove that the assumption of the Name was an empty form.

Yet it may be that many men who have done good works will not inherit eternal life. It must be remembered that there is none good but One, that is, God; therefore whatsoever good appears in any man's life is not due to goodness, inherent or cultivated, in the man, but to God's working in him. He upholdeth all, and giveth life to all, and His Spirit strives with every man, trying to get control of the life. Men yield to good impulses, and think that these spring from themselves, but they are due to the striving of the Spirit which seeks to possess the whole life.

If a man, in whom a great deal of good has appeared, shall finally be lost, it will not prove that God is unjust. It will merely show that the man decided against God in the face of great light, and therefore is more blameworthy than others in whose life but little of the Spirit's working was manifested. God's life is light (John i. 4), and the man who chooses the way of death rather than of life, sins against light. The more of the life there was, shown in him, the greater the light rejected.

"Business Corruption" *The Present Truth* 15, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

An unpleasant light has been thrown on present-day business methods by the report of a special committee of the London Chamber of Commerce. It would seem from the report that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, in almost all trades, for the manufacturer, to obtain orders without bribing the "buyers" of commercial establishments. Goods of inferior quality, and incorrect invoices, are passed, if the person whose duty it is to check these is "squared" to his satisfaction. The bribes are often given unwillingly, and against the voice of conscience, but those who do not like the system say that if they stood out against it they might as well go out of business as try to compete with other houses which give these secret commissions. The same evil is said to be firmly established in all the professions.

It may seem to some that civilisation has vastly improved business conditions and commercial honesty, but every now and then some evidence of deep-rooted and wide-spread corruptness breaks through the surface, and shows the worthlessness of all life that is not hid with Christ in God. Instead of becoming more and more free from the evils which cursed the world before the gloss of civilisation was used so much to cover them up, men are fast hastening to the condition foretold by the prophet: "The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man he uttereth his mischievous desire so they wrap it up. The best of them is sharper than a thorn thorn edge." Micah vii. 2-4.

What shall the Christian merchant do under such circumstances as these? Shall he follow a multitude to do evil and give Satan a chance to utter his old taunt, "Doth this man serve God for naught?" The Lord calls for faithful witnesses, men like Caleb who will serve Him wholly, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." The closeness of the contest between good and evil shows that the climax is fast approaching. It will come when the decree is made "that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Rev. xiii. 17. The time is very near then when those who had gotten the victory over these things are seen, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. Rev. xv. 2.

No one need feel that the contest against the organised forces of Satan is a hopeless one. The fight may be severe, but the victory is sure for the faithful.

When it is no longer possible to live on this earth, and live righteously, Christ will come to take to the mansions in His Father's house the remnant "that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." To those who feel that they cannot separate themselves from the corrupt practice of the world, for fear of losing their business, the solemn question is addressed, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and loss his own soul?"

"Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." This is a word to be remembered in times of discouragement. There is no failure for the one who commits his way to God. In the darkest circumstances he may rejoice to know that those are working together for good.

March 23, 1899

"The Perfect Salvation" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16.

"Power belongeth unto God." Ps. lxi. 11. It is an attribute of Divinity, for "there is no power but of God." Rom. xiii. 1. God is the Almighty-the One who possesses all the power there is in the universe. "Wisdom and might are His." Dan. ii. 20. "His way is perfect," and whatsoever He doeth, "it shall be for ever." Ps. xviii. 30; Eccl. iii. 14. Therefore it follows that the salvation which is effected by the power of God must be perfect, all-comprehensive, and eternal: "My salvation shall be for ever," says the Lord. Isa. li. 6:

This salvation is not a theoretical salvation from some possible future evil, but a present salvation from a present and very real trouble. It is not merely salvation from some danger that threatens, but salvation from ills that have already well-nigh overwhelmed us. "Behold, now is the day of salvation." It is true that the Gospel reaches out into the future, but only because it saves now, and eternity is only one continual now. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

When the birth of Jesus was foretold, it was said, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. i. 21. Jesus means Saviour. He saves people from sin. When sin entered into the world, death entered (Rom. v. 12); for sin carries death within it (James i. 15). "The sting of death is sin." 1 Cor. xv. 56. Sin, therefore, is a mortal disease that is on all mankind. Unless men are saved from sin, they must die; and in being saved from sin, they find salvation from death.

Death is simply the absence of life. If life be taken away, death results. The words of the Lord are life, and those who hear His words have life; even though dead already, they receive life through the Word. Isa. lv. 3; John v. 24, 25. Death has come upon all men, because all have rejected the Word of the Lord, the Source of life. Jesus Christ is the Word (John i. i), and He is the life (John i. 4; xiv. 6). So it is by giving men Himself that He saves them from sin and death. We are saved by His life. Rom. v. 10. His life is the power that conquers death, and it

conquers death because it is proof against sin, which is the cause of death. "There is no unrighteousness in Him." His name is Jesus, Saviour, because He is in Himself salvation.

Any so-called salvation that should deliver a man from one trouble, only to leave him to be destroyed by another, would be no salvation at all. If a man were condemned to death, the person who should nurse him through an illness only that he

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might be spared to be hanged, would not be entitled to the condemned man's warmest gratitude. It is not in any such way as that that God saves us. The inspired prayer, which must be fulfilled in every believer, is, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. v. 23. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

Jesus Christ saves us from sin—not merely from the punishment of the sins already committed, but from sinning—by giving us His own sinless life. This life is eternal life. Now, the characteristic of eternal life is that it is ever new. It is eternal because each moment it springs up fresh. Then it follows that the renewing of the body is necessarily included in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God says, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee," or, literally, "I am the Lord thy Physician." Ex. xv. 26. So when Jesus was on earth, He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." Acts x. 38. For be it known that the Gospel does not stop with the mere saving of a man; it has for its object something far beyond that,—so far beyond that it leaves no room for anybody to wonder if the Lord can save him; it takes a man from the very lowest state of degradation and makes him a salvation to others. Isa. xlix. 6-9. So the well of water which springs up into everlasting life to those who receive the words of the Lord, also flows out in rivers of living water to refresh others.

When Jesus saw the poor paralytic lying at the pool of Bethesda, He asked him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" John v. 6. When Peter found the man who had kept his bed for eight years, he said to him, "neas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. . . . And he arose immediately." Acts ix. 34.

This wholeness which comes through Jesus of Nazareth is wholeness of body as well as of soul and spirit. This is shown by the fact that the body was made whole; and the body was made whole in order that men might see the completeness of the salvation that is in the Gospel. So we read, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction." Ps. ciii. 2-4. The words of the Lord are "life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh." Prov. iv. 20-22. This is no theoretical, imaginary, or mystical salvation, but a real thing for practical, everyday life.

The words "whole" and "holy" have a common Saxon origin. They are, in fact, but one word. So to be made whole means to be made *holy*. Wholeness is holiness. Now a man is not made whole if something is lacking. There can be no real wholeness of body without inward holiness. A man may have eyes that are as good as any man has in this world; but if he does not see God in His works, they are of no use to him. Ears are useless to a man who will not hear the Word of the Lord. If a man does not speak as the oracles of God, of what use are a mouth and a tongue to him? If a man does not think God's thoughts, he might as well have no brain. In short, if our bodies do not move in response to the impulse of the Spirit of God, they are altogether corrupt and perverted, no matter how fair and healthful an appearance they may present.

"The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." God sees the sin in the heart; and since death is the product of sin, and disease is the working of death, He looks at the body of the person who is a sinner, and sees that "from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it." Isa. i. 5, 6. For that sin, if not removed, will at the last reveal itself as "a noisome and grievous sore." Rev. xvi. 2.

Now, it is from every sin and every disease that Jesus saves those who believe on Him. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Matt. viii. 17. When the lame man at the gate Beautiful had been healed in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, Peter said, "His name through faith in His name hath made this man strong; . . . yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this *perfect soundness* in the presence of you all." The next day, being questioned about the matter, he said: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, . . . even in Him doth this man stand here before you *whole*. . . . And in none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." Acts iii. 16; iv. 10-12, R.V.

The man who was healed, made whole, was saved. He is presented as a specimen of Christ's salvation. Peter's statement was, "He stands here before you whole in the name of Jesus, and there is not wholeness in any other." Jesus takes the man in whom there is "no soundness," and gives him "perfect soundness." He makes the man whom He saves "every whit whole."

In the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, this identity of sin and sickness is indicated: "Whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house; then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and forgive." 1 Kings viii. 87-99. The plagues that come on the land are only the outward manifestation of the plague that is in the hearts of men; and that is why it is said to those who make the Lord their refuge, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Ps. xci. 10.

This healing of the body, together with the forgiveness of sin, is not an arbitrary matter. It comes from an intelligent faith in the Word of the Lord. That Word must be taken absolutely as one's life, and must be brought into every act

of life. When one lives wholly by the Word of the Lord, then it must necessarily follow that he will be every whit whole. God contemplates nothing less than this.

This does not mean that the believer is immortal. Immortality is a gift bestowed only at the coming of the Lord. 1 Cor. xv. 51-53. But it does mean that the perfect life of Christ shall be manifested in our mortal flesh (2 Cor. iv. 2), so that none of the weaknesses of the flesh shall hinder our perfect service to God and humanity, Jesus. Christ has "power over all flesh," so that even as He Himself conquered in the flesh; He can deliver every one from the bondage of the flesh. Heb. ii. 14, 15. And this life of Christ dwelling in us is the assurance of immortality all His coming in glory.

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This deliverance is the absolute freedom which Christ declares to the world. He proclaims "liberty to the captives." Isa. lxi. 1-3. "For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death." Ps. cii. 19, 20. This freedom that the Lord gives is His own freedom. It is freedom from every bond. The one who acknowledges that he is the Lord's servant by right, and that God has perfect right to him, soul, body, and spirit, can say, "Thou hast loosed my bonds." Ps. cxvi. 16. Nothing that pertains to this sin-cursed earth can bind the soul that is absolutely yielded to God.

The soul that knows this perfect freedom which the Gospel gives, will never, can never, appeal to any lower power to deliver him from oppression. "The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed." Ps. ciii. 6. "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor." Ps. cxi. 12. Surely the Lord will care for His own, and "hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?" "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him?" "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily," said Jesus.

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." James v. 7. "What!" exclaims one, "have we, after all, to wait till some future time for deliverance?" Be patient. The Lord has not promised that tribulation shall cease before His coming. In fact, it is impossible that it should cease as long as sin is in the world. Even the inanimate creation suffers because of sin which man has committed; and so long as there are sinners there must needs be trouble; but the Lord gives peace that is proof against tribulation. John xvi. 33. The promises enough to sustain life to all those who trust Him. Matt. vi. 31-33; Ps. xxxvii. 3. At His coming there is the surety of such complete deliverance from every semblance of evil and oppression as the wildest dreams of social reformers have never imagined. Moreover, that deliverance is nearer than any reformer has dared to set for a realisation of his plans.

Therefore, "trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." "With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Israel's Deliverance. Isa. xiv. 1" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XIV. 1. LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob,
And will yet choose Israel.
And He shall give them rest upon their own
land;
And the stranger shall be joined unto them,
And shall cleave unto the house of Jacob.

2. And the nations shall take them, and bring
them into their own place;
And the house of Israel shall possess them in
the land of Jehovah,
As servants and as handmaids;
And they shall take them captive, whose cap-
tives they were;
And they shall rule over their oppressors.

3. And it shall come to pass in that day, that
Jehovah shall give thee rest from thine
afflictions, and from thy disquiet, and from
the hard servitude that was laid upon
thee; and thou shalt pronounce this
parable upon the king of Babylon; and
shalt say:-

4. How hath the oppressor ceased! the exactress
of gold ceased!

5. Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked,
the sceptre of the rulers.

6. He that smote the nations in wrath, with a
stroke unremitted;
He that ruled the nations in anger, is perse-
cuted, and one hindereth.

7. The whole earth is at rest, is quiet; they
burst forth into a joyful shout;

8. Even the fir trees rejoice over thee, the cedars
of Libanus:
Since thou art fallen, no feller hath come up
against us.

9. Hades from beneath is moved because of thee,
to meet thee at thy coming;
He rouseth for thee the mighty dead, all the
great chiefs of the earth;

He maketh to rise up from their thrones, all
the kings of the nations.

10. All of them shall accost thee, and shall say
unto thee:

Art thou, even thou too, become weak as we?
art thou made like unto us?

11. Is then thy pride brought down to the grave;
the sound of thy sprightly instruments?
Is the vermin become thy couch, and the
earthworm thy covering?

12. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer,
son of the morning!

It would be well if every one who is following these studies in Isaiah could keep with him for constant reference the article entitled, "The Time of the Promise," which accompanied the first lesson. Each succeeding lesson would impress the truth there summarised more and more on the mind, until a glance at any part of the book of Isaiah would enable the student to see that it refers to the last days of this world's history.

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Consider the condition of Israel in the time when this prophecy was written. They were not in captivity, but were dwelling in the land of Canaan, under their own king. We do not know at just what date this was written, but we know that it was not later than 700 B.C. Isaiah prophesied during the reign of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, beginning at the close of the reigns of Uzziah. See Isa. i. 1 and vi. 1-9. Jotham and Ahaz each reigned sixteen years, and Hezekiah twenty-nine years. 2 Chron. xxvii. 1; xxviii. 1; and xxix. 1. It was in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign that Isaiah had a special message for him, announcing his death, and later his restoration. We know this because at that time fifteen years were added to the king's life. 2 Kings xxi. 6. The prophet had therefore been prophesying at least forty-six years, and this was 713 B.C. He did not prophesy after Hezekiah's death, even if he did so long as that, since if he had it would have been mentioned in Isa. i. 1. But even if he continued till the death of Hezekiah, his work was all at least 700 before Christ, for Hezekiah died in 698 B.C.

Now this little study of date is not a technical matter. It is a thing of vital importance. From it we see that this prophecy of Isaiah concerning the choosing of Israel, and bringing them to their own place, giving them rest in their own land, was uttered nearly a hundred years before they were carried away to Babylon. At the time the promise was spoken, the kingdom was enjoying prosperity, and the Israelites were dwelling safely in the land of Canaan; yet God promised that they should yet have rest in their own land. This is very significant.

A similar thing is found in the history of David. See 1 Sam. vii. 1-10. There we learn that when David, at the height of his power, the Lord having given him rest from all his enemies, proposed to build a house for the Lord, he received a great promise from God, a part of which was this: "Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own,

and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more as beforetime." These things show plainly that the present land of Canaan, even though as fruitful as in the days of Joshua, is not good enough for an inheritance for God's people. David confessed that he was only a stranger and a sojourner in the land, and that was when the kingdom was at its greatest. 1 Chron. xxix. 15. He considered himself as much a sojourner as were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Only when sinners are destroyed out of the land, so that the children of wickedness cannot afflict any more, do the meek inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Ps. xxxvii. 9-11.

"Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." 2 Peter ii. 19. "Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin." John viii. 34, R.V. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." Prov. v. 22. No man can be in bondage if he is not overcome by sin. Daniel was in Babylon for more than seventy years, but he was never in bondage. He would not yield to sin, and so instead of being a servant, he became ruler of the realm. His three companions were likewise free. So free were they, even in Babylon, that when they were bound with cords, and cast into a burning furnace, because of their loyalty to God, the fire that was designed for their destruction, merely burned the bonds, and allowed them to walk at liberty. They were "free indeed," for the Son Himself made them free. See Dan. iii. 13-25. Thus we see that only sin can make one a captive in Babylon, and Satan is the author of sin; therefore when we read the promise that God's people shall take captive those by whom they were formerly taken captive, and shall rule over their oppressors, we know that it means victory over all their sins, and over all the power of the devil. It is the fulfilment of the oath which God swore to our father Abraham "that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life." Luke i. 73-75.

The victory is ours now, for "this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith." 1 John v. 4. But there will come a time when Satan himself shall be bound, so that he can "deceive the nations no more." Rev. xx. 1-3. Then not only a part but all of God's people, gathered out of all the lands, will burst forth into singing: "How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people of wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth." The promise is that they who seek after our soul, and desire our hurt, shall be turned back and brought to confusion; they shall "be as chaff before the wind," and the angel of the Lord shall cease them; their way shall be dark and slippery, and the angel of the Lord shall persecute them." Ps. xxxv. 4-6. The song of the redeemed upon Mount Zion must be learned here, for the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion. Isa. li. 11. It will be a new song that they sing; but it is now, in this present age, that the Lord lifts us out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and sets our feet on the Rock, and establishes our goings, and puts a new song in our mouths. Ps. xl. 1-3.

This song of redemption is sung over deliverance from the power of the king of Babylon. Can there be any question as to who this king is?-It is the one who smites the nations in wrath with a continual stroke. When he is laid low, "the whole earth is at rest, and is quiet." It is none other than the adversary, the devil, who goes about in the whole earth, to destroy the inhabitants thereof. Even he is to be brought low, although at one time he was "Lucifer, son of the morning," but is "fallen from heaven." No chapter shows this identity between the real king of Babylon, and Satan, more fully than this one. Let this fact be fully grasped and held; let it be understood that the book of Isaiah was written for the last days, and that it applies specially to us, and the entire prophecy becomes simple, and may be read with pleasure and profit.

"The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2) is Satan, "the god of this world." 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. As he has gained the place which rightly belongs to God, in the hearts of men, it naturally follows that he rules in the nations that forget God. In ancient times there were no nations on earth but unqualified heathen. Devil-worship was the worship of heathendom, and Satan was the real ruler in every kingdom. Now the leading nations of earth are professedly Christian, yet every one is openly and decidedly at variance with the teaching of Christ. The precepts of God are defied, and those who will follow them and teach others to do so, are punished. Consequently Satan, the author of confusion, because the originator of envy and strife,-the king of Babylon,-still reigns, and oppresses many, even of the people of God. But "thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." God has visited the nations, to take out of them a people for His name, every one who overcomes will be given power over the nations. Rev. ii. 26, 27. But the necessary qualification for ruling the nations is the ruling of one's own spirit, and this can be done only through Christ, who has been given "power over all flesh," and in whom we are made complete.

**"Studies in the Gospel of John. The Glory of God" *The Present Truth*
15, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

John. xi. 32-45

Jesus was in a retired place beyond Jordan, whither He had gone to escape the continual persecutions of the Jewish rulers. There He taught; the people in quiet, "and many believed on Him there." John x. 42. While He was there, one of His dearest friends fell ill, and his sisters sent word to Jesus, saying, "Lord, he whom Thou lovest is sick." John xi. 3.

"When Jesus heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Verse 4. Yet Lazarus died. What shall we say, therefore? What should we say if it were a present instead of a past occurrence? if we had received the assurance that our loved one's sickness was not unto death, but for the glory of God, and he was

now lying cold and lifeless? Would we say that the word of the Lord had failed? that either the Lord had made a mistake, or else we had misunderstood His words? That is what we should be likely to say, but it is just what we ought not to say. "The word of the Lord shall stand for ever." Although Lazarus had been dead for days, his sickness was not unto death, but for the glory of God. Can you believe the word of the Lord even when it is very "*apparent*" that it has failed? That is faith; and faith that will not be shaken by anything that appears, will bring victory out of defeat, and life from the dead.

At last the Master, had come to the home where He had passed many pleasant hours in unrestrained, quiet, Christian fellowship. He was met with the words, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Verse 21, also 32. This was the greeting of each sister. It almost seemed as if the Friend had been indifferent. He had tarried two whole days after hearing of the sickness of Lazarus, before making any movement toward going to see him. Oh, glorious indifference! It was the indifference of Omnipotence,-not indifferent to human suffering and human need, but indifferent to the threats of a foe whose utmost power could avail nothing. It was the immovable calm that comes from the consciousness of "all power." No one can by any means pluck a single soul out of the hand of the great Shepherd. The gates of the grave cannot prevail against one of those whom He bears upon His heart.

What need to be in a hurry? "He that believeth shall not make haste." Suppose the grave did close for a moment upon one whom it claimed as its prey: that proved nothing. When a general was informed in the heat of the battle that the day was lost, he coolly replied, "Very well, we'll take it again," and he did. Defeat was but a step to victory. So death did not disconcert the One who could say, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die." Verses 25, 26. What a marvellous confidence in the power of the Father, was manifested in the *seeming* indifference of Jesus! He claimed nothing for Himself; He acknowledged that He had no power in Himself; but He knew what He had believed, and in quietness and in confidence was His strength. What a lesson of trust there is for us in this story of Jesus and Lazarus. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

"Jesus wept." So did Mary and Martha, and so did the Jews who had come to condole with them. They all wept. But whoever supposes that Jesus wept as the rest did, makes a great mistake. It is unfortunate that none of our English versions indicates any distinction here, for there is a marked difference. In the Greek two different words are used, and some translations are faithful to it. The word used concerning Mary and Martha and the others is properly rendered "weep," and may be used to indicate any loud lamentation and wailing; but Jesus simply "shed tears." The fountain of Divine love and compassion is always full to overflowing. Jesus must shed tears at the sight of human anguish, even when He knew that the power was in His hands to remove it, and He was just on the point of doing so. Here is an example to us, that we may "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. He

who sorrows only with Jesus, and only as He sorrows, has such joy as the world knows nothing of.

"Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And when He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin Jesus saith unto them. Loose him, and let him go." John xi. 38-44.

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"Thou shalt see the glory of God." Did any dazzling light shine upon the company there assembled? There is no evidence of any such thing. Everything was quiet, and no light appeared to any, except the ordinary daylight; yet all present saw the glory of God. How?-In the power that was displayed in the resurrection of Lazarus. When Jesus turned the water into wine, at the marriage in Cana, "He manifested forth His glory." John ii. 11. God's glory is His power, and that is His righteousness. "God is light" (1 John i. 5), so that His glory is His own personality,-His character,-and since His glory is His power, we see that He is glorious and powerful because He is righteous.

That the power and the glory of God are the same, may be learned by comparing Rom. vi. 4 and Eph. i. 17-20. In the former we read that "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," and in the second we read that the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and His elevation to the right hand of God in the heavenly places, was the result of the working of the "mighty power" of God. His power was "wrought in Christ," and, moreover, the Spirit of God earnestly desires that we may know the "exceeding greatness" of this power, which is "to usward who believe." Whatever the Spirit desires for us, we shall have if we consent to be led by the Spirit. Let us think what this means to us.

The glory of God is the power of the resurrection, and this power it is possible, nay, absolutely essential, for us to know. Phil. iii. 10. We are exhorted thus, "Glorify God in your body." 1 Cor. vi. 30. This can mean nothing less than that the power of Christ's resurrection is to be manifested in the bodies of Christians. But this is the power by which Lazarus was raised from the dead,-the power by which Christ was raised from the grave. And this means a power-the life of Christ-in men that will lift them above the power of death. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." 2 Cor. iv. 11.

The same thing is set forth in Rom. viii. 10, 11: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up

Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." The Spirit is life; therefore the Spirit cannot *dwell* in a man in fulness without imparting life to that man. The life of the Spirit makes the man live in spite of mortality. That this imparting of life is now, in the present world, and not something to be expected in some future state, is shown by the verse following: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Having received the Spirit, we are debtors to live according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh. That is to say, the Spirit gives us all His fulness, so that we owe everything to Him; but in that condition the flesh gives us nothing of its corruption, so that we owe nothing to it. But when the flesh gives us nothing of its corruption, then we are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glory of the liberty of the sons of God.

The same truth is taught in Isa. xl. 3-5: "The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Where is the way of the Lord to be prepared?-In men. The way of the Lord is prepared by preparing the people for the Lord, "And thou, child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people in the remission of their sins." Luke i. 76, 77. The Lord's way is in the hearts and lives of His people. When that way is prepared, then the glory of the Lord may and will be revealed in His people; and the glory of the Lord is His life. It is by believing that we receive the Lord, and become sons of God; and thus it is that to us, as well as to the sisters of Lazarus, the words come, "If thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the salvation of God." What glorious things God has prepared for them that love Him!

"Loose him, and let him go." Christ came to set the captives at liberty. "I the Lord have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Isa. xlii. But the word of reconciliation is committed to us; it is put into all who are reconciled. To men is entrusted the work which Jesus of Nazareth began. "Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee, and I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves." Isa. xlix. 8, 9. A comparison of this text with 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2, will show that believers in Christ are the ones addressed. Not only are Christ's people to have the unconquerable life of Christ manifested in their own mortal flesh, but they are to minister it to others.

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. The Birds" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

"The winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; and the time of *the singing of birds is come*." What a sweet, bright, joyous time is the Spring-time, is it not? The very air seems to be full of the new life that is to be seen everywhere.

The birds feel it, and after feebly chirping and twittering through the cold, dark months of winter, they join in the general rejoicing and burst out in the Spring-time into full, sweet song, and so help to make this the happy season that it is.

How busy they are, too; for this is a most important time for them. Of what, do you suppose, are they thinking, as they sing so merrily while they are busy gathering the materials for their nests, and skilfully weaving them together in the way that God has taught them to do?

These nests are not for themselves; the birds do not build nests for a home and shelter for themselves. They are thinking lovingly of the treasure that the pretty warm nest will soon hold the precious eggs, which, if all goes well, will hatch into dear little baby birds, to be fed, and cuddled under their wings.

There is an ancient saying, "Everything comes from the egg; it is the world's cradle." As far as we have gone in these lessons we have found this to be true. Even the plants come from the egg, for the seeds that they spring from are really the little eggs of the plant. And the eggs that the bees, butterflies, spiders, and birds lay, are really the seeds from which now bees and butterflies and spiders and birds will at last come.

So you see that the *seed* and the *egg* are really the same thing; the egg is the seed, and the seed is the egg.

Remember now what we learned is *the real seed*,—"The seed the Word of God,"—and then you will know what is the power working in these wonderful and beautiful little eggs, which changes them into living creatures like the parent birds.

It is the Word of God, that is hidden in them, just as it is in the seeds that we sow in the ground, making them grow up into beautiful living plants like those from which they came.

For when, in the beginning, God made "every winged fowl after his kind," and "saw that it was good," He "blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and *multiply*," and, "let fowl *multiply* in the earth."

"The Word of God is living and active;" it lives and works. And so this word that He spoke in the beginning, when He put His blessing upon all the birds that He had made, is still carrying on His great work of creation, causing the birds to "multiply in the earth," just as He said.

And every Spring-time, when their life seems the fullest and brightest, the birds feel the working of this Word of life within them. Because of it, and by the power of it, they bring forth the eggs, which they tend so lovingly and carefully, no that the Word of God may be fulfilled, and they themselves may be multiplied.

As you see them about this Spring-time, so busily and happily building their to make a safe shelter for the eggs which they know are coming, think of the meaning of these things, and of this wonderful Word that is working so powerfully after all these ages.

Then I am sure you will not want to take any of the pretty eggs you may see in their little nests, but will leave them where the Word of God can carry on its perfect work in them, so that the birds may be multiplied in the earth, to teach us of God, their Creator and ours, and to make us happy with their sweet songs.

"The Bird's Egg" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

All of you have seen the inside of an egg, and know that it contains the yolk and the white. If you look at the yoke carefully you will see on the surface of it a little transparent speck of jelly.

This small lump of jelly is really the young bird, or what will turn into it. All the rest of the egg is for the nourishment of this little speck, just as the greater part of the seed is usually for the nourishment of the tiny speck that gradually unfolds into the new plant.

The wisdom and skill of the Creator is beautifully seen in the arrangement of the bird's egg. The yolk is lighter than the white, and so it floats in it, and is suspended in such a way that however the egg may be rolled the chick always uppermost, so as to come the nearest to the mother bird's body, and get the most heat from it.

At the end of the second day after the mother bird begins to sit, the life of the tiny bird begins, for then the heart starts its quick and regular beating, which will go on as long as its life, so wonderfully developed, shall last.

On the sixth day the bird begins to move, but it is not until about fifteen days from the beginning, that the first cry is heard from the perfect little living bird, while still within the shell.

As long as it remains in the shell, the bill is so soft and fleshy that it would not be able to cut the way out, if God had not provided it with a special little instrument for this purpose.

This is a sharp little growth on the top of the bill, which pierces through the hard shell, and, when the bird turns, cuts the end of it right off, leaving an opening through which the little creature makes its way out into the world. As there is no further use for this, it soon drops off.

The Word of God, that can change an egg into a beautiful bird full of life and power, just what He meant it to be, can

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work in your heart to make you exactly what He wants *you* to be. Ask Him to do this, and "let the Word of God dwell in you richly."

"The Eider Duck" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

You all know what eider-down is, don't you? Some of you no doubt sleep every night under a warm coverlet made of it. I am going to tell you where it comes from, and how it is obtained.

The eider duck is a tame bird that lives in the North of England, and Scotland, and in the Orkney and Shetland Islands. The female lays five or six eggs in a nest which she lines thickly with the beautiful soft down plucked from her own breast.

The collectors of the eider-down get it by robbing the nest; they steal the down, and take away the eggs as well, so as to make the duck line the nest again for a fresh supply of eggs. This she does, again plucking down from her breast to make a soft bed for her dear eggs, but this time she lays only three or four.

But the greedy collectors come again and rob the nest, taking eggs as well as down, so that she will have to line it a third time. She has now no down left to pluck from her own body, so she calls plaintively to her mate, the drake who is her partner, to come to her help, and he willingly plucks the soft feathers from his breast to make a new line for the nest.

"For wear the brown duck stripped her breast
For her dear eggs and windy nest,
Three times her bitter spoil was won
For woman, and when all was done,
She called her snow-white piteous drake,
Who plucked his bosom for our sake."

If there is a third cruel robbery, the pair go away and never come back to that place, but seek one where they can be multiplied in peace and safety.

The sorrows of any of His creatures touch the loving heart of the Creator and Father of all. He sees and notices everyone, for "not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice." Do not forget this, but learn, dear children, to be kind and pitiful to all, "that you may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven." Let us be always careful

"Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

"A Strange Egg" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

The little eggs in their cozy nest, that are found there only in the Spring season, are the birds' dearest treasures. Some of them will suffer almost anything themselves, rather than have any harm or damage done to these.

There is a bird that is found in the North of England and Scotland called the Guillemot. It has been given the name, "Foolish Guillemot," because it will allow itself to be taken captive rather than desert its egg.

It lays only one, unless this is stolen from it, when it sometimes lays a second, and even a third, but it never has more than one at a time, and this one is very precious to it.

There is something I want to tell you about this egg. Notice, and remember, because it will help you to see how wonderfully and beautifully God has made all His works to fit just a place He made them for.

You know that the usual shape of an egg is a sort of oval,-what we call an "egg oval," or "egg-shaped." But instead of being this shape the egg of the Guillemot is much longer than is usual for a bird's egg, and one end is very wide, while the other is very narrow, for it tapers down gradually from the wide end almost to a point.

Put your peg-top, which is wide at one end and pointed at the other, on the table, and blow it hard, or push it gently, and you will see that instead of rolling off the table it rolls round and round in its own circle.

Now the Guillemot makes no nest, but lays its egg on the bare rock overhanging the sea, usually on a narrow ledge, sometimes not more than six inches wide. If it were the ordinary shape, the high winds would be sure to blow it off the rock where there is nothing to hold it, into the surging sea below.

And now you see why the Creator has made this egg-shape,-so that it may be quite safe in just a place where He has taught the Guillemot to lay it; for instead of being blown *off* the rock, it only rolls round on it.

Is it not sad, children, that when God has shown such tender mercy and loving care for the egg of this poor bird, men should be constantly on the watch to steal it away from her? One man tells with seeming pride, instead of the shame that should be felt, that he carried away in his boat over two thousand of these eggs from a certain part of North America. Remember that each bird has only *one* egg, and think what this would mean to two thousand sorrowing mothers.

"A Personal Testimony" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

One of our readers sends us a long letter setting forth the many advantages of a pure, non-flesh diet, from which we quote the following:-

Ripe fruits, nuts, cereals, and good bread, contain every essential constituent for building up our bodies and keeping them in health. There is nothing contained in flesh, that will make one strong and vigorous, but what can be obtained in a greater degree from the vegetable kingdom, in a much purer form, and therefore more free from contaminations and diseases. I do not advocate that any work of the flesh will give eternal life; but this way of living entirely opposes the desire for stimulants, such as alcohol, tobacco and snuff. The prophet Isaiah says strong drink causes us to "err in vision and stumble in judgment." If our bodies are kept pure (and pure food makes pure blood), we shall be in a better condition to receive the Spirit of God, who will guide into all truth. This most delightful, healthful and enjoyable mode of living would indeed be a boon to parents having large families and limited incomes, as they would find it most economical and they would insure their children sound, robust constitutions. After fifteen years' experience of this way of living, I can testify to its advantage in every way.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

- A fire in a Swiss village destroyed 100 dwellings.
- Eighty three pearling vessels were sank in the recent hurricane off the coast of Queensland, 111 lives being lost.
- The incessant traffic across London Bridge reduces to powder about twenty five cubic yards of granite every year.
- The number of Jews sitting in the present House of Commons is nine, the largest number on record at any one time.
- A cubit foot of newly-fallen snow weighs five and a half pounds, and has twelve times the bulk of an equal weight of water.
- The new Allan liner, *Castilian*, has gone ashore during a dense fog, on her first voyage. It is feared she will become a total wreck.
- A Bill introduced into the Commons to raise the flash-point of petroleum to 100 degrees was opposed by the Government, and defeated.
- Several vessels which left America for Europe, but have been long overdue, are now regarded as lost in the recent storms. Upwards of 300 lives are involved.
- Besides the European States, the following countries will also be represented at the Peace Conference: The United States of America, China, Japan, Persia, and Siam.
- The deepest ocean sounding yet recorded has been made by a British war vessel. A depth of 4,782 fathoms (nearly 54 miles) was found between Auckland and the Tongan Archipelago.
- A Birmingham money-lender sued for payments of the balance of a loan. The judge made an order for payment at the rate of a penny a month, thus allowing sixty years for the repayment of the money.
- Some time ago a local committee was appointed to inquire into the alleged danger of disease arising from oysters eaten from the Southend beds. The report of the committee has been issued, and has led to the authorities peremptorily ordering the beds to be closed.
- An entirely new method for the manufacture of table cutlery is now announced. A round bar of steel is placed in a machine, and by means of hydraulic pressure a perfect knife is formed. One such machine is capable, it is stated, of producing 5,000 of these all steel knives per day.
- The Bill for the amalgamation of the South-Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways was read a second time on Tuesday, after a long discussion, and sent to a Hybrid Commission, who are to embody in the Bill the concession to be imposed upon the Company in the way of cheap fares, etc.
- Considerable uneasiness has been caused at the Vatican by the conversions to Protestantism which are going on in Austria. The Nuncio at Vienna has informed the Vatican that 10,000 Catholics have become Protestants. The Pope will address an appeal to the Emperor of Austria to take steps to arrest the movement.
- The plasterers' lock-out has entered upon its second week. Only 250 of the 3,850 London plasterers affected in the lock-out are actually idle, as the demand

for men is great among the builders not connected with the Master Builders association. The first week less than ?1,000 was distributed by the union in strike-pay in London and the provinces.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. x. 17.

It is evident that this statement is equivalent to saying that faith comes by hearing the Word of God, since the only hearing by which faith comes, is the hearing of the Word.

Faith is not manufactured; it exists, and is given to us. It exists in the Word of God, and comes to us with that Word. There can be no faith apart from the Word of God, and there cannot fail to be faith where the Word of God abides.

Why then does not everybody believe?-Simply because they will not hear. In a sense, everybody has heard, because the Word has gone to the ends of the earth; but most people hear only a sound, or hear only to forget. If a man hears sounds only occasionally, and is deaf the greater portion of the time, he could not be called a man with the sense of hearing. The man who hears, is the one whose ears are always acute, who hears all the time. One who thus hears the Word of God must believe and live.

"Hear, and your soul shall live." He who hears must live. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." John v. 25. But it is by faith that men live, for faith comes by hearing.

"By faith we understand." It matters not that this expression is used with reference to one particular thing, namely, the creation of the worlds; it applies equally to everything that may be known; for it is only by the Word of God that we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, and we may equally well understand anything else of which the Word of God gives information.

Therefore to believe and understand the truth-the Word of God, (John xvii. 17)-is the easiest thing in the world; one has only to hear it. Mind this: One does not hear the Word of God, and then take it under consideration for a season, until, after mature deliberation, he arrives at a point where he can believe. Far from it. "Faith cometh by hearing." The Word brings faith with it. One cannot argue faith into himself or anybody else; neither can any amount of reasoning inspire faith in any soul. It may be long after the Word of God is first presented, before faith comes; but the moment that Word is really listened to, faith appears, and if faith be cherished it will guide the reason.

The Word of God is revelation. God reveals Himself. The Word of God is light, because God is light. So the entrance of His Word gives light. Ps. cxix. 130. His Word is a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path. Verse 105. "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light." Prov. vi. 23. Now one does not see a light by means of reasoning and argument, but simply by - opening his eyes; and, further, it is the light that opens the eyes, so that the light is its own evidence and makes its own introduction.

Why then should anybody ever stumble over God's Word? There is no need of it. Indeed, it is really over themselves, over their own ideas and conceptions, which they interpose between themselves and the light of the Word, that men stumble. Hold yourself to the Word; shut yourself out, and look at and listen to only the Word; "then shall thy light break forth as the morning." Then instead of wondering how some people can see so much in the Bible, you will wonder how you ever kept from seeing so much. Then you will find that belief and understanding are as easy and natural as hearing.

The *Spectator* says: "The relations between England and France are much less strained. Both in Paris and London the Foreign Offices are in earnest conference with diplomatists, and it is rumoured that some very large plan is on the on the carpet-the transfer of the Free Congo State to France-under cover of which all minor disputes, such as the Newfoundland question and the Madagascar question, may be suddenly and amicably settled. The Paris Press preacher, peace between the two powers as a necessity of civilisation, and compliments M. Dolcasse on his moderation and desire to meet friendliness with amity. So long as the Channel Fleet is always ready, Englishmen are delighted to welcome even an appearance of cordiality in France. As we want the East and South of Africa, and France the North and West, there is no adequate ground of quarrel."

Note the statement that "so long as the Channel Fleet is always ready, Englishmen are delighted to welcome even an appearance of cordiality in France." Quite so. That sentence is very significant. As the nations are ready to talk peace, yea, they delight in peace, so long as they have plenty of guns and ammunition and well drilled soldiers.

One thing for which Christ rebuked people of His day was that they did not discern the signs of the times. They could tell what weather to expect from the reading of the face of the sky, yet saw no significance in the much more striking phenomena all around, which told that the kingdom of God was come nigh to them. In the same way to-day, those who might know from the Scriptures what is the significance of the events which are compelling universal attention, remain indifferent to their warnings. But while professing Christians quite generally prophesying peace progress for the world, there are some who recognise that the world is hastening to some tremendous crisis. One of the leading London papers said a few days ago:-

That the coming century will bring changes of a tremendous nature none can doubt. There are abundant signs that our existing civilization cannot continue unless on the condition of some renewal of its framework. It is based primarily on money, and the money is passing late the forms of monopoly. It is based on ever fiercer competition, and that competition, showing itself in mighty scramble to exploit the globe, tends to sow negation of every moral law. If the tree is known by its fruits, then the tree of secular civilisation, bearing such fruits as our slums, our weary, labouring population, our noisy, vulgar, crowded life, which gives us no leisure to grow wise, our armaments, our international snarling and cheating, which gives us gin-soaked Africa, butcheries in Uganda, military and materialistic Europe, must stand condemned, at least from the Christian point of view. The

condemnation is not the less real because this civilisation bears, as it were in a spirit of irony, the venerable Christian name.

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Luke xxi. 25, 26.

March 30, 1899

"A Sure Defence" *The Present Truth* 15, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

"The Lord is my Rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." Ps. xviii. 2.

How may one experience the ample security which these words set forth? All can see that the man who is able to truthfully describe his position in such language could not ask to be in a safer place. How then can we get into it?

Notice that it is the Lord Himself who is a rock and a fortress. Whoever then possesses the Lord, has, in Him, the shelter from all evil. This is true of every good thing offered to men by the Gospel. Not one blessing can be had apart from the Lord, and the Lord cannot be received without receiving every spiritual blessing. God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Eph. i. 3.

We should not conclude from this that it is every difficult thing to get a blessing from the Lord, since it is just as hard to get a single blessing as it is to get the fulness of God. Let us view the matter on the right side, and rejoice that it is just as simple and easy to be, filled with the Holy Spirit and be kept from falling as it is to get the single blessing which we have often proved it so easy to seek and find. When we might just as well have all that God has to give, it is dishonouring to Him to be content with so little.

"It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." Col. i. 19. And He in whom the fulness dwells is a free gift to sinners. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (John iii. 16), and "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. There is a deep and wonderful significance in the words we read so often, and so unthinkingly, "I am the Lord, *thy God*."

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But is the Lord ours in a practical way, so that we may really benefit by the fullness that dwells in Him? Is He not inaccessible for all practical purposes, by reason of His being in heaven while we are on the earth? No. "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down from above) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)" Why are we forbidden to say this in our heart? Because right there is Christ Himself, the living Word of God. "The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." So let your mouth and heart agree to it, so that you may

not deny Christ, but confess Him. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. x. 6-9.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. iv. 23. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matt. xii. 34. "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, . . . for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Matt. xv. 18, 19. Now if Christ live in the heart, and a man be willing to be a witness to that fact, it is evident that the fountain will send forth pure waters. The issues of the life will be the issues of Christ's life. "We shall be saved by His life." Rom. v. 10. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. x. 10.

In the same way, God, as our Rock, is brought into the life. We do not need, when we realists the necessity of protection, to go somewhere to find the fortress. We are already safe inside a, for God Himself is the fortress, and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28. The only thing that can endanger us is to forget that we are in the fortress, and so be deceived into trying to find the protection in some other place. "Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee." The man who knows that God is his fortress will abide in Him, and so have his mind at rest, in spite of all the foes that vainly rage outside.

"In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be put to confusion. Be Thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: Thou hast given commandment to save me; for Thou art my rock and my fortress. I am as a wonder unto many; but Thou art my strong refuge. Psal. lxxii. 1, 3, 7. This is not true of a favoured few only, God has given commandment to save all men, but many will not yield obedience. He is a rock to all, but some only stumble over it, through unbelief, and to them it becomes a rock of offence. It is available for all as a refuge. "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations." Psal. xc. 1. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him will I trust." Psal. xci. 1, 2.

We are not to limit these statements by saying that they are spiritual, for this fact does not limit them at all. It gives them the widest possible scope. Men have thought that they could have spiritual blessings without these affecting their temporal condition and circumstances for good, but this was because they did not understand the real nature of the spiritual blessings. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. viii. 11. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty, such liberty as Christ had by the Spirit, and, by the Spirit, He had such superabundance of liberty that He was not merely free Himself, but He went about delivering the captives, opening the prisons, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil. So we, when we experience the spiritual security that comes by dwelling in the fortress, are delivered at the same time from physical evil. "A thousand shall fall at thy

side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." This is because God is the dwelling Himself. "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation." Psa. xci.

But if the Lord has been our dwelling-place in all generations, how is it that evils befall us? Because we choose them, and God will always respect our choice. It is true we do not want death, but we want the sin which, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. When we are willing that the Lord shall make an end of sin, root as well as branch, He will do it speedily. His command is, "Abide in Me," and this abiding in Him, which secures us from spiritual enemies, will give us the same safety that Christ Himself, our dwelling-place, enjoys against every form of evil. "He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." Deut. xxxii. 4.

"Belgium and Hankow" *The Present Truth* 15, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

Belgium has now joined the other countries of Europe in demanding a portion of China. She asks for a settlement at Hankow. Italy's action in seizing Sanmun Bay is claimed by one of its semi-official journals to be "like that of England, for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of the Chinese Empire." This must be a part of the same profound policy which builds in the interests of peace.

"Close your eyes to truth, and you tumble into the ditch of error."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Selfish Ambition and Its Fall. Isa. xiv. 12-27" *The Present Truth* 15, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XIV. 12-27, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

12. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer,
son of the morning!
Art cut down to the earth, thou that didst
subdue the nations!

13. Yet thou didst say in thy heart; I will ascend
the heavens;
Above the stars of God, I will exalt my throne;
And I will sit upon the mount of the Divine
Presence on the sides of the North;

14. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will be like the Most High.

15. But thou shalt be brought down to the grave,
to the sides of the pit.

16. Those that see thee shall look attentively at
thee; they shall well consider thee:
Is this the man that made the earth to
tremble; that shook the kingdoms?

17. That made the world like a desert; that destroyed the cities?

That never dismissed his captives to their own home?

18. All the kings of the nations, all of them,
Lie down in glory, each in his own sepulchre;

19. But thou art cast out of the grave, as the tree
abominated;

Clothed with the slain, with the pierced by
the sword,

With them that go down to the stones of the
pit; as a trodden carcass.

20. Thou shalt not be joined unto them in burial;
Because thou hast destroyed thy country,
Thou hast slain thy people:

The seed of evil-doers shall never be

21. Prepare ye slaughter for his children, for the
iniquity of their fathers;
Lest they rise, and possess the earth; and fill
the face of the earth with cities.

22. For arise against them, saith Jehovah God of
Hosts;

And I will cut off from Babylon the name,
and the remnant;

And the son, and the son's son, saith Jehovah.

23. And I will make it an inheritance for the por-
cupine, and pools of water:

And I will plunge it in the miry gulf of de-
struction, saith Jehovah God of Hosts.

24. Jehovah God of Hosts hath sworn, saying,
Surely as I have devised, so shall it be;
And as I have purposed, that thing shall
stand:

25. To crush the Assyrian in My land, and to
trample him on My mountains.

Then shall his yoke depart from off them;

And his burden shall be removed from off their
shoulder.

26. This is the decree which is determined on the
whole earth;

And this is the hand which is stretched out
over all the nations;

27. For Jehovah God of Hosts hath decreed; and
who shall disannul it?

And it is His hand that is stretched out; and
who shall turn it back?

Those who are making a special study of the book of Isaiah should pay special attention to the text for there is where they will get their knowledge. Light comes from the Word. Read the portion of Scripture that composes the lesson many times carefully, giving thought to each statement, comparing everything with what precedes and what follows. The notes that are given in the paper, in connection with the lesson text, are simply designed to fasten your attention more closely upon it.

In studying this lesson, begin with the thirteenth chapter, and read through the fourteenth. It would be well also to read the second chapter again. Recall what has been said concerning the time of the promise, and the purpose of the book of Isaiah, and remember also the meaning of Babylon. Even without these things before us, but more especially with them, we cannot fail to see that the judgment upon Babylon means the destruction of "all the proud" and "all that do wickedly" (Mal. iv. 1) at the last day. This lesson is therefore specially important now.

Lucifer means "light-bearer." The margin gives "day star," and other renderings are the same. He is also called the "son of the morning." A glorious being he certainly was, but now fallen from heaven through overweening ambition. There can be no question but that he is the mightiest of "the angels that sinned" and so "kept not their first estate," who are now "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the Judgment of the great day." 2 Peter ii. 4; Jude 6. It is Satan, no longer the bearer of light, but the prince of darkness, the chief of "the rulers of the darkness of this world." Eph. vi. 11, 12. But though fallen from his state of light and glory, he still remembers enough of it to be able to transform himself into an angel of life. 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. Therefore we need to be on our guard lest we be deceived. Even when we are walking most in the light, he will try to steal in as a part of that light, and thus lead us astray while we think we are still in the right way. But we have one safeguard, namely, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," the word of truth. Eph. vi. 17; John xvii. 17. He who "abode not in the truth," and who is "a liar, and the father of it" (John viii. 44), cannot endure the word of truth. Keep fast both of that, and the devil will flee. See James iv. 7; 1 Peter v. 8, 9.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Prov. xvi. 18. "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." Isa. ii. 12. This is because righteousness must prevail, and only God can rule in righteousness, and He is of a lowly spirit. "Behold his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith." Hab. ii. 4. When righteousness, which is meekness, prevails, then pride and ambition must be destroyed.

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God says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Lucifer said, "I will be like the Most High." Wherein then was Lucifer wrong?—Simply in this, that he took the wrong way to be like God. He thought that by exalting himself he could be like God, whereas self-exaltation makes one most unlike Him. Whoever lifts himself up will not find God, for God calls on all to humble themselves to walk with Him. Micah vi. 8,

margin. "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree." Luke i. 52. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." God "raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." 1 Sam. ii. 8.

In contrast with Lucifer who tried to exalt himself to occupy God's place, we have the case of Christ, "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 6-11.

Self-righteousness is therefore un-righteousness. He who thinks to make himself righteous, -he who thinks that he has goodness in himself, -is guilty of the same sin that Lucifer was, and is moved by the same spirit. It is the spirit of the man of sin "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God," or, setting himself forth as God. 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. Whoever justifies himself, and refuses to receive the reproofs of instruction, which are the way of life (Prov. vi. 23), is a part of the man of sin. The one who is always anxious to make himself out to be right, who becomes irritated when corrected, and who is always ready with a plausible excuse for everything that he does, shows himself to be one with Lucifer, and in danger of sharing his destruction. Let us learn this lesson indeed. Let us learn of Christ, who is meek and lowly in heart, "who did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth;" yet "when He was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1 Peter ii. 22, 23.

"I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north." Literally, "in the uttermost north." Everybody knows that the farther north he goes, the higher the north star appears. From this each can learn that if he stood at the north pole, north would be directly overhead. North, therefore, is up. God is "the Most High," and therefore He dwells "in the uttermost north." His dwelling-place is "the high and holy place." Isa. lvii. 15. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north [literally, "the uttermost north"], the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Ps. xlviii. 1-3.

"Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the Judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another." Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. Promotion comes not from the east, the west, nor the south; therefore it must come from the north; and since God alone is Judge, to lift up and to put down, it follows that He dwells in the north. There alone is where promotion comes from. Therefore when Lucifer thought to occupy the north, he meditated

an impossibility, for he could not get there without being drawn up by the Lord of hosts.

There is a mystery about the north. This is true even of this earth. The Hebrew word rendered "north" signifies secret, hidden. What is this attraction-this drawing power? It is God. Every manifestation of force is but the working of God. Christ said of His crucifixion, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." John xii. 32. By the cross of shame and humiliation He was lifted up to the right hand of God,-up to "the uttermost north." The power therefore by which God draws all things, by which the worlds are kept in their places, is the power of the cross. All creation, the whole universe, preaches the cross. Every manifestation of attractive energy tells us of the power of the cross to save us from sin. The way to the Highest is the way of the cross. If we humble ourselves to the death of the cross, we may even now dwell in the "secret place of the Most High," and "abide under the shadow of the Almighty." For "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."

"How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" Righteousness is strength; sin is weakness. Satan, the adversary, once Lucifer, the light-bearer, brought sin into the world, and all sinned. By sin man lost his dominion. It was not arbitrarily taken from him, but he could not hold it any longer. He lost his power to rule. He could not rule himself, and so could rule nothing. Then "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. v. 6. Satan weakens us, but it is our glorious privilege to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." Eph. vi. 10. Christ, the meek and lowly One, is given to us, and He is "the power of God." He has conquered, and in Him we have "power and authority over all devils." Luke ix. 1. One of the most blessed of all the words of comfort is the assurance that by faith we may be "made strong" "out of weakness." Heb. xi. 34.

"Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch." Christ is the true Vine. He says of the Father, "every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away." "If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." John xv. 1-6. Christ is the tree of life, because He is "the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 24), and wisdom is "a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." Prov. iii. 18. He is the life. John xiv. 6. There is no life except in Him. He is also the Way-the way to God. John xiv. 5, 6; Heb. x. 19, 20. Only by Him can anyone approach God. John xiv. 6; Eph. ii. 13, 18. Lucifer would not accept this way; he "abode not in the Truth," and so he was "cut down to the ground," cast out like an abominable branch. This is a warning to us, to abide in the Vine. It is so easy to do this, for we have but to let ourselves rest. Only in trying to lift ourselves up, do we wear ourselves out.

Remember the origin of Babylon (Gen. xi.) and the character of its rulers. It was the spirit of Lucifer,-envy of any who occupied a superior position, and a determination to be above them. But "where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." James iii. 16. That is why Satan is full of all evil, and why the whole world, inspired with the same spirit is corrupt. But this is why

the destruction of Babylon involves the whole earth. "For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts. The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand; that I will break the Assyrian in My land, and upon My mountains tread him under foot; then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. *This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth*; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations."

How shall we escape in this time of destruction? "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Ps. xlii. 1, 2. God, who dwells in "the high and holy place," dwells also with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit. Isa. lvi. 15. The high and holy place is therefore the place of humility. So then "he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High [the place of lowliness and meekness] shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

"Studies from the Gospel of John. The Anointing at Bethany. John xii. 1-11" *The Present Truth* 15, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

Jesus therefore six days before the passover came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus raised from the dead. So they made Him a supper there; and Martha served; but Lazarus was one of them that sat at meat with Him. Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, which should betray Him, saith, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Now this he did not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein. Jesus therefore said, Suffer her to keep it against the day of My burying. For the poor ye have always with you; but Me ye have not always.

"The common people therefore of the Jews learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests took counsel that they might

put Lazarus also to death; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Him."

Six days before the Passover means six days before the cross of Calvary. None of those who sat at table with Jesus knew this; but Jesus knew it very well. Indeed, Jesus was always walking beneath the cross, for He knew from the beginning of His ministry what its end would be; and He knew just when the betrayal and crucifixion would take place, for He Himself had told His disciples about it as they were on their way to Jerusalem. There was nothing in His looks or actions to mar the peace or joyousness of the feast.

What a lesson this contains for us. Jesus lived every day just as perfectly as He possibly could live on His last day; and therefore there was no need for Him to make some great change at the last. Most people would consider it an exhibition of recklessness or bravado, or else gross insensibility on the part of a man who should attend a feast six days from the time when he knew he was to suffer death; but we know He refused to act in the last week of His earthly life just the same as He had always acted? Why spend time in mourning "preparations for Death?" That always implies that one is conscious of a misspent life. No preparation is needed for death; all one has to do is to be prepared to live, and to really *live*, and then if death does come, he will be ready for it, no matter how or when it comes.

If we put ourselves in the place of those disciples, we shall not wonder at their indignation over the seeming waste of the costly ointment. A reference to the record in the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew shows that the other disciples were indignant, as well as Judas. How often have we expressed what we thought was "righteous indignation" over some supposed extravagance, or when something was done for which we could see no reason. We are very apt to make hasty judgments. May we not from this learn a lesson. We can see that it was wrong in this case; but it is not in itself so apparent as in many instances that come under our immediate notice. If the disciples had known all the circumstances, as we know them now, and as they did afterwards, none of them, save Judas, would have murmured.

The eleven disciples were sincere in their care for the poor, while Judas was a hypocritical thief: yet their zeal was altogether out of place. Indeed, they made themselves sharers in the sin of Judas, because

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they were led by him. It is evident that he was the ladder in the condemnation of Mary's act, since in this place he alone is mentioned as having complained. If they had known what spirit actuated him, they would not have thought of joining him in his outcry. Here again we may learn to be on our guard against sympathising too readily with a man's grievance, and too readily joining in with somebody else's denunciation of what plainly seems to be a mistaken course. If we are not careful, we may be strengthening some traitor in his wicked designs, instead of helping the cause of suffering humanity.

When the disciples saw the whole box of ointment used upon Jesus, they said, "To what purpose is this waste?" Matt. xxvi. 8. Think of spending the value of a whole year's labour in one gift, and that something that could be used only

once! Three hundred pence meant three hundred days' labour. See Matt. xx. 1, 2. But it was given freely, and Jesus did not reprove the giver, but on the contrary commended her. Nothing is wasted that is given to the Lord from a sincere heart. In the ancient days God's people used to burn up entire beasts upon the altar, and offer much costly incense; and God accepted it, yea, found delight in it. But God's pleasure in such service was dependent on the condition of the worshipper's heart. When the heart nation, and a multitude of whole burnt offerings was to no purpose. Isa. i. 10-13. But when the heart was purified by faith, and the sacrifice was one of joy for righteousness bestowed, then God was pleased, for "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." Ps. li. 17-19.

There is only one sacrifice that has ever been made, or that can ever be made, and that is the sacrifice of Christ. No man ever yet "made a sacrifice" for God. Many have "offered sacrifices," and sacrifices that have been acceptable, too, but they were sacrifices that God Himself provided. In the one sacrifice God has given us everything, and of His fulness, which we have all received, we are expected to make returns which serve, not to enrich Him, but to show our appreciation of and trust in His gift. The secret of every acceptable sacrifice is trust in God. 'By faith Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain.' Heb. xi. 4. That which the one sacrificing really says,-that which his offering means,-is that since he gets everything from God, he can give everything back to the Lord, and still be sustained. With Christ we receive all things from God. God has abundance of everything, and He gives lavishly. He not only sends rain on the unjust as well as on the just, but He causes it to rain on the wilderness, wherein there is no man. Job. xxxviii. 26. Is it wasted? Oh, no; it will not return unto Him void. None of God's gifts are wasted, and nothing is wasted that is given to Him. Only by giving ourselves and all that we have to the Lord, can we be preserved. He that will save his life shall lose it, and he that will lose his life for Christ's sake shall save it unto life eternal.

What an example we have in this lesson of the blindness and wickedness of unbelief. Lazarus had been raised from the dead, and consequently much interest centred in him. The miracle had caused many to believe on Jesus. People flocked to see the man who had been dead four days, and buried, and who was now alive, and many of them went away believing. Now what did the unbelieving chief priests do? They were determined not to believe and not to allow anybody else to believe if they could help it; so they resolved to put Lazarus to death, so that this witness to the power of Christ might be removed. Yet they *thought* that they were working for the good of the people. Strange that was filled with evil, incense was an abomination they could not see that when they found necessary to commit murder in order to sustain their position, that position must be wrong; for truth can never be sustained by violence and crime. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." That shows the wickedness to which unbelief drives men. As to the blindness of it, think of their planning to kill a man that had been raised from the dead by and for the glory of God, in order to silence his living testimony as to the power of Christ to give life! How could they expect to kill him? They would be fighting directly against God. Even if the priests had been permitted to kill Lazarus, the result would

necessarily have been his resurrection again under more striking circumstances than before. God makes even the wrath of man to praise Him, so that nobody can do anything against the truth, but for the truth. Who would not wish to be in harmony with a power that is so sure to succeed that even opposition helps it along?

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. The Work of the Holy Spirit"
***The Present Truth* 15, 13.**

E. J. Waggoner

Remember what we talked about last week,-the birds' eggs, and how they are charged by the power of God's Word into beautiful little living creatures. But there are some eggs that are never so changed.

If you should take away the eggs from the nest of any bird, or if the birds should desert the nest, they would become spoiled, and although there are such wonderful possibilities within them, they would come to nothing.

For although the eggs themselves are formed by the power of the Word of God, He has not made them so that they can of themselves produce the living bird. They must be kept in the nest where the mother bird broods over them with sheltering wing, and life-giving heat from her own body.

And in that, as in all things, God has a beautiful lesson for us. If you learn it carefully now, the birds themselves will continually remind you of it, so that you will not forget.

In the beginning,-(have you noticed how all our talks take us back to the *beginning*? This is because we are learning "the Gospel of the *Spring*." Look in your dictionary for the meaning of this word, and we will talk of it again next week).

In the beginning, "the earth was without form and void." Then God spoke to the earth and to the waters. You may read what He said in the first chapter of Genesis. He told the earth to bring forth grass and trees and living creatures; He told the waters to be gathered together into one place, and to bring forth all kinds animals, and birds to fly above the earth.

How could the earth and the waters bring forth all these wonders? They could not, of themselves, any more than an egg can of itself produce a living bird. But,-"*the Spirit of God moved* upon the face of the waters," and upon the earth, and so every word that God spoke was at once fulfilled.

The formless earth took just the shape that was in the mind of God, and brought forth grass, trees, and living creatures and creeping things. The waters brought forth great whales and all kinds of fish, and birds of beautiful plumage, able to fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

All this was not the work of the earth or the waters, but of the creating Spirit of God which moved upon them when God spoke. In the beautiful expression, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," "the Hebrew word 'moved' refers to the movement of the wings of bird as it hovers over the nest."

The mother bird broods in silence over her seemingly lifeless egg until the Word of God which is working there is fulfilled, and a perfect living bird is brought

forth-a beautiful peacock, or a dazzling bird of paradise or humming bird, a pure white swan, or a sweet-singing nightingale.

God uses this to teach us of the work of His Holy Spirit,-how it moved and brooded in the beginning over the earth that was "without form and void," until it was brought to perfection and filled with life and beauty, and "God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good."

This is a lesson that will help you everyday. Do not forget that God made us from "the dust of the ground," and that you have no more power in yourself to become like God and do His will than the dust over which you walk.

But when God speaks to the dust and His Spirit moves upon it, it becomes and does exact what He says. So when He speaks to you and you listen to His Word, His Holy Spirit will move upon your heart, and brood there until His perfect image shall shine forth, and He will see you "very good," as He saw all His works in the beginning.

"Neighbours" *The Present Truth* 15, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

Someone once asked Jesus the question, "Lord, who is my neighbour?" In His answer, Jesus told the story of the poor man who fell among thieves, and of the good Samaritan who showed mercy on him, while the priest and the Levite "passed by on the other side." Read the story in the tenth chapter of Luke. This was to teach that the real "neighbour" is one who shows kindness and love to any who are in trouble.

Here is a story of some little birds who were just such "neighbours" to one of their number who was in distress:-

A gentleman in England, who lived in the country, had his attention called to a thicket of bushes near his house one day. He saw a number of birds there, whose loud cries and strange movements he could not understand.

He felt very curious to find out the meaning of it, so he crept close up to them and examined the bushes. There he found a female bird whose wing was caught in such a manner that she could not get away. Near by was her nest, containing several young birds. As she was kept a prisoner there, she was unable to get any food either for herself or her young ones.

He stood still, at a little distance, and out him watched what was going on. He saw a number of old birds come flying into the bush, bringing worms and insects in their mouths, which they gave first to the mother, and then to her young ones. She cheered them in their good work with a song of gratitude.

After watching this interesting sight till his curiosity was satisfied, the gentleman released the poor bird from her confinement. In a moment she flew to her nest with a merry song to her deliverer. And her kind neighbours, who had come to help her, flew away to their own homes, as soon as they saw she did not need their help any more, singing as they went a song of joy.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

- A spider can live ten months without food.
- New South Wales contains more flowering plants than all Europe.
- A fire in a fashionable New York hotel caused the loss of over fifty lives.
- The Congo river has at one place eighty-two waterfalls within a distance of 154 miles.
- Silk is considered unclean by the Mohammedans, because it is the product of a worm.
- A disastrous cyclone swept over several American States. Many lives were lost, and the destruction of property was immense.
- A Finnish deputation of 400 persons who arrived at St. Petersburg, in order to present to the Czar a petition against the measure lately introduced in Finland by the Russian Government, were ordered to return immediately to their country.
- A force of American bridge builders employed by the Pencoyd Ironworks will leave Philadelphia in a few days for the Soudan, to erect the railway bridge across the Atbara river. The order was given to the Pencoyd firm by the British War Office because the English builders wanted seven months to build the bridge, while the American firm has promised to do the work in seven weeks.
- An agreement has been come to between France and England with regard to the division of the Soudan provinces. The arrangement is thought, in both countries, to be in England, favour.
- A serious conflict between the police and the people occurred at Havana. From thirty to fifty persons were wounded, some of them seriously. It is believed that the rioters were mainly officers of the Cuban army. The police have been ordered to seize all weapons carried by Cubans.
- Reports from Rome state that although the health of the Pope does not inspire immediate alarm, it is generally felt that the end is approaching. One who has been with the Pope every day says that his Holiness is not exactly ill, but that his life is being slowly extinguished, like a lamp that is deprived of oil.
- A miner at Klondike is reported to have discovered the body of a mammoth forty feet from the surface. The flesh had been frozen, and was said to be in a perfect state of preservation. The body went over forty-one feet in length. The left tusk was perfect, and measured fourteen feet in length and forty-eight inches in circumference.
- According to telegraphic intelligence received from Manila, Aguinaldo is more than ever resolved to continue the war for independence, and is rigorously suppressing any manifestation of a contrary feeling among the Filipinos. One general who counselled peace with America was decapitated.
- A trooper who was employed by the South African Chartered Company, brought an action against Messrs. Rhodes and Jameson for injuries sustained in the "Jamieson Raid." The defendants sought to have the action set aside, but the Judge held that the trooper's claim was good, and it will go to trial. If it meets with success, a number of similar actions will be brought.
- A richly-engraved sword with jewelled hilt and gold-mounted scabbard has been presented to one of the heroes of the American-Spanish war, Commodore J. W. Philip, by the Sunday-school children of Texas, "in recognition of his

bravery and acknowledgment of Almighty God." The Commodore was noted for his devout utterances during and after the great sea-battle at Santiago.

-Central Russia is suffering intensely from the effects of a severe famine. Ten provinces to the region of the Volga are reported to be suffering from a worse failure of crops than any of the oldest inhabitants can remember. Not only has the grain sown perished in the greater part of that district, but also the vegetables and grass. The official allowances are limited to young people under eighteen, and to adults above fifty-five years of age. Scurvy and typhus are very prevalent, and the children, deprived of milk, are dying from exhaustion. The so-called bread obtainable has no nutritive qualities, and produces "all the symptoms of poisoning." The peasantry, having parted with all they possessed to buy food, are suffering from cold as well as from hunger.

-A deputation to Mr. Long, M.P., asked that manufacturers of condensed milk be required to print on their labels the actual strength of the article, as compared with cow's milk. The chairman of the Public Health Committee of Camberwell Vestry, declared that infants brought up on skimmed milk invariably suffered from rickets. Dr. Stalker, of Willesden, said that in that district forty out of every 100 children died before they were a year old. He attributed this to the use of varieties of condensed milk, which were practically chalk and water. No trade in such a substance ought to be allowed. Dr. Cassell, public analyst, of Kensington, said the proper course was to insist upon an entirely new name being used for "condensed milk," because it was not milk at all.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Peace is the opposite of war. When two parties are at war, and one of them surrenders to the other, war must cease, and peace must follow.

God has no quarrel with anybody. He is the God of peace. He is not at war with men, but all men have rebelled and fought against Him. Whenever a man submits to God,-unconditionally surrenders,-he is at peace with God. God has offered peace to all that are near and to all that are far off, so that if anyone is not on good terms with God, it is his own fault.

But this is only a little of what is contained in our text. It does not say that, being justified by faith we are at peace with God, but that we have peace with God. Now "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. Therefore the man must be changed in order to be at peace with God; his carnal mind must be replaced by the mind of the Spirit of God. Then the man must necessarily have peace with God, for "to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Mark the words, "peace with God." From being in opposition to God, the man has been turned round, converted, placed by the side of God in harmony with Him, yea, *in Him*. Therefore it is God's own peace that the man shares. "The peace of God" rules in his heart. This is evident from the fact that the man was

changed from a state of enmity to one of peace only by Christ's taking complete possession of him. He is "turned into another man," even a man of God. Now "all things are of God," so that the peace in the soul is God's peace.

Christ has been raised from the dead and set at the right hand of God in the heavenly places. The same God who has done this, being rich in mercy, because of His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ, and hath raised us up with Him, and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. ii. 4-6. Thus we are made to inherit the throne of glory (1 Sam. ii. 8), and gave "power with God," clothed with His power and filled with His peace. What a glorious position! This is the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

The announcement of a forthcoming Sunday edition of the *Daily Telegraph* is being strongly commented upon in the religious press, which fears that the movement will spread. Already the *Daily Mail* has declared its intention of doing likewise, and announces that other large dailies are meditating a similar step. The *Methodist Times* says:-

They are not in want of money. They might have left the poor Protestants and quiet people of England one day in which they might think of something else than Racing, Football, and "Ample Particulars of Law and Police Cases." Are the seriousness of life, the responsibilities of citizenship, the sacred relations of the faintly and the Church, the lofty ideals, the preparations for another world, everything, to be sacrificed in order that those who already enjoy wealth beyond the dreams of avarice may yet make more millions?

Other papers write in a similar strain, as though Christians would be obliged to read the Sunday papers, if they are printed. But there are a good many thousand people who keep the Sabbath on the day God commands, the seventh of the week, Saturday, yet they have no difficulty about the papers that are published on that day. They simply do not read them until the Sabbath is over. How much is Sunday-keeping worth that cannot resist the temptation to read a newspaper on that day? Those who keep it unto the Lord will not be affected by any number of temptations, and those who do not will not keep it anyhow.

Someone may ask, "Why do you, who are observers of the seventh-day Sabbath, concern yourselves about Sunday keeping?" Because those who keep Sunday as the Sabbath of the Lord, not knowing that it is a heathen institution in honour of the sun, adopted by the Papacy, and without a jot or tittle of authority from the Scriptures, are the very people who, when their attention is called to the true Sabbath, embrace it and walk in the tight. They are Sabbath-keepers in heart, and not knowing that they are weekly dishonouring God's own Sabbath, they are accepted of Him, as walking in the light they have. But no man keeps Sunday in such a way that it is acceptable to God unless he promptly leaves it for the Sabbath when this is made known to him. For this reason we like to see those who keep Sunday do it in all honesty of purpose, even making sacrifices that they may keep it aright. There is no fear that these will reject the true Sabbath when they learn of it, but it is so easy to keep Sunday now; the multitude do it, custom is on its side, and popular religion and respectability make

it fashionable; so that men do not really know whether they are keeping it because it is easy to do so, or because they regard it as the will of God. The true Sabbath is without these attending circumstances, and when the knowledge of it comes to men, they have opportunity to find out whether they serve the Lord front a pure heart, or whether they love the world more than they love their Saviour. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple."

It seems to be at last definitely decided that the Pope will not be invited to attend the Peace Conference, whereupon the grapes are at once declared to be sour. Says the *Catholic Times*:-

The farcical character of the forthcoming Peace Conference is emphasised by the fact that, as Mgr. Tarnasel, Papal Internuncio at The Hague, has informed the Vatican, in the list of delegates to the Peace Conference sent by Russia to the Dutch Government, which is charged with issuing the invitations, the Papal representative is not included. It is the play of "Hamlet" with Hamlet left out, and of course the author meant it to be only a play.

If, as this suggests, the Pope's influence for peace is more powerful than all the rest of Europe put together, he can make it manifest without a Conference, and the fact that, with all this influence, he has not kept the peace, leaves the Papacy selfcondemned, either of vain boosting or indifference to bloodshed.

No man can do anything against the truth of God. His efforts to overthrow it will only cause it to be more widely known. God makes the wrath of man to praise Him. "We can do nothing against the truth but for the truth?" Whoever directs his efforts against those who serve the Lord, simply gives them occasion to learn how powerless is man compared with God. "If God be for as who can be against us?" Satan, by the contrast of his own evil nature, has only succeeded in setting forth the goodness of God.

April 6, 1899

"Building on Sand" *The Present Truth* 15, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

"Every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it." Matt. vii. 26, 27.

It is impossible to imagine more foolish conduct than that which the Saviour describes. No man in his senses builds a house unless he expects it to stand, and provide him a shelter and dwelling-place, and therefore a builder will look carefully to his foundation, choosing the best he can find, and even strengthening that if it appears necessary. If a man took no thought for the foundation, but built his house on the sand, he would be counted a fool.

Yet this folly is nothing to be compared with the madness of hearing the words of Christ and not doing them. The man who builds his house on the sand loses only temporal things. The man who neglects to do Christ's sayings loses eternal

life. Yet how many are doing as Christ bids? Take the instruction given in the sermon on the mount, the very occasion when this solemn warning was uttered. Men who profess to be Christians say openly that it is foolish to think of carrying out all the instruction that the Saviour gives in this sermon. They profess to admire very much the more spiritual interpretation He put upon the duty of men, than was set

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forth "by them of old time," but when it comes to yielding obedience to the words He spoke, they assert that this is impossible in the present state of things.

"Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" was the question put to the disciples at this time, and addressed to every one who names the name of Christ. The mere profession is nothing. No matter how lofty and splendid the edifice built on the sand, when the storm comes it is doomed. It is not the man or woman whose nature makes meditation enjoyable, and whose intellect, exerted upon sacred things, can wander at will among far-reaching speculations which dazzle slower minds, that is necessarily in touch with Christ. There may be all of this, and it may be spoken to others with the tongues of man and of angels, yet to some who will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" the unexpected answer will be given, "I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

These are the fools whom Christ described. Priding themselves on spiritual attainments, it seems a small matter to them that their own lives are not exactly in accord with the words of Christ. Surely, they think, our splendid services to the cause of religion are of far more importance than the small defects of our daily life. But it is not enough to have the external righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. If the experience stops there, "ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." The man who makes light of sin is also accounted light, less than nothing, by beings of true spiritual insight. These words do not promise that the transgressor shall have a low place in heaven. It simply states that the man who transgresses the law of God in any degree and teaches others to do so, will be esteemed at his true value in the kingdom, no matter what his pretensions may be.

Of course, it is a good deal easier to make anything out of sand than out of rock, which calls for patient, long-continued toil. Men get impatient sometimes at the slow methods of the Gospel; and want to see something accomplished quickly. So they try to accuse men, and find that this quickly draws. But that which is so easily gained is just as easily lost. It is true that to the careless observer great results seem to be attained, but unless the hearing and doing of the words of Christ is the means employed to build up a church, when the storm comes the structure will fall into ruin. Splendid ritual, plans for securing the assistance of the laws, and every form of enterprise outside of the Word of God is as foolish as the building of a house on sand.

The builders on the rock seldom achieve distinction among men. Their work seems small in amount, and it does not advertise itself. Yet it goes on quietly, gradually, effectively, building nothing that is not on the true foundation. In humility and faithfulness, the words of Christ are allowed free course in the life, and the Word of God alone is resorted to for guidance and wisdom and strength. It is these who are doing the work. Others fill the public eye and ear, and are accounted the pillars of the church, but when the storm comes, it will be seen that the faithful application of the Word to one's own life was the real agent in accomplishing all that was permanently effected. Do not envy others their high position, and seemingly vast opportunities. So faithful in the little details that come to you, and God will see that they grow into great things.

"Studies from the Gospel of John. Jesus Teaching Humility. John xiii. 1-17" *The Present Truth* 15, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

(John xiii. 1-17)

The scripture that forms the lesson for this week is so rich, and so comprehensive in the instruction that it gives, that we quote it entire, from the Revised Version. The mere reading of the text cannot fail to benefit the reader. Give it careful and prayerful attention.

THE EXAMPLE

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"Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. And during supper, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God, riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and He took a towel, and girded Himself. Then He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. So He cometh to Simon Peter. He saith unto Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, what I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt understand hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all. For He knew him that should betray Him; therefore He said, Ye are not all clean.

"So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and sat down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master, and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Master, have

washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord, neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them." John xiii. 1-17.

There we have the story; let us consider some of the wealth of instruction it contains for us. We cannot exhaust it. The most that can be done in this article will be merely to suggest some things for thought.

NOT AN ORDINARY OCCURRENCE

In the first place let it be noted that this was no common occurrence. Some people have imagined that this act of feet-washing was a thing rendered necessary by the fact that people wore low sandals, so that the feet became readily soiled and needed frequent washing, and that it was a common act of courtesy for a host to perform such a service for his guests. This is wholly imaginary. Suppose it were true, what kind of host would he be, who should neglect a thing that ought to be done when the guests first entered the house, if at all, until after they had sat down to supper? What would you think if you were invited to a feast, and in the midst of it were invited by your host to take a bath? No; the claim that the washing of feet was a common act of courtesy only sets Jesus forth as neglectful; and that fact alone disproves it.

It was indeed common for hosts to provide water for the feet of their guests, but not to wash their feet. Each one did that for himself. The host would no more think of washing the feet of his friends than we would think of washing the hands and faces of our friends when they arrive after a journey. We provide water for them, and leave them to make their own toilet. Even so it was in ancient times. Abraham was a pattern of hospitality, but he did not wash the feet of the three men whom he so courteously received. He ran to meet them, and bowing down to the ground, invited them to come in, saying, "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts." Gen. xviii. 1, 5. Here we see very clearly that the guests were expected to wash their own feet. Hence it aroused the utmost astonishment on the part of the disciples, when they saw Jesus begin to wash their feet. They had never before seen or heard anything like that.

CHRIST AS SERVANT

Who was it that did what even a common servant was not expected to do? It was Jesus, the Son of God. Was it because He lost sight of the dignity of His position, that He did it? Not at all; He did it in full consciousness that He came from God and was going to God. He knew that He was their Lord and Master, and nothing that He did was inconsistent with that fact. He did not lower Himself. Not one of His disciples had any the less respect for Him because of what He did. His was the true dignity that does not have to be hedged about in order to be preserved, but which preserves itself, and dignifies whatever it undertakes.

This was a lesson of service. Jesus said: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. xx. 25-28. On this very occasion He said: "Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? but I am among you as He that serveth." Luke xxii. 27. Jesus was greatest of all, because He did the humblest service.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Phil. ii. 5-7. Notice that it was the *form*, not the character, of a servant, that Jesus took on Himself. Why did He not, in coming to earth, take the character of a servant?—Because He already had that. He came to earth to let the world see and know just what He was, but He had to come in a form that they could appreciate. Men's ideas were so perverted that if Jesus had come to earth in royal state and heavenly glory, they could never have associated Him with service, and so could not have learned the lessons of service that they ought. So He changed His *form*, and let His life show who He was. Those who recognise Him as Lord, and acknowledge Him as such, even while He bears the form of a servant, will one day have the privilege of seeing Him serve, and of being served by Him, when He is arrayed as King of kings, and Lord of lords; for He says to us: "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Luke xii. 37.

LOWLINESS OF THE MOST HIGH

What an honour to be served by the King of glory! Yet just that honour we are all receiving every day; for the God of the universe has set and keeps all nature in operation to serve us. Day and night He waits to attend to every want. Every moment He watches, to see that we lack nothing. He gives to us life, and breath, and all things, and does service for us that no earthly servant could be hired to do, even if he had the power. Remember that Jesus was the revelation of God to men. Whoever saw Him saw the Father. John xiv. 9. Therefore the act of Jesus, in washing the feet of His disciples was designed to show us that the Most High God is the servant of all. Jesus Christ was "God manifest in the flesh." When Jesus said, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart," He was declaring the character of God. One does not ordinarily expect meekness and humility in kings' courts or in kings themselves; but the King of kings is meek and lowly in heart. Although He is "the high and lofty One," who dwells in "the high and holy place," He dwells also with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit. Isa. lvii. 15. His meekness constitutes His greatness, and it is only His gentleness that makes us great. Ps. xviii. 37.

We call Him Lord and Master; do we mean it? Is He our Lord? If so, then we are, and acknowledge ourselves to be, servants. "As He is, so are we in this

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world." He is Lord of servants, for He is Lord simply because He is servant. He is not to us the Lord unless we, like Him, are servants. He is Lord, not to domineer over His followers, but to lead them. The very name "disciples" or "followers," indicates that He is leader. And this shows absolute unity of purpose and character between them. They are as He is. He is different from them in degree only, not in kind. He is Lord, not because He rules while they serve, but because He does more service than they do. When we learn this, we shall know what our duty is in any position of authority in which we may be placed in the body of Christ.

THE DIGNITY OF LABOUR

The example of Christ in washing the feet of His disciples teaches us a lesson concerning the dignity of labour, and shows us that there is no such thing as "menial" labour. Any man who is ashamed of honest work, is not a follower of Christ, for the greater portion of His earthly life was spent as a carpenter. Anybody who looks with even the slightest degree of contempt upon one who is employed in the very lowest service, or who feels himself in any degree superior to a servant who is doing legitimate work in the very lowest position, is putting himself above Christ, and despising Christ. So long as the world stands there must be some who are what the world calls servants. There must necessarily be division of labour. No one person can do everything. Some are adapted to one thing, and others to another. But that which everybody ought to be taught is that all classes of honest and necessary work stand on an exact level. All who meet the end of their existence in this world, are servants. Read Col. iii. 22-24; and iv. 1: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatsoever ye do; do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ." "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that you also have a Master in heaven." Thus we see that all,-rich and poor, high and low, are servants of the one Master. The fact that many refuse to recognise the relation does not nullify the truth. We see that for one to despise another who is called a servant, or who wears the garb of a servant, is to deny that he himself is a servant, and to despise his Master, who is, in both form and fact, a servant. It is not what one works at, but the spirit in which he works, that determines the grade of his service. Sweeping floors and blacking boots is just as honourable service as is preaching sermons or writing books. To guide a team of horses is in itself as dignified a calling as to guide a State; and the man who guides his team well, and as a worker for Christ, is more honourable than the one who guides the State without any thought of his responsibility to God. Learn from Christ that work is God's gift to man, and, when rightly done, allies man with God.

A LESSON OF LOVE

Look again at that upper room where Jesus washed the feet of His disciples. Judas was among them, although the devil had already put it into his heart to betray his Lord, and, the bargain had already been made with the chief priests. Jesus well knew what was in the heart of Judas, but the fellow-disciples of Judas did not. Jesus had all the time known the covetousness that was in the heart of Judas, and He knew that this covetousness would make him His betrayer. He knew the anger that filled the heart of Judas at his failure to secure the value of the ointment that had been poured out upon the Master. He saw Judas as he went to the chief priests and made the bargain which really meant murder. Nevertheless the Lord proceeded to wash the feet of Judas just the same as He did the others. No shade of difference was noticed in His treatment of them. Not by word, look, or gesture did Jesus give any intimation that He knew that Judas was not as loyal as the rest of the twelve. His intercourse with Judas, the traitor, was marked by the same tenderness as with John, the beloved disciple. Let those who are wont to consider feet-washing as an act of courtesy look at this phase of it for an example in courtesy such as the world has never seen.

But this was not an act of mere courtesy . It was the courtesy that naturally springs from perfect love. There was nothing "put on" with Jesus. He was just what He seemed to be. He did not force Himself to any line of action. In the world, the height of "good breeding" is manifested in the man who can maintain a calm exterior while boiling with indignation and rage within; but Jesus had that perfection of good breeding that the world never can know. It was the breeding that marks the oldest of "old families"-the family of God. He acted calmly, because He was calm within. He made no difference in His treatment of the disciples, because He felt none. His was the character of God, who "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. v. 15. "He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil." Luke vi. 35. Jesus treated Judas kindly, because He felt kindly toward him. In His heart there was not a trace of bitterness, no rising of anger, revenge, or what men delight in calling "righteous indignation." Yet Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are." Heb. iv. 15. He had our nature, so that injustice would tend to arouse Him as much as us. The perfect love which He manifested to all is a proof of the power of the Divine nature to swallow up the human. God gave Him "power over all flesh," so that the same unselfish love may be manifested in us.

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The love that Jesus manifested in washing the feet of Judas was the same as that which prompted the prayer for those who crucified Him, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." He who washed the feet of Judas would just as readily have washed the feet of Pilate or the chief priests. And not only would He have washed the feet of these men, if occasion had called for it, but He would have performed any other service for them; for the feet-washing stood as the representative of all kinds of service for others. No man ever did a baser deed than Judas did; and the fact that Jesus did for him the most humble service, knowing that he was at the time under the direct influence of the devil, and

planning the most heartless perfidy against his chief Benefactor, is evidence to us that Christ would gladly and lovingly serve His worst enemies. This is a strong ground of consolation to us, making it possible to come to Him with confidence, in spite of our sins against Him: but it is more than that; it is a lesson to us as to how we should treat those who might be considered our enemies.

AN EXAMPLE

There are very few of the professed followers of Christ who follow Him in the act of feet-washing, yet the commandment to do so is as explicit as any commandment found in the Bible. Listen: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, *ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*" Ye ought to wash one another's feet. That is, it is a duty; ye owe it to one another to do this. Suppose one could find in the Bible similar language concerning Sunday; how it would be seized upon. What would not the advocates of Sunday observance give for one such statement about that day. And if there were one such statement it would be decisive. When Jesus says that we ought to do anything, that should settle the matter with all of His disciples; we ought to do it without any questioning. Things that we may not understand will be made clear to us in the performance. In keeping the commandments of the Lord there is great reward. Ps. xix. 11. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

If ye know what things?-If ye know that "the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither is he that is sent greater than He that sent him." If one knows that (and it is so simple that everybody ought to know it), it will be his greatest pleasure, and will be considered an honour, to be permitted to do as his Lord does. Some have said that they "thought too much of themselves" to engage in any such act as the washing of feet. That is a sad condition to be in. That is to think more highly of self than one ought to think. It is to think ourselves greater than the One who sent us. No one can find any excuse for not following the example of Jesus, that will not be a condemnation of the Lord of glory.

But although the words of Jesus leave us no escape from a literal following of His example, the mere literal act of feet-washing is not a following of that example. We cannot do as He did, except in the same Spirit. If we have not the mind that was in Christ, we cannot do the works that He did. He who washes the feet of a brother, and at the same time cherishes the faintest shadow of ill will towards him, or has the slightest unbrotherly feeling, is not following the example of Christ. More than this, if there is in his heart any feeling of bitterness toward any soul on earth, he is not following the example of Christ, no matter how often he washes the feet of the brethren. If there is a lurking grudge in his heart, if he feels hurt and grieved because somebody has mistreated him, then he is not following the example of the Master; for Christ had no such feelings, and it is the condition of the heart that determines the value of any action. It is self-evident that no one can do as Christ did unless he is just as Christ was. Therefore it must be very plain to all that this ordinance of feet-washing is calculated to bring all believers into absolutely perfect unity and harmony with Christ; and this would

mean absolute harmony with one another, and perfect love for all men, even such love as led Jesus to give His life for His enemies. What a marvellous ordinance this is, that Christ has left in the church, to bring the members frequently to face the question whether they are imbued with His Spirit, and walking in His steps, or whether unconsciously they have been slipping away from Him!

One thing more should be noted: Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, and He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." Acts x. 38. He who follows Christ's example must likewise go about doing good, and ministering healing for all the ills that the devil brings upon men. He must be ready to give to any person any kind of help that is needed. He must be ready to give Christian help to all who need help, be they brethren in the faith or those who despise and hate the faith. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. vi. 10, The ordinance of feet-washing, which Christ Himself established in the church, is our profession of faith and practice-a natural declaration that we have given ourselves to Christ, to do as He did,-a declaration that what we are doing for one another we are ready to do for anybody. If it does not mean this it is but an empty form. But the Lord has no more ceremonies in the church. The church is His body, and so must be filled with His life. What a blessed gift is this which He has provided for all His followers, that they may know that they are one with Him. Here we may know, as the visitor to old Jerusalem cannot, that we are walking in the footsteps of Christ, and that He is with us as we walk.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Devouring Curse. Isa. xxiv. 1-28" *The Present Truth* 15, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXIV. 1-23, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. Behold, Jehovah emptieth the land, and
maketh it waste;
He even turneth it upside down, and scattereth
abroad the inhabitants.

2. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the
priest;
As with the servant, so with his master;
As with the handmaid, so with her mistress;
As with the buyer, so with the seller;
As with the borrower, so with the lender;
As with the usurer, so with the giver of
usury.

3. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly
spoiled;
For Jehovah hath spoken this word.

4. The land mourneth, it withereth;
The world languisheth, it withereth;
The lofty people of the land do languish.

5. The land is even polluted under her inhabitants:

For they have transgressed the law, they have
changed the decree:

6. They have broken the everlasting covenant.
Therefore hath a curse devoured the land;
Because they are guilty that dwell in her.
Therefore are the inhabitants of the land
destroyed;
And few are the mortals that are left in her.

7. The new wine mourneth; the vine languisheth;
All, that were glad of heart, sigh.

8. The joyful sound of the tabour ceaseth;
The noise of exultation is no more;
The joyful sound of the harp ceaseth;

9. With songs they shall no more drink wine;
The palm-wine shall be bitter to them that
drink it.

10. The city is broken down; it is desolate;
Every house is obstructed, so that no one can
enter.

11. There is a cry in the streets for wine;
All gladness is passed away;
The joy of the whole land is banished.

12. Desolation is left in the city;
And with a great multitude the gate is battered
down.

13. Yea, thus shall it be in the very centre of the
land, in the midst of the people;
As the shaking of the olive; as the gleaning
when the vintage is finished.

14. But these shall lift up their voice, they shall
sing;
The waters shall resound with the exaltation
of Jehovah.

15. Wherefore in the distant coasts, glorify ye
Jehovah;
In the distant coasts of the sea, the name
of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

16. From the uttermost part of the land we have
heard songs. Glory to the righteous!
But I said, Alas, my wretchedness, my
wretchedness!

Woe is me! the plunderers plunder;
Yea the plunderers still continue their cruel
depredations.

17. The terror, the pit, and the snare,
Are upon thee, O inhabitant of the land:

18. And it shall be, that whoso fleeth from the
terror,

He shall fall into the pit;
And whoso escapeth from the pit,
He shall be taken in the snare;
For the floodgates from on high are opened;
And the foundations of the earth tremble.

19. The land is grievously shaken;
The land is utterly shattered to pieces;
The land is violently shattered out of its
place:

20. The land reeleth to and fro like a drunkard;
and moveth this way and that, like a
lodge for a night;
For her iniquity lieth heavy upon her,
And she shall fall, and rise no more.

21. And it shall come to pass that day,
Jehovah shall summon on high the host that
is on high,
And on earth the kings of the earth;
And they shall be gathered together, as in a
bundle for the pit;

22. And shall be closely imprisoned in the prison;
And after many days, account shall be taken
of them.

23. And the moon shall be confounded, and the
sun shall be ashamed;
For Jehovah God of Hosts shall reign
On Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem;
And before His ancients shall He be glorified.

The reading of this chapter makes more deep the impression that the book of Isaiah is emphatically a book for the last days. To the prophets of old it was revealed "that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." 1 Peter i. 12. This chapter tells us not only what shall take place in the last days, but also the cause of it. Study the chapter through as a whole, and note that it is a unit, presenting only one thing.

Note that which is to come upon the earth; it is to become empty, turned upside down, "devoured by the curse," "clean dissolved," is to reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed like a cottage. These are very strong expressions; they mean nothing less than utter destruction at the coming of the Lord.

The terms languish, fade away, indicating weakness, sickness, are frequent in this chapter. The verb in the expression "turneth it upside down," means "beset with pain." So in verse 4, "the world languisheth," we have the fact that the earth becomes sick. It is getting old and feeble, hence it staggers and totters, instead of going steadily.

Why does this take place? Verse 5 tells. It is "because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." In the beginning man was given dominion over the earth; not simply over the beasts and birds, and the fishes, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the face of the earth, but over the earth itself. Gen. i. 26. Now when the governor cannot control himself, when he transgresses the laws, and makes them void, what can result but that all that is under him should be out of

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order? The earth sympathises with its lord. Man having lost his dominion, the earth runs wild. The curse eats up the earth, not because God arbitrarily sends it, but because man's disobedience to the laws which he should keep and execute, brings the curse.

"Few men left." Thank God, He sends His messenger before His face, to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the fathers to the children, so that He need not come and smite the earth with utter destruction. See Mal. iv. 5-6. When the Lord has "removed men far away," and there is a "great forsaking in the midst of the land," yet "the holy seed shall be the substance thereof." Isa. vi. 12, 13. Who will be one of the few? "Whosoever will" may come.

Compare verses 21, 22 with Rev. xx. 4-6. At the coming of the Lord all the wicked who are then alive will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. 2 Thess. ii. 8. They cannot endure the sight. A thousand years the earth will lie desolate, while God's people, caught up at Christ's coming, both living and dead made immortal (1 Cor. xv. 51-54; 1 Thess. iv. 13-18) will be with the Lord. At the end of the thousand years the wicked who have been gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, shall be visited. Then will their iniquity be visited upon them, and the earth will be purified, and "the first dominion" will return. Micah iv. 8. "Then the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and before His ancients gloriously."

Note verse 20: "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard," and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it. Here we see plainly that it is the weight of sin, that causes the earth to be removed, even as it does men.

"The earth is clean dissolved." Verse 19. Compare this with 2 Peter iii. 11. Read the whole of this latter chapter, and it will be seen even more clearly that the coming of the Lord is under consideration in the prophecy of Isaiah. But although all these things shall be dissolved at that time, "nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Do not lose sight of the fact that in that day "the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones on high." Verse 21. Compare this with Eph. vi. 12, margin, "wicked spirits in high places." Compare the last part of the second chapter of Isaiah. The day of the Lord is against every thing that is proud and lofty. Let us, then, in order

that we may escape, hide ourselves in Him who is meek and lowly in heart, that the storm may pass over our heads, so that we shall be among those who glorify God from the ends of the earth, and "sing for the majesty of the Lord." Verses 13-15.

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. The Real Spring" *The Present Truth* 15, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

Have you thought why this first season of the year is called "Spring"? Your dictionary will tell you that it is because it is the time when everything "springs or grows," "begins to appear," "to come into being."

The spring is the source or beginning of anything, and this Spring season is the beginning of the new life of the year, the time of the beginning, spring, or birth of the new plants, of insects, birds, lambs, and other living creatures.

The Word of God tells us that Jesus is the real Beginning of all things, the One by whom and from whom all things are brought forth, and come into being, and so He is the true *Spring* of the whole creation of God.

When the father of John the Baptist spoke of the coming of Jesus to our world, he called Him "the Dayspring from on high." Jesus is the Dayspring, or the spring of day. God "called the light Day;" and Jesus said, "*I am, the light.*" He is the spring of the light that makes the day; it all comes from Him, the Sun of Righteousness, the Dayspring.

Think, too, what makes the bright Spring season. It is the earth turning again towards the sun from which it had been turned away all the winter. Then the warm sun causes the buds and leaves to spring from the trees, and the plants and flowers to spring from the ground.

This new springing of all life is caused by the sunlight, and Jesus is the true Light, the real Sun. So He is the Spring, not of the day only, but of the seasons, of all the life and growth, the beauty and fruitfulness, the seedtime and harvest, that the sun brings to our earth.

And as the sun comes nearer and nearer,

"Thou wak'st again, O Earth,

From Winter's sleep;

Bursting with voice of mirth

From icy keep,

And laughing at the sun,

Who hath their freedom won,

Thy waters leap."

But where do these laughing, leaping waters really come from?

"Whence came the river, so strong and clear,

That waters the meadows far and near?

From a clear little spring

Like a lustrous pearl,

Where the mosses cling,

And the fern leaves curl,

On the hill-top's height,
Bubbling up so bright,
Fed by mountain rain,
Without taint, without stain."

But this "clear little spring" "bubbling up so bright" is not the real beginning of the water. Like everything else in all creation, it comes from Jesus, the Beginning, "the fountain of living waters." All the water in the world is His Word, His life, made visible so that we can see it, and drink it, and get life from it. He is the true Spring of the water, just as He is of the light.

Spring is the time of life and motion. The waters that have been bound in "icy keep" are set free by the warm sun, and the streams flow to the rivers, and the rivers rush to the sea. Everything that has been resting and sleeping awakes and *moves*.

The cause of all this movement is life, new life, coming into everything. Jesus is "the Life," and so He is the real cause of all motion.

Look at the hands of a watch or clock, and you will see them gradually moving round the face of it. Although you cannot see what moves them, you know it is the hidden spring that is keeping all the works of the watch moving in perfect order.

Perhaps you think that you can move of yourself, because you are alive, but this is not so, for it is "*in Him*" that "we live and move." The very life that is the spring of all your movements is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of life which, we learned last week, in the beginning "*moved upon the face of the waters.*"

Every movement that has ever been made in this world has been because of the moving of this Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus. Because of this moving of His Spirit, the waters flow, the plants grow, the birds fly and you are able to move and walk and run.

Jesus, from whom all things come, and whose life is in them all, is the hidden an, secret spring that is keeping in order and harmony all the works of His great universe. Nothing moves of itself, because nothing has life in itself, but

"There lives and works

A soul in all things, and that soul *is God.*"

When we think that we can move our selves and go our own way, this is what brings sin and trouble and confusion. So remember always that you have no life or power in yourself, and let Jesus be the Beginning, the Spring, of your every thought and word and act, and move you all the time in just the way that He want you to go.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

-In France there are 1,130,391 foreigners, while in foreign countries there are only 517,000 Frenchmen.

-A sum of 225,000 has been donated to the Royal Geographical Society for the purposes of Antarctic exploration.

-The Paris-Lyons-Mediterranean Railway have tried an electric locomotive of 611 horse-power. The engine drew 100 tons at a speed of nearly seventy miles an hour.

-One steamer is reported at Newfoundland with 42,000 seals. Thirteen other steamers are loaded also with a similar freight, "and the news has caused great rejoicings."

-The Kettering guardians have decided to substitute wood chopping for oakum picking as a task for casuals. This decision was reached after two of the guardians tried the oakum picking themselves.

-A steamer which has been imprisoned in the ice in the Gulf of St. Lawrence for fifty-two days, is still drifting helplessly to and fro, and getting short both of provisions and coal. It is impossible to reach her.

-Severe fighting has taken place between the American troops and the Filipinos, with heavy loss on both sides. The native defences give evidence of considerable military skill, but the Americans are carrying all before them.

-According to a French paper, experiments of a most conclusive character, which have been made with armour-piercing shells, have demonstrated the possibility of a shell passing through the armour of a warship and exploding inside at a given moment.

-Communication between England and France by means of wireless telegraphy has been established. The station on the English side is situated at the South Foreland Lighthouse, and that on the French side near Boulogne. The stations are thirty-two miles apart. Messages passed backwards and forwards with the greatest ease.

-Some of the Socialist members of the French Chamber of Deputies moved that the words "God Protect France" should be removed from the coins of the Republic, and that the Government be requested not to place France under the protection of any divinity. The Minister of Finance said he saw no objection to the motto complained of, though, personally, he was a freethinker, and believed France was able to protect herself. Similar mottoes appeared on the coins of the United States and Switzerland. The motion was rejected.

-The results achieved by the great engineering strike have not yet all been made manifest. Recently one railway company ordered twenty engines from the States, and another company is getting thirty made there. America has also obtained the contract for the bridge at Atbara, as none of the British ironmasters could guarantee delivery within the time specified. The Egyptian government had to wait four months for one small bridge of thirty-one tons ordered in England. This delay is attributed to the block of work caused by the strike. For the same reason, the first lot of engines for the Soudan Railway will come from America.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

An Archdeacon of the Church of England, preaching in Carlisle Cathedral, went to the root of the present Church difficulties in ascribing them to ignorance

of the Scriptures. This is bad enough among the people, but when it is found in those who teach, false doctrines are inevitable. The Archdeacon said,-

At the last ordination in a neighbouring diocese, three candidates for deacon's orders failed to satisfy the examiners, and they all failed in one subject-in knowledge of the Bible. He was persuaded that the mischief which had come upon them had arisen because they had been going away from the Bible. They had not been making the Bible their first and deepest study.

The Christian, commenting on this, says it is true in Nonconformist as well as in Church circles. Religious journals also are to blame because they deal with these questions from almost every standpoint but the right one, of setting forth what the Lord says.

Articles in what were called religious journals took the place of the study of the inspired Epistles and Gospels; and until they went back to the well-spring and the fountain of truth, he saw nothing for it but going on in the same condition of anxiety in which they now found themselves. He read article upon article in newspapers and magazines upon the subject, and not once in fifty times did he find an appeal made to the Word of God in these questions which was disquieting them now. What they wanted was a better trained ministry, and particularly a ministry better trained in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

This clear statement of the cause of Church divisions and errors of doctrine makes clear what is the only hope of amendment. Reform will not come by petitions to Parliament, indignation meetings, violent speeches, and political organisations. The one effectual means is to take up the work which has become neglected and preach the Word of God. It was this that made the Reformation worth anything, and nothing else will save men from the darkness of error. Light is what is needed, and "the entrance of Thy Word giveth light."

Although the world is all the while receiving blessings from God without the least response of gratitude, it is very quick to lay the blame upon Him if anything goes wrong, even when the calamity is entirely due to man's disobedience of His commands. This is instanced in the following extract from the *Spectator*:-

The terrible explosion at Toulon raises once more the old, old question, Why does God permit such events to happen? Here are scores of innocent people killed and injured (some of the latter for life) by an unforeseen and sudden catastrophe, due either to "accident" or, as it is whispered, to some diabolical act of treachery. How can it be justified? If society puts to death the man who causes sets like this, must we not impeach the Providence which permits the act and sustains the arm of the miscreant who effects it? The question is still asked by man whose faith in a divine and beneficent order is shocked by the occurrence of a tragedy which overtakes innocent victims, and who ask in the desolation of their souls, Can God be just?

This is a good specimen of the injustice that underlies all human charges against God. How much was the Creator to blame for the existence of that arsenal at Toulon? Was not its sole purpose the destruction of His creatures? Its premature explosion with small loss of life most likely prevented a much larger number of deaths. Had God's voice been heeded, the arsenal would never have existed, but since God was shut out of the matter, it is not His fault that His

exclusion left the way open for Satanic agencies to precipitate the deadly work which men intended to execute in their own way against their fellows.

Men want to be left free to sin and then to be shielded from the consequence of their wrong-doing. They require God to protect them while they do the devil's work. Because God lets them experience the evil results of their course, they revile Him as unjust. But suppose God did save men from all punishment, that they might follow iniquity unchecked. Every one would be lost, because no one would be compelled to stop and think where he was hastening. God in mercy allows men to see where their course leads, that they may turn back in time. If the explosion of one arsenal and a few sudden deaths can send a thrill of horror through the country, what will happen when the contents of every arsenal are directed with murderous intent and skilled effort at individual lives? Satan is a hard master, and his payment is death. The Lord lets men see it sometimes that they may reconsider whom they will serve.

The complaint against the Sunday newspapers, which are about to be issued, and to which we referred last week, grows in volume. One man writes the following pitiful letter to a religious journal:-

As a bookseller and a large newsagent, I feel it difficult to know what to do. I know what Jesus would do, but I have to consider my business-my only means of livelihood. What effect will these Sunday papers have on my business? I have had several applications to supply the papers, and if I am not prepared to send the Sunday edition, I am not to send it on the other days, my customer will get them where he can get his Sunday edition, the result to me is probably a great loss in business and possibly bankruptcy.

Again, I shall be debarred from work in the Sunday-school. I shall be unable to get to a place of worship-at least on Sunday mornings; I shall be compelled to keep my shop open and send out my paper boys with the papers, and thus my influence as a Sunday-school teacher is destroyed.

The present test is the best thing that could come to this man. He thinks he is a Christian, and working for the Lord, but his business is his god. He will follow where that calls him to go even against his conscience. Such a teacher can have no real influence for good, for acts speak louder than words. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead." God does not ask men to honour Sunday. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord," but those who do not obey the first commandment will not keep the fourth, even though they see clearly that it has never been changed.

A gentleman who has recently visited Rome writes as follows in the *Christian World*:-

Rome would, if she had the power, still force her creeds by fire and faggot. I was talking one day while in Rome with a prelate of the Church on the question of heresy. "As a matter of fact," I said to him, "I could not believe many of your doctrines. They are to me simply unbelievable." "Ah, well," he replied, "we distinguish in cases of heresy." "In what way?" I asked. "Well," he said, "there are two kinds of heresy-there is passive heresy and active heresy. Passive heresy is simply to doubt, but active heresy is to propagate the doubt. In the former case the Church is very merciful." "But," I asked, "suppose you as a Church had

supreme power to-day as you once had, and suppose I felt it my duty to openly oppose certain articles of your faith. What would the Church do?" *"It would stop at nothing to stamp out the heresy,"* was his reply.

There is nothing to be surprised at in this, but there is danger that men will regard Rome as having a monopoly of the persecuting spirit. Persecution began with Cain. It was seen in Ishmael, and it will appear in everyone who is not born of the Spirit. As then, "he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even suit is now." People may think that they will never persecute, but they certainly will unless they be born of the Spirit. Those who do not gather with Christ scatter abroad, and this is persecution. There is no such thing as "passive heresy" against the false doctrines of Rome.

April 13, 1899

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Deliverance of God's People. Isa. xxv. 1-9" *The Present Truth* 15, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXV. 1-9, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. O Jehovah, Thou art my God;
I will exalt Thee; I will praise Thy name;
For Thou hast effected wonderful things;
Counsels of old time, promises immutably
true.
2. For Thou hast made the city an heap;
The strongly fortified citadel a ruin;
The palace of the proud ones, that it should
be no more a city;
That it should never be built up again.
3. Therefore shall the fierce people glorify Thee;
The city of the formidable nations shall fear
Thee.
4. For Thou hast been a defence to the poor;
A defence to the needy in his distress;
A refuge from the storm, a shadow from the
heat;
When the blast of the formidable rages like a
winter storm.
5. As the heat in a parched land, the tumult of
the proud shalt Thou bring low;
As the heat by a thick cloud, the triumph of
the formidable shall be humbled.
6. And Jehovah God of Hosts shall make
For all the peoples, in this mountain,
A feast of delicacies, a feast of old wines;

Of delicacies exquisitely rich, of old wines perfectly refined.

7. And on this mountain shall He destroy
The covering that covered the face of all the peoples;
And the veil that was spread over all the nations.

8. He shall utterly destroy death for ever;
And the Lord Jehovah shall wipe away the tear from off all faces;
And the reproach of His people shall He remove from off the whole earth;
For Jehovah hath spoken it.

9. In that day shall they say,
Behold, this is our God;
We have trusted in Him, and He hath saved us;
This is Jehovah; we have trusted in Him;
We will rejoice, and triumph, in His salvation.

"O Lord, Thou art my God." Whoever says this understandingly, from the heart, has everything. Nothing can make him discontented; nothing can cause him to worry; nothing can make him afraid. Read Ex. xxxiv. 6-7, to find out what the Lord is, and also 1 Chron. xxix. 11-12, and Ps. xcv. 3-5, to learn His power, and then think what an infinite treasure every one has who can say, "O Lord, Thou art my God."

Jehovah is not merely the Being whom we worship, to whom we bow down in reverence as One infinitely above us, but He is ours. He belongs to us, as truly as we belong to Him. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup." Ps. xvi. 5. To as many as receive Christ "gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John i. 12. By believing we become sons of God, "and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." Rom. viii. 17. Through faith we become partakers of the nature of God, just as Christ is one with Him. He is ours to the extent that everything that He has, and everything that He is, belongs to us. We have Him.

It was this knowledge that gave Jehoshaphat and all Israel the victory over a vastly superior force, even before the battle had begun, and when everything seemed against them. They were in an extremity, and there was no earthly prospect that they could escape. Then Jehoshaphat stood in the midst of the congregation of Israel, and said, "Lord God of our fathers, art not Thou God in heaven? and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in Thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand Thee?" 2 Chron. xx. 6. The fact that God is in heaven, shows that He is over all, and does whatever pleases Him. Ps. cxv. 3. Nothing is hard for Him, and no enemy can withstand Him. Therefore when in addition to this Jehoshaphat could say, "Art not Thou our God?" he had the victory already; for since God was his, all who came

against him came also against the Lord; and their overthrow was assured. Accordingly when this prayer of faith had been uttered, the assurance came, "Be

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not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle; set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you." 2 Chron. xx. 15, 17. To God belongs victory; "His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory." Ps. xcvi. 1. When by faith we claim Him as ours, then we prove that faith is the victory that hath overcome the world.

"Thou hast done wonderful things." His name is Wonderful (Isa. ix. 6), so that it is His nature to do wonderful things. He does nothing that is not wonderful. The age of miracles is the age of God. "Who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders; Thou hast declared Thy strength among the people." Ps. lxxvii. 13, 14. "Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to usward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Ps. xl. 5. Therefore let us "sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things." Ps. xcvi. 1. "I will speak of the glorious honour of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works." Ps. cxlv. 5. Here is something to talk about. "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee. They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power." Verses 10, 11. If men would do this all the time, such a thing as discouragement or fear would be unknown.

"Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." Both of these words, "faithfulness" and "truth," are from the one root which we have Anglicised as "amen." The word means firmness, steadfastness, solidity, immovability. So we might read, "Thy counsels of old are amen and amen," or, as Lowth has it, "immutably true." Jesus Christ is "the Amen, the faithful and true witness." Rev. iii. 14. His name also is Counsellor. Isa. ix. 6. So "all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen." 2 Cor. i. 20.

All the promises of God centre in the one great promise, the promise of Christ's coming. He is not slack concerning His promise, even though unbelieving men may think He is. 2 Peter iii. 3, 4, 9. This has been the purpose of God since the world began, and He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Eph. i. 11. His promises are "immutably true." His faithfulness is established "in the very heavens" (Ps. lxxxix. 2), so that as true as the heavens is the promise of Christ's coming. Always true to their appointed times are the heavenly bodies; those who observe their movements, and keep note, know that they will keep their appointments to the very second; even so will it be with Christ's coming in glory to judgment and salvation.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Ps. xli. 1. The children of men take refuge under the shadow of His wing. Ps. xxxvi. 7. "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Ps. xci. 9, 10. The Lord is everything that anybody requires. He is "a refuge from the storm," and "a shadow from the heat," yet He is a sun, even "a consuming

fire" (Heb. xii. 29), and He "hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm." Nahum i. 3. From Him we get light and heat, and also shade. That is, in Him we find evenness of temperature. But those who do not put their trust in Him will be in darkness, and at the same time consumed by the heat. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

The Lord of hosts will make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, that is, all sorts of delicacies. He provides the table for all, and whoever will may come and eat, "without money and without price." "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." Ps. xxiii. 5. Even though the enemy may be coming on in full strength, raging and boasting, and threatening dire calamity, we can quietly sit down and eat. The Lord invites us to His feast, and even when He comes to us as our guest, He provides the food.

"In this mountain." That is, in Mount Zion. See last verse of the preceding chapter. That is God's dwelling-place (Ps. ii. 6; xlviii. 1, 2), and it is there that He has prepared the feast of salvation for all people.

The covering that is cast over all people, and the veil spread over all nations, is to be taken away in Mount Zion. Over all the earth and over all minds and all lives, rests the shadow of the curse. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. iii. 13. It is through the blood of the new covenant, the everlasting covenant, that remission of sins is found. But the god of this world has blinded the minds of all that believe not (2 Cor. iv. 4), and this veil of unbelief keeps the glory of the cross, which swallows up the curse, from shining in. Nevertheless when the heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. The true light now shineth, and whoever will may see light in His light. Even though the majority will not believe, but persist in walking in darkness, the time is coming when even they shall see that God's way is perfect, and shall be compelled by force of evidence to acknowledge that He is just. The covering which has concealed God's gracious working will be removed in the Judgment, and God will stand clear. It will then be too late, however, for any to receive benefit from the light that will shine, since they have rejected light when they might have walked in it.

This veil, the curse, which is even now taken off from all who truly believe, is to be for ever removed from the earth. The very earth itself is to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glory of the liberty of the sons of God. For "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth." Tears will be wiped away, because the cause of tears—sin and death—will be removed. Compare Rev. xxi. 1-5 for further evidence that in the prophecy of Isaiah we have in detail the things that are only briefly mentioned in the New Testament.

"He will swallow up death in victory." Literally, "He will swallow up death in eternity," or for ever. In 1 Cor. xv. 54 we have this same thing quoted, and there the Greek has it plainly, "victory," while in the Hebrew of Isa. xxv. 8 it is just as plainly "eternity." Does this indicate a contradiction, or any lack of harmony in the

two texts?-Not the slightest; it simply shows that the two words mean the same thing. Victory, in order to be really victory, must be eternal. A seeming

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victory, which does not last, is not victory at all. When God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, it is for eternity, for "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever." Eccl. iii. 14.

But the final victory over death is only the present victory over sin, which is the sting of death. The power by which the righteous will be raised from their graves, immortal, is identical with the power by which in their lifetime they were raised above the power of sin. That is the power of Christ's resurrection. It was not possible for death to hold Him (Acts ii. 24), because guile was not found in His mouth. 1 Peter ii. 22. John, in prophetic vision saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, "and with Him an hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads." "And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God." Rev. xiv. 1-5. So we see that there will be found a people over whom death will have no more power than it had over the Lord Jesus. We know that He could not die except by His own will, because He was sinless. In like manner those who "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. xiv. 12) will be superior to death. No man, not even Satan, can take their life from them, and hence they will be translated. Their translation without seeing death is not due to the accident of their being on earth when Christ comes, but to their life of perfect righteousness by faith. There is nothing accidental about it; it is the natural working out of the life of Christ. At any time in the past God's people might have been translated, if at any time it could have been said of them, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

Men are saved only by the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. It is not abstract righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ's real life "unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference" (Rom. iii. 22), that saves us. The instant any man, however sinful he may be, believes on the Lord Jesus, and confesses Him, he is counted righteous. God declares him righteous, and that makes him righteous. If he should die that very hour, as was the case with the thief on the cross, he would be saved, and would appear in heaven as though he had never sinned. Thousands will appear in the kingdom of God without fault, who never in their lifetime knew all the commandments of God, nor all that is involved in the faith of Jesus. Consequently not all the righteousness of the law has been exhibited in their lives. They have unconsciously been living in violation of some precepts of the law, but from all these secret, hidden faults they have been cleansed. But these have learned the lesson of submission to God, and were willing to serve Him. They can be taken to heaven, therefore, they will make no break in its harmony, for the instant they see the fullness of God's righteousness they will embrace it with joy.

But if all the righteous were saved in this way there would be an opportunity for the accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God day and night (Rev. xii. 10), to say that it is impossible for God to make men absolutely perfect in this world; that He is obliged to take them to heaven, and get them out of the

reach of Satan's temptations, in order to make them perfectly righteous. To be sure, he can be confronted with the case of Christ, who lived an absolutely perfect life, in spite of all Satan's temptations; but he would evade the force of that by saying, as men, and even Christian men, do now, that Christ was different from other men. Therefore, in order to show that Christ was here in this world with no advantages over other men, and that what God did by Him, He is able to do for all, to exalt the power of God, to show that Christ has power over all flesh, and effectually to stop the mouths of all gainsayers, God will not send Jesus the second time until He can point to a people who, like Jesus, are absolutely without fault, and who, surrounded by sin, and subject to Satan's onslaughts, live entirely above the power of sin and death. They will be complete possessors of the victory that hath overcome the world. Thus will not only the mouths of all the wicked be stopped, but there will be given the perfect witness of God's power to salvation, which will draw many in the last days from the world to God.

It is eternity-eternal life-that swallows up death. Absolutely perfect faith means perfect knowledge of God's Word, because "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. x. 17. "The just shall live by faith," so that perfect faith means perfect life,-the life of Jesus manifest in our mortal flesh. When this is experienced, the individual will be delivered from all diseases, even though in weak, mortal flesh, with disease attacking him, just the same as he will be delivered from all sin, even while beset and in heaviness by manifold temptations. Thus will Christ and those whom God gives Him be for signs and wonders. They will walk unscathed in the midst of raging pestilence, just as the three Hebrews did in the burning, fiery furnace, because "the form of the fourth" is with them. And this will be not only in the time when the plagues of the unmingled wrath of God are falling on the reprobate, but before men have made their final decision, so that the witness will tell for the salvation of many. It is just as easy for God to make a man perfectly whole now, and to keep him so, as it is to keep him alive at all; for it is the one life that does all.

In that day shall they say "Behold, this is our God, we have trusted in Him, and He hath saved us." Not merely, "He will save us," but, "He hath saved us." A present, complete salvation is the assurance of future salvation. All that is necessary for anybody to be able to say is, "The Lord has saved me, and He saves me now." Keep trusting, and the salvation will continue. Those who have become acquainted with the Lord, will know Him when He comes. The Lord Himself will come, and He will not be a stranger. "We will rejoice, and triumph in His salvation," because we have trusted in Him, and have proved the power of that salvation. But the power of the salvation now is worth rejoicing over just as much as it will be at the coming of the Lord. Therefore "rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice" (Phil. iv. 4), because it is with rejoicing that the redeemed of the Lord come to Zion, the mountain of God.

"Bible Society in Philippines" *The Present Truth* 15, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

The British and Foreign Bible Society has been the first to avail itself of the new opening in the Philippines. Almost at once after Manila was occupied by the United States forces, the agent was on the ground, and secured a place for a Bible depository, though not without strong opposition from the priests. The first day he sold twenty Spanish Bibles, seventeen Testaments, forty-eight copies of the Gospels in separate form, one English Bible, and one Testament, and subsequent experiences have proved that the time is ripe for effort. Several mission boards are planning to enter the islands, but thus far no work has been organised there.

"Studies from the Gospel of John. Words of Comfort. John xiv. 1-14"
The Present Truth 15, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

John xiv. 1-14

"I WILL COME AGAIN"

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Jesus was personally present with His disciples when He spoke these words. He had been with them in bodily form for several years, and they had looked upon Him and handled Him, and had walked and talked with Him in loving companionship. His presence was as real as their own, and they delighted in it. But now He had told them plainly that He was going away, and that they could not follow Him. This had filled their hearts with sorrow; for they had yielded to the powerful attraction of Jesus, and since He had first said to them "Follow Me," to be with Him had been their joy. Now they felt as children do when the loved and loving mother is taken from them. They were in great heaviness of heart, and therefore Jesus spoke the comforting words that we have just read.

"The glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ," is the "blessed hope" of all His true disciples. Titus ii. 13. It is the comfort for all who mourn loved ones who have fallen in death. The words of the Apostle, direct from the Lord Himself, are: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air;

and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore *comfort one another with these words.*" 1 Thess. iv. 13-18.

One more text will be sufficient for the promise of His coming. Forty days after His resurrection, Jesus led His disciples out of Jerusalem "as far as to Bethany," telling them of the power by which they were to be witnesses to Him: "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have Been Him go into heaven." Acts i. 9, 10.

Looking at these statements, we see clearly that Jesus will come again, and that His coming will be as literal as was His first advent, "This same Jesus" is to return again. It is to be no secret coming, no snatching away of His people by stealth. No; the "voice of the Archangel and the trump of God" will make known the second coming of Christ, and every eye must see Him, whether it wishes to or not (Rev. i. 7), "for as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man." Matt xxiv. 27.

OBJECT OF CHRIST'S COMING

This is the all-important thing. Why will He come? What necessity is there for it. That His coming is necessary, is evident, since the Lord does nothing in vain. He will not come in all the pomp and splendour of heaven, with all His angels, and with earth-shaking peals of the trumpet, for nothing. The object is plainly stated in our text. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Take this in connection with the statement to the disciples, recorded in the preceding chapter (verse 36), "Whither I go, thou canst not follow [or, go with] Me now but thou shalt follow Me afterwards," and we see that no word could make it plainer that only by the second coming of Christ in glory can His disciples be with Him again. It is not only those who chance to be living when He shall come, that He takes to Himself, but the eleven to whom He was talking. They can never be with their Master again, except by His coming again to receive them. Until He comes, they are away from Him.

Here is where the comfort comes in. When it is known that none can be with Christ except by His second coming, then everybody who loves the Lord will also love His appearing. That none can be with Christ in any other way, is evident from the whole Bible. The dead are not with Christ, for "the dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Ps. cxv. 17. "In death there is no remembrance of the Lord." Ps. vi. 5. "The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they anymore a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Eccl. ix. 5, 6. The old hymn tells us that "death is the gate to endless joy," but the Bible tells us that death is an enemy. 1 Cor. xv. 26. Since it is an enemy, we may know that it does not admit us to heaven, and the hymn is false.

Moreover "death came by sin." Rom. v. 12. If it were true that death is the gate to endless joy, then it would follow, since death came by sin, that sin admits men to heaven; but that is so palpably false and unscriptural that no one with any respect for the Bible can hold it. Still further: the devil is the one who has the power of death. Heb. ii. 14. Now if death were the way to be with Christ, and the gate of heaven, then we should have the devil as the gate-keeper of heaven! "But that is too monstrous for consideration. So we must accept the common-sense, Scriptural fact, that death is an enemy,

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the great enemy, of the human race, and that Christ came to deliver us from it. He came to destroy death, and him that had the power of death. Through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, the power of death, yea, death itself, is destroyed, and Christ's second coming is simply the consummation of Calvary. He comes for the salvation of His people. Isa. xxxv. 4.

We see friends sicken and die. We see them carried; cold and to the grave, and every tear that is shed, and every funeral train and procession of mourners gives the lie to the statement that death is a friend. One may say it as a matter of theology, but when he meets it face to face he gives involuntary testimony to the fact that it is a bitter, cruel enemy. At such times the heathen cannot but break out into wild wailing; for death has no hope in it. But the Christian, while he must sorrow for the lose of loving companionship, cannot sorrow as those who have no hope, for Christ's coming gives hope in death. He will come. This is the comfort for those who mourn. Loved ones who have been separated by death shall thus be united; for at the sound of the trumpet the dead shall be raised incorruptible, then-the living, also made immortal, shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. That is the only way, and that is what makes the promise of Christ's coming such blessed comfort.

Even with the Lord! Yes, that is the comfort. Friends; are to be united at the coming of the Lord, but only the presence of the Lord will make that a joyful meeting. We long for His coming in order that we may be with Him. He is coming to receive us to Himself. Do not lose sight of that. It is Christ alone who can sanctify all earthly friendships. "Love is of God." Therefore it is only the fact that we shall ever be with the Lord, that will make the meeting with friends a heaven. His presence outshines everything else. Without Him friends would be enemies.

PREPARING A PLACE

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." He knows when the place is prepared for His people; we do not. He has said that when the place is prepared He will come for us; we must believe that He will keep His word. Suppose for a moment that we had the power to do as we pleased, and should go to heaven before Christ's second coming; we should find no place ready for us. We should be in the embarrassing position of guests coming before the appointed time. But there is no danger that anybody will be in

that position; for we have the assurance of Christ's words, that the only way we can go to be with Him is for Him to come again and take us. Knowing this, all His true disciples will join in the prayer of the beloved disciple: "Come, Lord Jesus."

THE WAY

Yet we are in danger of making that petition misunderstandingly. We are in danger of forgetting that Christ is the way to the heavenly mansions; that none can attain to the resurrection of the just except those who are "found in Him" at His coming, not having their own righteousness, "but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. iii. 9. No man cometh to the Father, to the place where God sits "in light that no man can approach unto," except by Christ, who hath once "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." 1 Peter iii. 18. But in order that we may at the last day and so on throughout eternity be able to stand before God and see His face, we must now draw near. Even now must we dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and full provision for this has been made, for now, even "and so on throughout eternity be able to stand before God and see His face, we must now draw near, even "*now* in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph. ii. 13. "Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." We must come to God and become acquainted with Him before we can see Him; and Christ is the way.

Oh, what depth and breadth of comfort there is in those words of Jesus, "I am the way"! We have all sinned, "all gone out of the way," and know not how to find God. We would gladly return to the Father's house, but we know not the way. Jesus says, "I am the way." His name is Immanuel, God with us, and He is with us all the days, even unto the end of the world, so that although we may wander far from God, behold, the way back to Him is close beside us. Though we wander out of the way, it goes with us, so that even while we may be fleeing from the way, the way is seeking us; for "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke xix. 10. What a wonderful way is this, that itself seeks the wanderer! How easy it is to find our way back to God! "I am the way." You do not know how to do that which you would? Jesus is the way. "I have a frightful temper, and don't know how to get the victory over it."

"I am the way." You do not know how to do that which you would? Jesus is the way. "I have a frightful temper, and don't know how to get the victory over it." "I am the way." Are you overburdened with cares, and know not how to accomplish the tasks that *must* be done? Still Jesus says, "I am the way." Would you learn the best way of doing the work to which you are called, so that you can be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed"? Jesus is the way. He knows how to do that of which you know nothing; and that which you know how to do well, He knows how to do better. And not only does He know how to do it, so that He can teach you, but He is the way to do it, for He is the life.

THE LIFE

Christ is the life, as well as the way, therefore He is the living way. We cannot get the benefit of Christ as the way, unless we know Him as the life. He is the Word of life, the light of men. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." In other words, "the life was manifested, and we have seen it." There is no real life but the life of Christ-Christ Himself. His life-He Himself-is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He has for ever identified Himself with humanity, that man may for ever be made one with Divinity. He has taken all mankind upon Himself, and is the bearer of all the burdens of humanity. His life given freely to every soul, is the way from sin to righteousness. It is the victory.

Altogether too much is Christ kept at a distance. He is near, but men persist in building up barriers which God has broken down. The middle wall of partition between man and God has been broken down and taken away in the flesh of Christ, so that every man may be, if he will, what Christ is. "The Word was made flesh," and He has "abolished in His flesh the enmity," even the fleshly mind. Now He was made our flesh. "There is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds." 1 Cor. xv. 39. It was the flesh of men that Christ took. It was the flesh

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of sinful men that He took, for He was "made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Rom. i. 4. Yet He "knew no sin." 2 Cor. v. 21. "He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." 1 John iii. 5. If therefore we will believe, and acknowledge, and hold to, the truth that Christ is our life, we shall find in reality that "as He is so are we in this world." 1 John iv. 17.

"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." 1 John iv. 2. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. x. 9. How shall we confess the Lord Jesus? What shall we confess about Him?-Confess the truth, namely, that He is come in the flesh, even in our own sinful flesh. Reckon ourselves to be dead, and Him alone to be alive-*the life*. Then will all things be of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ. Then it will no longer be we who profess to be living, and bunglingly trying to manage our own affairs, but Christ who actually lives, and who successfully does the will of God in us. The connection between us and Christ must be a vital one, if we would walk in the way. It must not be simply a joining of hands, that He may lead us in the way, but a union of hearts and lives. We must be lost in Him. Remember that *He is the way*; therefore if we would walk in the right way, we must live in Him. The identification between us and Him must be complete. What wondrously glorious possibilities there are for us in the fact that Christ is the way and the life-the living way. Let Him do it, and all will be well.

THE TRUTH

Jesus is the truth. He says, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "If the Son therefore shall set you free, ye shall be free indeed." John viii. 31, 32,

36. Thus we see that the Son is the truth which makes free. Only He can give freedom, for nothing but the truth can make men free. Apart from the truth there is only bondage. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold down the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. i. 18, R.V. That is to say that God's wrath is manifested against the ungodliness of those who repress Christ, and refuse to let Him live His perfect life in them. This corroborates the statement that Christ is in every sinful man, ready and anxious to make His life perfect. The fact that a man lives and has breath, which he may use in denying the existence of God, is proof of the presence of God in his flesh. And He is there not to condemn or destroy, but to save. The fact that He stays there and endures all the abuse and shame that is heaped upon Him, proves His forbearance and longsuffering and love. If therefore one will simply "give up," let go of himself, the truth-the life of Christ-will just as surely manifest itself in him, and will be his life, as grain will grow when good seed is sown in the ground. God has made the way of truth so easy and simple that there is no excuse for those who do not walk in it.

Christ is *the truth*. There is no other. There is no truth in the universe that is not true simply because it is some part of the manifestation of Christ. And there is nothing true that is not in Him. Now it is evident that that which is not true does not really exist. We admit this when we say, "It is not so." When God made all these things, He created them by His Word. He said, "Let it be," "and it was so," that is, it came into being. That which is not so has only a fictitious existence. It *seems* to be, but the end will show that it is not. If sought for, it cannot be found. In the Sanscrit, from which our language originates, the word for "truth" means simply "that which is." Christ is; His name is "I AM," and so He is "the truth."

There are men who deny Christ, the truth. How much do such men really know?-Nothing. This is plain enough if we stick to the text. The truth is that which is. But no one can know that which is not. Nobody can know that a thing is so when it is not so. Suppose now, as often happens, that a man has spent a long time diligently studying, and thinks that he has reached a profound conclusion, and it turns out that there is not a word of truth in all that he has been studying. His supposed facts are only fancies. What has he gained? How much does he know as the result of his studies?-Simply nothing. So we see that only in Christ are to be found "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." He is the Author and perfecter of faith, and only by faith can we understand. That which is, is the thing that hath been, and which will be. Christ is the One "which was, and which is, and which is to come." The truth endures for ever, simply because *it is*, and therefore, whosoever doeth the truth, or abides in the truth, abides for ever. Men may think that they can acquire vast stores of the wisdom, and yet deny Christ, that is, deny Him in their lives, deny His right to be their life; but all their seeming knowledge will at the last perish with them, showing that both it and they were in reality nothing. Then will it be demonstrated that only in Christ, in knowing Him, can men know anything. Therefore become acquainted with Christ.

THE WORD AND THE WORK

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father which dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John xiv. 10. Note the change in expression, showing that the Word is the work. We should naturally expect the sentence to run thus: "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father which dwelleth in Me, He speaketh them." And this is what Christ really said, for whenever God speaks something is done. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made." Ps. xxxiii. 6.

Now read John viii. 28, and find the counterpart of the verse in our lesson, "When you have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am (He), and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things." In the first text quoted, we read that Jesus does not speak His own words, but that the Father does the works; in this we read that Jesus does not do the works Himself, but that the Father speaks in Him. Thus we see that the Word and the work of God are one and the same thing. If the Word of God abides in us, then the works of God will be manifested. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." John vi. 29.

GREAT WORKS AND GREATER WORKS

Here is one of the positive assurances of Jesus, that are specially noted by John "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." John xiv. 12. How can this be? Do not ask; for just as no man can by searching find out God, so no man can expect to

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understand how He works, and so of course no one can hope to know how the works of God are wrought in him. The fact is enough for us. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13. Christ was not a monstrosity, a freak of nature, a unique specimen of humanity, never to be paralleled. No; He is "*the Man*." He was sent into the world in order that all might have before them an example of a perfect Man, and as a proof that God can make such men. Only as we arrive at "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," do we come to "a perfect man." Eph. iv. 13. God has put into us the same word of reconciliation that was in Christ (2 Cor. v. 19); and as it is the word that works, it follows that the same works will be done by those in whom the Word dwells as were done by Christ. Christ's ministry of reconciliation is committed to us. We are now to appear before the world "in Christ's stead," as witness for Him, that through us the world may believe in the existence of Christ. This being the case, it follows that the same works that He did must be done.

"But we don't see them done now." That makes no difference with the truth of Christ's words. It only shows how little faith there is even in the church. Men have been too slow to understand the wondrous possibilities embraced in the faith of Jesus. When we receive "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him," then we shall "know what is the hope of His calling," and "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe according to the

working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." Eph. i. 17-20. Why not receive that Spirit now?

But what about the "greater works" than those which Christ did? What are they? and how is it possible for us to do them? To both these questions we can only say that we do not know. Moreover it is not likely that we ever will know. Certainly we shall never know *how* the works are done, for it is only by God's almighty skill that they are wrought. If we cannot know how the least works are done, we certainly cannot know how the greatest are done. We do know that the just will come up to the day of judgment totally unconscious of many good deeds that they have done. Matt. xxv. 37, 38. What mortal man could endure the knowledge that he was doing greater works than Christ did? If he should think such a thing, the thought itself would lift him up above his Lord and Master, and would ensure his fall. So we must be content and even glad not to know how or what God works in us. The root, buried in the soil, cannot see the glorious fruit that is borne through its faithful ministry, but it works steadily in the place assigned it, content simply to be what God will have it; even so it should be with us. Our part is to trust; God is then responsible for results.

IN HIS NAME

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." John xiv. 13, 14. A most wonderful promise, and yet a most natural one, when we think what it means to pray in the name of Jesus.

In the first place; it does not mean simply the repetition of the word Jesus. That would be but mockery. In Acts xix. 13-16 we have an instance of the uselessness of that. The name of Jesus is not to be used as a charm. There is power in it, but it is not the power of magic.

We are to pray in His name. That is, we are to be in the name, and the name is Himself. We are to come, not in our own name and person, but in the name and Person of Jesus of Nazareth. We are not to personate Him, however. Such a fraud would quickly be detected. No; we are to be left entirely out of the question. We are not worthy to approach the throne of God. People say, "I am so unworthy: I am not fit to come into God's presence." Very well, provision has been made for all such cases. We know that Christ is worthy. "In the days of His flesh" He "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard." Heb. v. 7. God never turned away the prayer of His only begotten Son, even "in the days of His flesh," when He was clothed with our sinful flesh: Everything that He asked was granted. Let us therefore confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh-our flesh. Let us deny ourselves,-deny our own existence,-and acknowledge Him as the only One who liveth. Then it is "not I, but Christ" who approaches the throne of God. Then the answer to our prayers is assured beforehand; for it was for deliverance from our sins that He prayed. Coming thus in His name, we are as sure of receiving the things that we ask for as He was.

Our sins were upon Him, and they are upon Him still, for He is still in the flesh, and is still praying for us. The burden of the world's sin was upon Him, and from this He prayed to be delivered. So we can leave ourselves out of the question, and be lost in pity for Christ, as we see Him struggling under the load of sin. Then our pity moves us to make an unselfish prayer, "for the sake of Jesus." Oh, that he may be delivered from the oppressive load, and may receive His heart's desire! We make common cause with Him. The prayer is heard. He is delivered. But lo, it was our sin that He bore, and as we prayed for deliverance "for Jesus' sake," that He might be freed, our sin was removed, and deliverance came to us. Thus His victory is our joy. We prayed in His name, and the Father could not but grant the petition. But it is self-evident that no prayer "in the name of Jesus" can ever be selfish.

The name of God is in Christ. Ex. xxiii. 21. So when we pray in the name of Jesus, we are presenting God's own name as the Surety. With what delight then we read the assurance, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." That is a commandment, say you? True; but you must know that in Christ all the commandments of God are blessed promises. Truly, "His commandments are not grievous." "In keeping of them there is great reward."

"Little Folks. The Gospel of the Spring. The Equinox" *The Present Truth* 15, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

THE EQUINOX

What does this word "Equinox" mean? perhaps you ask. You may have heard it talked about lately, as we have just passed what is called the "Vernal" or Spring "Equinox."

It is made up of two meaning "equal nights." Latin words meaning "equal nights." About the 21st of March the days and nights all over the world are just equal, each about twelve hours long, and this is called the time of "equal nights," or the "Equinox."

But after this the days and nights get more and more *unequal*. The part of the earth that we live on the North, passes more and more into the sunlight and the days get longer. The South passes away from the sun, and the days get shorter and shorter; until, when it is midsummer with us, the longest day, it is midwinter in the South with the shortest day.

Then we pass again to the time of "equal nights." About the 23rd of September is the "Autumnal Equinox," when the days and nights are of the same length all over the world again. But after this the South passes into the sunlight, and we pass away from it. Midsummer in the South, their longest day, is our midwinter, the time of short days and long nights.

Now let us think for a little while what it is that makes these changes,-that governs the length of the day all over the world, and makes the four seasons, Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter.

You will remember that when God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament," He said also, "Let them be for signs, and for *seasons* and for *days* and *years*." And you know that the *year* is the exact time which it takes the earth to make its journey round the sun.

But this alone does not make the *seasons*; for if the earth were to travel round the sun in a perfectly upright position, there would be no change whatever. The days and nights would be always and everywhere just the same length, and some parts of the earth would have nothing but winter, while in other parts there would be continual summer.

The temperature in the part of the earth that we live on would always be what it is about the time of "equal nights," the end of March and of September. There would never be heat enough to bring any of the fruits of the earth to perfection. So much of the plant and animal life of the world would be impossible.

To what, then, does the earth owe its changing seasons which bring in their turn "cold and heat, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest"? It is to what is called "the inclination of the earth's axis" about which you have most likely learned something in your geography lessons.

Instead of being perfectly upright, the earth inclines, or leans, always towards the North. The North Pole, the uppermost part of the earth, points always to the North Star. Because of this the North Pole is sometimes turned towards the sun, and sometimes away from it, and this has an effect upon the whole earth, and brings the change of seasons all over the globe.

Stick a knitting needle through a ball of wool, or a pencil through a ball of string, and draw this round in a circle with the upper point of the needle turned all the time towards one particular object, and you will see that every part of the ball will be a part of the time turned towards the centre of the circle, and part of the time away from it.

Do you see then to what we owe the life and fruitfulness of the earth? It is to this secret drawing influence, this attraction from that part of the heavens that we call "the North," that turns the earth always towards it. It is this same drawing power from the North that makes the needle of the compass point always in that direction.

God's Word teaches us that "the North," "the uttermost North," is the dwelling-place of God, "the secret place of the Most High," from which He governs the whole universe. So it is from God Himself that this sweet influence comes, attracting and drawing the earth, making it incline to Himself. "He hangeth the earth upon nothing," and by His Spirit He guides and holds it in just the position in which it will get the greatest benefit from the life-giving rays of the sun.

Not our earth only, but all the great worlds that God has made He is upholding and drawing to Himself, and guiding in just the way that will bring them the greatest good.

This same sweet influence which attracts the earth towards God, is drawing every one, even every little child, who lives upon it, to Himself. As you feel this sweet influence moving upon your heart, drawing you to turn to God, to love Him,

and to give yourself to Him, do not resist His gentle pleadings and grieve His loving Spirit.

Let Him turn you fully towards Himself, and guide you in all your ways, to bring the greatest blessing and happiness to you, and to make you a blessing to all around you.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

-A whale, fourteen feet in length, was captured in the Trent, forty miles inland.

-The new Russian ice-breaker has started its career very auspiciously. It went easily through drift ice about five feet thick.

-England, Germany, and the United States have agreed to submit their differences in Samoa to a tripartite Commission.

-A young lady in Philadelphia had her hand permanently injured by the squeeze a gentleman gave it when shaking hands with her. She sued him for damages and was awarded \$2,000.

-The passenger steamer *Stella*, struck on the Carquet Rocks during a dense fog on her voyage to Guernsey, and was lost. The survivors suffered terribly from exposure, having spent the night in open boats. Between seventy and eighty lives were lost.

-An assault by Turks upon a Bulgarian position has been repulsed with some slaughter. There are persistent rumours of impending trouble between the two countries, and it is generally expected that there will soon be another outbreak of war in the Balkans.

-The *Lancet* attacks a statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the effect that the people of the United Kingdom would be better off if more beer and less spirits were drunk. The *Lancet* asserts that beer-drinking in itself is as bad as spirit-drinking, and that the increase in the consumption of beer tends to an increase in the consumption of spirits.

-Coal has been found in Kent at various places in strata of considerable depth. It is not clear yet whether the coal exists in paying quantities, but the indications are that it does, and if this turns out to be the case, it will exert a marked influence on the future of Kent.

-A well-known French Deputy has issued a report in which he professes to prove by evidence obtained at first hand that nine out of ten of the Parisian beggars are impostors. The blind men, he says, can see well enough when the time comes to count their day's takings.

-An expedition on an unusually large scale will leave Russia at the end of April for the exploration of East Central Asia. The Czar has contributed \$6,000 to the funds. The expedition will travel through Thibet, devoting itself to scientific studies, especially to the surveying of those regions not yet accurately mapped.

-Malolos, the capital of the insurgent Filipinos, has been captured after slight resistance, and occupied by the American troops. The insurgents, before retreating to the north, set the town on fire. It is understood that the Americans

will not pursue the Filipinos into their mountain fastnesses during the rainy season.

-Bull-fighting has been revived in Havre. It is over thirty years ago since the people of that town closed the arena, and it is only after long negotiations with the municipality that leave has been obtained to reopen it. Some 8,000 spectators were present at the first performance. The bull-fights will be held every Sunday, and the organisers hope to make big profits from English visitors.

-The recent "lease" of territory at Hong Kong to the British Government is now considered insufficient, and a proposition for the acquirement of a larger piece of ground has been submitted to the Tsung-li-Yamen. To ensure due consideration for the suggestion, it has been accompanied by an intimation that in the event of a refusal, the existing Chinese customs establishments will be removed from British territory.

-The Viceroy of India, speaking at Lyallpur, the centre of the most recent Panjaub irrigation scheme, said that four years ago, the town, now a flourishing market, was a barren uninhabited jungle. In six years 1,000,000 acres had been brought under cultivation, at a capital outlay of ?1,500,000 sterling. It is now estimated that the total value of the crops in a single year equals the capital cost of the entire works. There is also a population of 200,000, where six years ago there were no inhabitants.

-A Temperance Congress has been opened at Paris. It is divided into three sections, the first of these being scientific and medical. The social, political and legislative aspects of the question stand apart. The educational side is left to future discussion. The congress will take as its maxim the absolute elimination of alcohol as an essential factor in human diet. The criminal tendencies of over-drinking will probably be the most interesting feature of the congress. Dr. J. H. Kellogg, whose name is well known to our readers, is attending the congress as a delegate.

-The authorities in South Africa object to natives being brought to England from there for the purpose of taking part in mimic combats and savage sports. It is said that after the natives return they exercise a bad influence over their people. They are merely overgrown children, and go home completely spoilt. A number of Zulus who were enraged at a London entertainment were engaged in a London entertainment were having enough when they left Durban, where mere of them had been in civilised employment for years, but they came back ferocious drunkards.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

The concluding portion of "In Gethsemane," by Mrs. E. G. White, which began last week, will appear in our next issue.

That which keeps men from receiving God's blessings in larger measure is the selfish use they make of those they do receive. Not passing on to others what they receive, they cannot develop in Christian experience, and are content to be ministered unto instead of being ministers.

Christ was faithful in all things, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God. No good that He enjoys is retained to minister to His own pleasure, or uphold His own dignity, but is given freely to all. He had everything that heart could wish, yet He emptied Himself, and, taking the form of a servant, became obedient unto death, even the, death of the cross. It was His joy to serve others, and it is when He sees others saved that His soul is satisfied.

Because this mind was in Christ, God could safely commit everything into His hands, knowing that the power would be used to bless others. So God hath given to Him a name which is above every name. But this is not the end. We are not to think of Christ as having gained the position He coveted, and to secure which He suffered Himself to be humiliated for awhile. He is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Therefore He remains a servant in heart still.

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel." Acts v. 31. But it is the goodness of God that leads man to repentance (Rom. ii. 4), therefore the more highly Christ is exalted, the more will He continue to show forth the goodness of God in His dealings with us.

Satan is the king of Babylon, so that every one who is in any way subject to Satan is in Babylon. But no one need remain there. There is a way of escape for all, for the message of the everlasting Gospel to every nation is that "Babylon is fallen." Rev. xiv. God calls men out, that they may not be partakers of her sins, and that they receive not of her plagues. Rev. xviii. 4. "Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing; declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob." Isa. xlviii. 20.

We noted last week some statements by an archdeacon on the ignorance of the Bible among candidates for the church. Dean Farrar is reported to have said a few days ago at a conference of schoolmasters, held at Canterbury,

He was fairly amazed at times at the ignorance which children and youths and men showed on the subject of the Bible. He constantly found amazing ignorance of the simplest facts and principles of the Bible, and he had found that very strikingly in candidates for Holy Orders when he acted for some years as examining chaplain to the Bishop of Worcester.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking later, said
he knew repeated instances of man who was sent out from the Universities as examiners who were not fit to examine in religious knowledge.

This is hardly to be wondered at when the pulpit is so full of infidelity, and uses its influence to make the Word of God subordinate to the speculations and reasonings of man. The Archbishop himself has publicly asserted the fallibility of the Scriptures, quoting a discrepancy, which was palpably due to an error in copying, to back up his statement that the writers of some of the books of the Bible were not trustworthy, although their intentions were honest. When the most highly placed official of the Church of England prefers not to accept an easy and natural explanation why a certain figure is given as seven in one book of the Bible and three in another, it is not strange that examiners and teachers and pupils should conclude that it is waste of time to study a book which is

untrustworthy. If parents and teachers and ministers sow the seeds of doubt, they must not expect to reap a harvest of faith.

The following is taken from a leading daily paper:-

The Trust system in America has attained gigantic dimensions since the close of the Spanish-American war. So rapid has been its growth and so widespread its operation during the last year that a complete change has been brought about in the industrial system of the United States. Today in America all the chief industries of modern life, except farming and banking, are concentrated into the hands of fifty-four great combinations, controlling between them some three hundred and sixty-six million pounds of capital. Such enormous aggregations of wealth and the power that wealth brings in the hands of a few may seem to be a direct menace to labour all the world over. But the amalgamation of millionaire interests promote as nothing else can the real solidarity of labour.

And when millionaire interests are consolidated, and the solidarity of labour secured, what will be the position? Each will form a powerful army, and there will be war to the death. "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces." Isa. viii. 9.

The Scriptures recognise that there will be oppression of the poor by the rich in the last days. But the Lord judges the cause of the poor. In this is their only hope. "Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth." James v. 4. The Lord hates oppression, but when the labourers organise, that they may oppress their oppressors, they take their case out of the Lord's hand. He cannot approve or support their course.

"Shall men sit down tamely then under oppression?" If they commit their cause to God they may be quite sure that all that God can do for them will be done. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." "For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts [the Lord of sabaoth] Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." Isa. viii. 11-13. Labour organisations may have good objects, but they often work hardships on those whose interests they seek. There is only one Union which will never fail to secure its objects, and which will never work an injury to its members, its resources are sufficient for every struggle, and no applicant for membership is refused. "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, *even as we are One*: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one." John xvii. 22, 23.

April 20, 1899

"Sowing to the Flesh" *The Present Truth* 15, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

"The sower soweth the Word." Mark iv. 14. This is true of every one who sows could seed, for "the seed is the word of God." Luke viii. 11. Every grain of wheat is descended from the words spoken at creation, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the urban yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth." Gen. i. 11. Since all of these were to continue "after his kind," all seed which is sown is just as much the word of God now as it was before God gave a body as it pleased Him to the words which He spoke to the earth.

Every one therefore who looks upon the grains of wheat, or the bread which is made from them, has before him the word of God. We know that this seed when sown will grow and multiply, and that when taken into our bodies it imparts life, and we may know just as certainly that the same word will spring up and bear fruit in us, and sustain our spiritual life. Being the word of God, which could create a perfect man, body, soul, and spirit, we may know that this word is not only physical but spiritual food. 1 Cor. x. 3.

This is not an unimportant matter, to be looked upon merely as an interesting thought presented by the scriptures, but without practical bearing on a man's salvation. It is of vital importance. Every time we put food into our bodies we are sowing seed, which will bear fruit after his kind. If we sow that which is pure and healthful, we shall enjoy a harvest of health and vigour. If we eat that which is polluted, decaying, and lacking in the elements of real food, we shall reap feebleness, disease and decay.

But this is not the only consideration. If we take the food merely as the beasts do, without recognising that it is spiritual food, adapted to sustain our spiritual life, it will not profit us. "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 8. Corruption means decay and death, and this is all that a man gets who eats merely to continue the life of the flesh. This is because death is the portion of the flesh. "For the minding of the flesh is death." Rom. viii. 6, margin.

Jesus Christ is the life of the world. In Him all things were created, and it is in Him that all things consist. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin." Therefore the man who eats to sustain the body, eats to sustain that which is dead because of sin. Of course he reaps corruption. Well, if the body is dead, why eat at all? "The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Rom. viii. 10. Let the food be eaten for the maintenance of the life of the Spirit, and he that soweth to the Spirit shall reap life everlasting. But the food for the Spirit must be spiritual food,

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and this God gives us freely, for all food that, imparts His life is spiritual, because "God is Spirit."

Perhaps some will say, "But if we have the spirit of God we do not need to be fed." Many make this mistake. Being converted, and receiving the Spirit, they think that this will keep them right, and that they can, without serious loss, neglect Bible study and prayer. But they are wrong. They must be continually receiving the Spirit, for God is always giving it afresh in His Word and the numberless channels by which He communicates His life to man. Those who

continually receive the Lord in His gifts, do not walk after the flesh but after the Spirit. They reckon themselves to be dead with Christ, but yet alive because He is raised from the dead and lives in them. Gal. ii. 20. Thus they know the power of His resurrection (Phil. iii. 10), and with power give witness to it. Acts iv. 33.

Those whose mortal bodies, though dead with Christ, are yet made alive by His Spirit dwelling in them (Rom. viii. 11), have no occasion to eat for the sake of that which is dead. Having put on the Lord Jesus Christ, they make no provision for the flesh. Rom. xiii. 14. They eat by faith, discerning the Lord's body, and whatsoever they do in word or deed, they do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Col. iii. 17. They are dead unto sin but alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, makes them free from the law of sin and death. They are born of the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, they do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh. Gal. v. 16. When Christians recognise that it is Christ who lives in them, they will not eat or drink anything that they would not set before the Saviour if He were their guest.

"Studies from the Gospel of John. The Comforter. John xiv. 15-27" ***The Present Truth 15, 16.***

E. J. Waggoner

John xiv. 15-27

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments."

Who is there that sees anything severe or arbitrary in this requirement? If there be such an one, it is because he does not know the character of the Lord. Suppose you have a dear friend who is going to a distant land to be gone several years. You are sad at the thought of parting, but he comforts you with the assurance that he will come again, and that then he will remain with you; and then, putting a likeness of himself into your hands, he says, "If you love me, keep this." Would you go about bewailing your hard lot? Would you say that it was asking too much of you? Indeed you would not. On the contrary, you would rejoice at such a token of your friend's love and confidence. Even so should we regard this keepsake from our Lord.

The commandments of Jesus are the commandments of God the Father; for God said of Him to Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him." Deut. xvii. 18, 19. Jesus said: "I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak." John xii. 49, 50. He was simply the revelation of God to men, the manifestation of God in the flesh, so that it was God speaking in Him. The law of God was in His heart (Ps. xl. 8), so that He was that law personified.

Jesus is the One who gives freedom. John viii. 34-36. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus gives freedom from sin and death. Rom. viii. 2. He therefore is

the "perfect law of liberty" into which we are to look as into a mirror, beholding not our own sinful selves, but "the image of the invisible God," into whose image we are transformed as we behold. James i. 25; Col. i. 15; 2 Cor. iii. 18. Therefore in requiring us to keep His commandments, He simply asks us to keep a memorial of Himself. Love will gladly do this. "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous."

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me."

When God made man, the crown and lord of creation, He planted a garden eastward in Eden; "and the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it." Gen. ii. 8, 15. Man did not have to make the garden; he was not required to plant it; he was only to dress it and to keep it. God made it perfect; man's duty was only to keep that which God had committed to him. So God gives us His commandments, His own perfect righteousness, and asks us to keep it. By faith in God we keep the commandments; so that one has only to keep the faith in order to keep God's commandments. To us all, even as to Timothy, comes the exhortation, "Keep that which is committed to thy trust." It should not be considered a hardship to keep what is given to us, when that thing is the highest good.

Notice that this talk about keeping the commandments immediately follows the promise that if we shall ask anything in His name He will give it. "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment

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that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another." 1 John iii. 22, 23. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and love is freely shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He makes the conditions of answered prayer very easy, and then supplies the conditions.

"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless [orphans], I will come to you." John xiv. 16-18.

Jesus Himself is a Comforter. His presence is comfort. It was because He was going away, that the hearts of the disciples were troubled; and Jesus comforted them with the assurance that He was going to the Father, to prepare a place for them. Therefore we may know that "if any man sin, we have a Comforter with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John ii. 1. The word rendered "Advocate," in this text is identical with that rendered "Comforter" in John xiv. 16. We have a Comforter with the Father, and "another Comforter" on earth with us. Surely we have no lack of comfort.

This Comforter, the Spirit of truth, is Christ's own representative, Christ's own personal presence with us as He could not be in the flesh. We know this in two ways from our text. First, Jesus says, "I will send you another Comforter," and adds, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." So through the Spirit Christ is personally present even when absent. If, when talking to Nicodemus, He could speak of Himself as "the Son of man, which is in heaven" (John iii. 13),

now that He is on the right hand of God in the heavens He may with equal truth speak of Himself as with us.

In the second place, we know that the Spirit is but Christ's larger presence, so to speak, because the Comforter is "the Spirit of truth." Jesus Christ is "the truth." John xiv. 6. The Spirit of truth therefore is Christ's very essence. Having the Spirit, we have Christ and all that He possesses.

"I will not leave you orphans." Christ is "the Everlasting Father" (Isa. ix. 6), and He is the living image of the Father, the shining of His glory. Therefore the Holy Spirit, Christ's representative, who brings Christ's own presence, brings also the presence of the Father, so that with Him we are not orphans. Through the Spirit we become sons of God, members of His household, and the Father Himself is with us all the time. No longer are we prodigal wanderers from our Father's house, but sharers of all His bounty.

The world cannot receive the Spirit, because it cannot see Him. The world's motto is, "Seeing is believing;" the truth is that "believing is seeing." The world does not believe, and so it does not really see; it only imagines. It is not content with a God whom it cannot see, and therefore it manufactures gods. Out of its own imagination it makes images, and worships them. The Spirit, however, can be received only by faith, and whoever believes endures as seeing the invisible. All who believe may know the presence and voice of the Holy Spirit just as surely as they may know their most intimate friends, and even more so, since they can have no other friend so intimate. "Ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Do you ask how you will know Him? Believe and you will know for yourself, as no one can tell you.

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but ye see Me; because I live, ye shall live also." Christ is our life, and the fact that we live is proof of His presence. "But the wicked live!" you exclaim. Yes, and that proves the grace and mercy of God; it shows His presence to save. The Spirit of life and righteousness is striving with all, seeking to be received as a welcome guest. Christ says to His true disciples, "Ye see Me." This is true even now that He is absent so that the world cannot see Him. But He is present now only by the Holy Spirit, which proves that believers have ocular demonstration of the presence of the Spirit. Yea, faith enables men to see spiritual things.

"He shall teach you all things." There is no teacher like God (Job xxxvi. 22), for "out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 6. The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Isa. xi. 2. He is "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God." His very presence gives wisdom. Through the Spirit one knows things that without Him could never be learned by any amount of study.

Without the Spirit, one really knows nothing. This is a fact. See: The Spirit is bestowed in order that we may know the things that are freely given to us by God. 1 Cor. ii. 12. Since God does nothing uselessly, it is evident that without the Spirit we could not know the things that God freely gives us. Now what does He give us?—With His Son He freely gives us all things. Rom. viii. 32. There is nothing that God does not give us, and nothing of that which He gives us can be

known without the Spirit; therefore without the Spirit we cannot really know anything. The school of Christ-the school of meekness and humility-is the school in which true knowledge of even the most common things is obtained, and the reception of the Spirit ensures to us the highest education.

Think a moment, and you will see that this is literally true. Take two men, one having all the advantages of the best schools in the land, and the other compelled to spend all his life in hard, manual labour. The one will have all the polish that the world can give, while the other may present a rough exterior, and may not be able to pass even an entrance examination in schools from which the first has been graduated with honour. The one is a sceptic, while the other knows and fears the Lord, and has obtained the wisdom that comes from above. James iii. 17. Which one has the advantage in education? You may hastily say, the first. Not so fast. Remember that this whole life, even though it be fourscore years, is but the threshold of eternity, and you must never leave eternity out of your reckoning. The Judgment comes, and the first goes to destruction, and all his attainments perish with him, while the other has before him endless ages of association with God and angels, whose acquaintance he has made on earth. Say you not that even the very first day of the life beyond, the poor man know more than the other? When you first judged, you were like one who should make his decisions as to two men upon their entrance to school. The end is the time to pass judgment. None of this that has been said by any means depreciates learning or application; far

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from it; for the one who knows the Lord will by that very companionship be stimulated to reach out for every attainable thing, and will be enabled to make more advancement in solid knowledge than an unbeliever can.

"He shall teach you all things." The Spirit is the only teacher. Whatever one learns from any other person he does not really know. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." 1 John ii. 20. "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him." Verse 27. No one is to learn of man. It is true that God has set teachers in the church, and He uses men as agents for conveying instruction; but the one who receives the instruction as coming from man, instead of direct from God, does not know the truth. No matter by whom the instruction comes, unless the learner receives it so directly from the Spirit that he knows it as a personal revelation from God, he does not have it as he ought to have it.

"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, . . . shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Since all things that are worth remembering come from Christ alone, and the Spirit brings them all to our remembrance, when we receive Him, it follows that the Spirit is given to us to be memory for us. Mind, the Spirit is not a substitute for study and application, and is not given to encourage laziness; but He is our Teacher, spurring us on, and helping us, and becoming so one with us that He takes complete possession, so

that we have no mind but that of the Spirit. Then the Spirit is understanding, and memory as well, enabling us to think of the right thing at just the right time.

THE DECLARATION OF PEACE

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

So the chapter ends where it began. "Let not your heart be troubled." Peace is ours, then how can we be troubled. Do not get things reversed. We are not to believe that we have peace because we have no trouble; but since Christ has given us His peace, we are not to be troubled, no matter how great the trouble.

"My peace I give unto you." Peace, perfect peace, means victory. In that Christ gives us His peace, He gives us His victory. He has conquered, and put the enemy to flight, after taking from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and He gives us peace. Not only so, but He gives us *His peace*-the peace that was unruffled even in the fiercest fight. He was oppressed and persecuted as no other man ever was; spies were continually on His track, perverting His words, seeking to exasperate Him, whispering about Him, bearing false witness, defaming His character, arousing suspicion, contradicting and abusing Him; yet never once was He impatient. What perfect peace! And this peace He has given us. We are not able to keep patient under trials, but the peace of Jesus can keep us. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. iv. 6, 7.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Trust and Protection. Isa. xxvi. 1-14" *The Present Truth* 15, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXVI. 1-14, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. In that day shall this song be sung:-
In the land of Judah we have a strong city;
Salvation shall He establish for walls and
bulwarks.
2. Open ye the gates, and let the righteous
nation enter:
3. Contrast in the truth, stayed in mind:
Thou shalt preserve them in perpetual peace,
Because they have trusted in Thee.
4. Trust ye in Jehovah for ever;
For in Jehovah is never-failing protection.
5. For He hath humbled those that dwell on high;
The lofty city, He hath brought her down;

He hath brought her down to the ground;
He hath leveled her with the dust.

6. The foot shall trample upon her;
The foot of the poor, the steps of the needy.

7. The way of the righteous is perfectly straight;
Thou most exactly levellest the path of the
righteous.

8. Even in the way of Thy laws, O Jehovah,
We have placed our confidence in Thy name;
And in the remembrance of Thee is the desire
of our soul.

9. With my soul have I desired Thee in the night;
Yea, with my inmost spirit in the morn have
I sought Thee.

For when Thy judgments are in the earth,
The inhabitants of the world learn righteous-
ness.

10. Though mercy be shown to the wicked, yet
will he not learn righteousness;
In the very land of rectitude he will deal per-
versely;
And will not regard the majesty of Jehovah.

11. Jehovah, Thy hand is lifted up, yet will they
not see:
But they shall see, with confusion, Thy zeal
for Thy people;
Yea, the fire shall burn up Thine adversaries.

12. Jehovah, Thou wilt ordain for us peace;
For even all our mighty deeds Thou hast per-
formed for us.

13. O Jehovah, our God!
Other lords exclusive of Thee have had do-
minion over us:
Thee only, and Thy name, henceforth will we
celebrate.

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14. They are dead, they shall not live;
They are deceased tyrants, they shall not rise.
Therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed
them;

And all memorials of them Thou hast abolished.

Note the difference in punctuation in the first verse of Lowth's translation, as compared with the ordinary version. There is no difference in the sense, but Lowth's rendering makes it a little more emphatic. Not only is the song sung in the land of Judah, but the city is there. This is of course implied in the common rendering? The city is therefore Jerusalem made new-New Jerusalem, which

cometh down out of heaven from God. Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2. It is a city built up entirely new, and will occupy the very place where the present city stands, only it will be very much more extended. See John xiv. 1, 2; Zech. xiv. 1-9; Lowth's rendering of Isa. xxvi. 15 also indicates this: "Thou hast added to the nation; Thou art glorified; Thou hast extended far all the borders of the land."

This is the city for which the patriarchs of old looked. Heb. x. 10, 14-16. Its builder and maker is God; and its foundations are described in Rev. xxi. 18-21. Coming down, as it does, in the land of Canaan, the land that was promised to Abraham and his seed for an inheritance, the promise of God is fulfilled to the very letter. To apply the prophecies concerning the building up of Jerusalem to any work done by men, and in this present state, is a gross perversion of the Scriptures, and a depreciation of the promises of the Gospel. Only God Himself can fulfil His own promises, and only He can build a city suitable for the habitation of His redeemed ones.

It will be a "strong city." Its defense will be salvation. It will be so strong that it will be able to withstand a siege by Satan and all his hosts, including all the armies of wicked men who have trained under Satan's banner. See Rev. xx. 7-9. Some one will exclaim, "Of course no enemy in the universe could take the city of God, the New Jerusalem! It would be absurd for anyone to try." Very true; yet that city will be no safer than are God's people now; for it will be kept only by the very same power that now keeps those who trust in the Lord. The humblest and most insignificant person on earth, who trusts the Lord, is just as safe as will be the hosts of the redeemed in the New Jerusalem. The wicked far outnumber the righteous, and the mighty host marching against the city of the saved would strike terror to their hearts, if they had not individually learned the power of Christ's salvation. The Gospel is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth, and that is the power that will be the confidence of the redeemed in the Holy City when it is besieged by Satan's hosts.

The righteous nation is the nation that keeps the truth. Jesus said, "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me." John xiv. 21. God has committed His truth to men, even to wicked men, to see what they will do with it. If they repress it then the wrath of God is justly revealed from heaven against them. Rom. i. 18. But if they keep it, letting it have free course in them, then it will preserve them from all evil. The truth of God is the shield of His people. Ps. xci. 4.

God is the God of peace (Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Thess. v. 3), therefore all who put their trust in Him are necessarily kept in perfect peace. The peace and protection that are given are not a reward for trusting, but are the necessary consequence of that trust; "for in Jehovah is never failing protection." "In the Lord Jehovah is an everlasting Rock," or "the Rock of Ages." Revised Version.

There is nothing in this world that troubles people more than pride. And pride is what the Lord has promised to bring down. Pride is an abomination to the Lord. This fact, instead of alarming us, should be a cause of rejoicing, for it means deliverance from our worst enemy. Note in the chapters of Isaiah, which we have already studied, how much is said about bringing down that which is proud and lofty. "He hath humbled those that dwell on high; the lofty city, He hath brought

her down." But before that time comes, He delivers His people from pride, and therefore from the destruction that follows it. Read the promise in Ps. xxxi. 19-21; "Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man; Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. Blessed be the Lord: for He hath showed me His marvellous loving kindness in a strong city." Note that it is "from the pride of man" that God promised to keep those who trust in Him. Then of course He keeps us from our own pride, and that is the only pride from which we are in any danger.

What a blessed assurance is contained in verse 7. The text that we have quoted is very much more close to the original than is our common version, yet there is a very precious suggestion in this latter. Mark the expression, "Thou, Most Upright, dost weigh the path of the just." The word rendered "weigh," means to ponder, think upon. Compare Ps. i. 6. The Lord makes the way of His people the object of special solicitude; He makes it straight and plain, and that is why they are upright. He is no respecter of persons, and therefore He takes the same care of all people; but the wicked will not walk in the way marked out for them. All anybody has to do, to be righteous, is to walk in the way of the Lord. Ps. cxix. 1-2.

"The Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works." Ps. cxlv. 9. He encompasses the wicked with the same mercy that He does the righteous. The whole earth is surrounded with an atmosphere of grace and mercy, which the inhabitants breathe in as they do the air, so that nothing is lacking for the salvation of any person. Therefore if any are destroyed, it is only because they reject the mercy of the Lord. The only thing that any lost soul will have to bring against the Lord will be that He dealt mercifully with him. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Surely God will be clear when He judges, since those who are lost have been hardened only by His mercy. See the case of Pharaoh, and note how it was the forbearance and mercy of the Lord that hardened his heart. He regarded the kindness of the Lord as weakness, and presumed on it. Ex. viii. 15, 31, 32; ix. 34, 35.

"Lord, Thou wilt ordain peace for us; for Thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Verse 12. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13. He is striving to work in all, but many will not allow Him to have His own way with them, and He will not force any, since He works only by love. It is the pride of men, their unwillingness to acknowledge that they are not their own masters, that keeps them from yielding to God. Whoever

is willing to admit that he is nothing, and is not able to do anything, not even to make a single movement of himself, but will acknowledge God in all his ways, will find that God works in him, making his way perfect. What a blessed thing it is to be able to see, from the working of God in the things round about us, how able He is to do all our works in us, and to do marvelous things. In the things that are made, the everlasting power and Divinity of God are clearly seen. Rom. i. 20. The

least thing that He does is great, and shows His almighty power. They are all unconsciously passive in His hands, and so His will is wrought in them. Because their yielding is involuntary, there is no morality in the fulfilment of God's will in them; but when we voluntarily yield as completely as the inanimate things do involuntarily, then does God make our way even as His own, and gives to us the credit of having done that which only His omnipotence could accomplish. Read Ps. xc. 16, 17.

Other lords besides Jehovah have had dominion over us. Who is there that has not been guilty of idolatry? "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," is not an arbitrary commandment, but a blessed promise to all who will put their trust in the Lord. God rules only by love and gentleness, but other lords exercise dominion over us, compelling us to serve them. Being delivered from the bondage of corruption, we say to the Lord, "Thee only, and Thy name, henceforth will we celebrate."

"They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased tyrants, they shall not rise." There is no God but Jehovah. All the gods of the heathen are nothing. "They must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good." "But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King." Jer. x. 5, 10. A man is like that which he serves. Hence he who serves a dumb, dead idol is himself destitute of life. "They that make them are like unto them, so is every one that trusteth in them." Ps. cxv. 8. When we trusted in the works of our own hands, we were lifeless-dead in trespasses and sins; but having been made alive in Christ, we reign with Him, instead of being lorded over. Not only will all false gods perish, but the very memory of them will be destroyed. The memorial of God, on the other hand, endures for ever. Ps. cxxxv. 13.

"Little Folks. Our Fellow Creatures" *The Present Truth* 15, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

"Through created things thrills one pulse of life from the great heart of God." We are told in the Book of Proverbs that "out of the heart are the issues of life," and you know that every time your heart beats it sends the blood pulsing through your whole body, carrying life to every part of it.

So from the heart of God comes the life that supplies the whole creation, and pulsates through all the things that He has made. It is His life that

"Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees."

His Spirit is in the air, the breath of life to all His creatures. All breathe in the same air, the same breath, and so share one life,-the life of God.

We sometimes think of the animals, the birds, the fishes, and the plants, as altogether different beings from ourselves. But the wise King Solomon, speaking of animals and man, tells us that "they have all one breath," one life.

So all these other creatures are only different *forms* of the *same life* that we share. They as our fellow-creatures; they all spring from the same Father as ourselves, and live by breathing in His life, just as we do.

If we really love God, we shall love everything in which we see God, everything that shares with us the life of God,-even the grass beneath our feet, the flowers, the trees, the birds, the animals, as well as our human brothers and sisters.

Love delights in the happiness of all things. So as we learn to see God's life in all, and to love them because of it, we shall delight more and more in seeing them happy. The life that we have in common with them will be a bond of sympathy and love between us, so that we shall be able to understand them better,-to understand their wants and to supply them, and to learn the lessons that God is teaching us by them.

All the animal creation God made for man, and gave to him to rule and to have dominion over. In this way man would be always learning lessons of love, as God should use him as the channel through which to shed His kindness and love upon them. And besides this it must have added directly to man's own happiness, to be the instrument used by God to bring blessing and happiness to all His other works.

"There is no fear in love," and so man and all the animals were perfectly free and fearless in the beginning. But when man lost the spirit of love out of his heart, the animals began to fear and flee from him, and to try to defend themselves from him, so that he was led to fear them also.

This fear of man that most of the animals have, makes it hard for him to get near to them in their natural state, to find out much about them, and the wonderful lessons they teach.

Thoreau, an American naturalist, shut himself away from all human society in the lonely depths of a wood for two years and a half, so that he might study the works of God around him,-the creatures that made their home there.

We are told of him that "he knew how to sit immovable, a part of the rock he rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish, which had retired from him, should come back and resume its habits;- nay, moved by curiosity should come to him and watch him."

The birds in Walden Woods would come at his call and perch upon his arms and shoulders. The snakes coiled, round at legs, and fishes swam between his hands and even the foxes, we are told, would run to him for protection from the hunter.

This was because he was so gentle and harmless, and had studied these animals so well that he was able to make them, understand that he would not hurt them. So they did not fear him, nor try to hurt him.

In the good time that is coming, when God shall "make all things new," all the "new creatures" that live in His "new earth" will be holy and harmless. Perfect love, the perfect life of God, will cast out all fear, and unite all living creature in one great brotherhood.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

-General Booth has stated that Mr. Cecil Rhodes has promised him all the land he wants on which to establish colonies of the "submerged tenth."

-The secretary of a local Building Society at Cambridge has disappeared with ?800 of the funds. Obedience to the words of Christ would save men from these losses. Matt. vi. 19.

-The serious disasters to the Lowestoft fishing fleet off the Cornish coast during the recent storms is said to have involved a loss of 520,000, the heaviest blow inflicted on the fleet for half a century.

-The recent successful experiments in wireless telegraphy have given a tremendous impetus to commercial interest in the new discovery. It is already proposed to connect Paris with England by means of the Eiffel Tower, and a syndicate has approached the inventors with an offer for exclusive rights between New York and England. The messages are not affected by the worst of weather, and the only expense is the erection of terminals of the proper height.

-The Governor of Santiago has notified the War Department that it is unsafe to withdraw the Volunteers from Cuba until they are replaced by regulars, as the mountains are filled with bandits, and trouble is feared.

-One of the two Professors who will represent Germany at the "Peace Conference," has wrote a pamphlet in which he maintains that peace is neither desirable nor possible, and that universal peace is rather a danger than a blessing for humanity.

-Fighting continues in Samoa, where a body of English and American troops fell into an ambush and lost several men. The feeling against Germany runs very high on account of her favouring the claims of the rival king, and thus prolonging the fighting.

-The latest trade combination announced from America is a coffin trust, which is capitalised at 20,000,000 dollars. It is said that ninety per cent, of the coffin factories throughout the United States will, in consequence of this combination, have to close their works, throwing some 6,000 men out of employment.

-Gambling is said to be rampant in the University of Oxford at the present time. Although generally confined to the larger and more important colleges, men from smaller societies are welcomed in gambling circles, and many an undergraduate whose future depends upon his academic success is ruined by his participation in the vice.

-At the International Alcoholic Conference in Paris it was stated that France has a public-house for every eighty-five inhabitants. The enormous consumption of cheap brandy, rum and absinthe was said to be sending thousands to the asylums. Brandy drinking had become a regular thing In Italy. Next year's Congress will be held in Vienna.

-A device to develop 1,000 horse power from the waves of the ocean is about to be constructed at Sea Gate, New York, at a cost of ?20,000. Every wave that rolls over the machine means so much air compressed by the machine. The power will be converted into electricity for lighting, heating and motive force. The device works independently of tides.

-A remarkable feat in shipbuilding has just been completed on the Tyne. Last autumn the steamship *Milwaukee* ran ashore on the coast of Aberdeen, the main

hold being penetrated by a huge rock. The bulkheads in the stern division were undamaged, so that no water reached the engines. It was determined to cut the steamer in two, which was done by the aid of dynamite. Eventually the forward section of the steamer was left upon the rocks and the stern was floated into deep water and towed to the Tyne, where the reconstructed vessel was successfully launched a few days ago.

-Serious fires continue to be reported from the United States, and it is noticeable that in each instance it is the wealthiest class that suffers. The Windsor Hotel, which was frequented by very rich people, is believed to have been set fire to by an incendiary. A few days after this was destroyed, with great loss of life, a millionaire named Andrews, and his wife with ten other persons, perished in the conflagration which destroyed their mansion. A few days before Mr. Andre, had been the recipient of an infernal machine sent by post, and it is believed that a similar attempt to destroy him was the origin of the fire. An explosion was heard at the time. Still another case of supposed incendiarism is reported. This time one of the Vanderbilts, who was lately married, is the sufferer, losing a country home valued at \$60,000, but escaping with his life.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

People get discouraged sometimes because they see so many difficulties in their path. If it were not for this obstacle and that, the way would be open for them to live as they would like to, and to be thorough Christians. But every one who reasons in this way makes a great mistake. There are no difficulties. The things which he looks upon as hindrances are helps. If he were to go up to them in faith, he would find it so, but many are too frightened at their appearance to go near them.

The promise of the Lord to those who accept His mercy is, "They shall take them captives whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors." Isa. xiv. 2. It is not in the plan of God that any of His people shall be led captive by Satan. Instead, Satan is to be led captive by them. Christ spoiled Satan and all his angels, and "made a show of them openly, triumphing over them" (Col. ii. 15), and, in the same way, God "always causeth us to triumph in Christ." 2 Cor. ii. 14.

Satan under the feet of Christ. But the feet of Christ are a part of His body, and His body is the church; so that the lowest part of the church of Christ is set far above the power and might of the adversary. We read concerning Satan, when he is seen in his true aspect and condition, that he is "as a carcass trodden under feet." Isa. xiv. 19. So we see that instead of finding him an almost insuperable barrier between us and God, we may make him a stepping-stone every time he thrusts himself upon us. Satan can do nothing against the truth, but all his efforts, in spite of their malicious animus, will work for the truth. 2 Cor. xiii. 8.

This was made evident in the case of Christ. The Saviour receives His exaltation, and the name which is above every name, by reason of His humbling

Himself to death, even the death of the cross. But if it had not been for Satan, Christ would not have been crucified. The princes of this world would not have done it (1 Cor. ii. 8), if Satan had not blinded their eyes. 2 Cor. iv. 4. So that when Satan was making his supreme attempt, to overthrow the truth, he was contributing more than ever to its successful establishment.

The same was true in the experience of the apostles. Paul and Silas were taken captive at Philippi, and thrust into the inner prison, but it resulted in the gaoler himself being led captive and in the morning Paul and Silas ruled over their oppressors. So when Paul was taken captive to Rome, it seemed to every one that he was very much a prisoner, with a centurion and a large band of soldiers to keep him, yet before the journey was ended Paul had taken them all captive. God gave him all that sailed with him. Acts xxvii. 24.

So let no one be dismayed because of the lions in the way. They are all chained. Captivity has been led captive by Christ. Eph. iv. 8. The Lord has turned again the captivity of His people. The things that threaten to hinder us are only permitted to help us, so long as we abide in Christ. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." Rom. viii. 28.

In his Budget speech in his Budget speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he had refrained from re-imposing the duty on tobacco, although it was necessary to increase the sources of revenue, because it would tend to diminish the consumption of tobacco in this country. He was anxious to avoid doing this.

I saw that that article, in spite of the fondness of all classes of our population for it, was consumed much less per head of the population than in Continental countries, where the duty is lower. I was anxious at least to take a step towards the establishment of a reserve of force in one of the greatest sources of our revenue. I knew then, and I know now, that this could not be affected in one year, but I do urge the Committee to give the experiment a fair trial in the interests of the revenue. I do assure them of my complete conviction that if they will do so they will reap from it a golden harvest in the future by the increased consumption. I anticipate a great increase of consumption in the year now before us.

All is not gold that glitters, and even if there is such a harvest as is anticipated from the sale of tobacco, there will have to be set against it the physical, mental and moral deterioration which comes of wholesale indulgence in a hurtful drug. The *Hospital*, in a recent number, said:-

We have sometimes wondered whether the annual consumption of fifteen millions' worth of tobacco may not be exerting a slowly prejudicial influence upon the national character, and then goes on to suggest that the widespread use of tobacco and its "soothing" effects, may be "one of the influences under which British commerce is showing a disposition to languish, and to make way for competitors who regard strenuousness as the high road to success."

The controversy over matters of ritual in the Church of England continues with unabated ardour. The Roman Catholic press states that the Pope is watching the contest with keen interest, and that, if necessary, the Roman Catholics of England are prepared to join with the Ritualists in contending for the ceremonies which are so dear to both. On the other hand Mr. A. J. Balfour, in the House of

Commons, has set forth the impression which the struggle is calculated to make upon the minds of those to whom the Church owes the preaching of the Gospel.

After all, while we are disputing about these matters of relatively small importance, there are vast questions, lying at the very root of all religion, which are being called in doubt from day to day by those who are far removed from the plans of controversy in which we are forced to dwell. I am convinced that no greater injury can be done to the cause of religion than the sight of ministers of religion apparently absorbed and prepared to sacrifice everything to matters which, compared with the subjects to which I refer, are almost nothing. It makes me grieved, and I find it almost impossible to express adequately the strength of my feeling on this subject, when I find that there is not merely an injury, and perhaps an irreparable injury, done to the fabric of the Church, but to the whole cause of religion.

But the church is the body of Christ, and when man are members of that body in name only, it is well that they should expose their true condition, lest others get the idea that the service of Christ consists in putting on vestments and adopting fanciful attitudes, or getting up an agitation against those who do so. "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed." John viii. 31.

The Jews in America are divided over the question of transferring "the Jewish Sabbath" from Saturday to Sunday. One Rabbi says that ten years ago in Chicago "before we dropped our Saturday services the attendance got down to three, the sexton, the organist, and myself," whereas now, he adds, "our congregation numbers between 1,500 and 2,000, representing nearly 500 families," and he continues, "within another decade I expect to see practically every Jewish congregation worshipping on Sunday." The "Jewish Sabbath" always was a burden. "The Sabbath of the Lord thy God" is rest, and so it is found by those who honour it."

April 27, 1899

"The Speaking Blood" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

"We are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just man made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. xii. 22-24.

"Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous." 1 John iii. 12. Cain and Abel each brought an offering to the Lord. Cain's offering was of the fruit of the ground, and Abel's of the firstlings of the flock, and of the fat thereof. Abel's offering was accepted, while Cain's was rejected; therefore Cain was envious, and slew his brother as they were alone in the field. Then said God to Cain,

"Where is Abel thy brother?" "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." Gen. iv. 10.

What did Abel's blood say to the Lord, as it cried from the ground? It cried for vengeance. A life had been taken, and nothing but life could satisfy the demand of justice. It cried just as does the hire of the labourers who have reaped the fields of the rich, which has been kept back by fraud. James v. 4. All the innocent blood that has been shed on the earth, cries to the Lord for punishment which will be meted out to the violent ones who have shed it; "for, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isa. xxvi. 21.

But what about "the blood of sprinkling," to which we have come: what does it speak? It speaks peace and pardon. Christ, like Abel, was put to death because His works were righteous, but His blood calls not for vengeance. On the contrary, that blood is the only means by which even those who shed it can find salvation. It was a most cruel and wicked thing, to crucify "the Lord of glory," and yet "through the blood of His cross" He reconciles all things to God, "whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col. i. 20. What a marvellous thing! that the blood of the slain one procures pardon for the slayer!

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." Heb. xii. 25. The blood is the life, and therefore represents Christ Himself. The speaking of the blood is the very voice of Christ Himself. Christ said of those who with wicked hands nailed Him to the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Luke xxiii. 34. This therefore is what is said by the sprinkled blood unto which we all have come, and by which we are brought near to God. Even though we ourselves have been guilty of the blood of Christ, by it we have boldness to enter into the holiest, even into the secret place of the Most High. Heb. x. 19. There the blood brings us, and there the blood cleanses us from all sin.

Abel knew of this blood, and of its cleansing power, for "by faith Abel offered

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unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous." Heb. xi. 4. Abel was not by nature any more righteous than Cain was; but even those who were "aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Titus iii. 3), are made perfectly righteous through faith in His blood. Being made righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then they can "offer the sacrifices of righteousness." Ps. iv. 5.

It must be remembered that there was no virtue in the offering which Abel brought to the Lord, even though it was a more excellent sacrifice than that of Cain. There is only one sacrifice in the universe, and that is Christ, "who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God." His blood will purge the conscience from dead works, so that all the works will be wrought in God. He was made a propitiation for sins before the foundation of the world, and faith in His blood, and that alone, without any act whatsoever, makes the believer righteous. But faith works, and the justified one by the same faith through which he receives pardon, can "offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God." 1 Peter ii. 5. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." Ps. li. 17. This is a spirit that

acknowledges that self is nothing but dust, and that the Christ of God is everything.

The voice of the blood of Christ still speaks to us from heaven, inviting us, pleading with us, to come and receive pardon. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

"Studies from the Gospel of John. The Vine and the Branches. John xv. 1-14" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

John xv. 1-14

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."

The passover supper had been eaten. Jesus had performed the last loving act of humble service for His disciples, the closing hymn had been sung, and now they were on their way to the garden that was to be the scene of the Saviour's greatest struggle with the powers of darkness. Nothing is more common than a vine forming an arbour; and Jesus, who was always ready to impress a lesson by the things that were before Him, took advantage of the sight of a vine that they passed to teach His disciples an important lesson on the reality of things. He would have them know that the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are unseen are real and eternal (2 Cor. iv. 18), so that they might endure "as seeing Him who is invisible."

Jesus is the *true* vine. All vines that we see growing out of the earth, and bearing fruit, are but visible proofs of the presence of the invisible vine—the reality. The seed of everything that grows is the Word of God. Luke viii. 11. In the beginning, when the earth was first created, and there was nothing in it, God said: "Let the earth bring forth grass, the yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind." Gen. i. 11. "And it was so." God's word was the seed

whence every plant of every kind sprung. Just as He sent His word out into darkness, and light shone forth, so He sent His word into the vacant earth, and vegetation appeared. But Jesus is "the Word of God." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and Word was God. . . . All things were made by Him." John i. 13. Hence Christ is the Seed. This is true in the most comprehensive sense. Our confidence in Him as the righteous seed that shall beget righteousness in us, is made perfect by seeing the efficient working of that seed in all creation. "The Word was made flesh" dwelling among us "full of grace and truth;" and the possibility of this is shown to us, even before we experience it, by the fact, seen everywhere, that the word was made grass, herbs, and trees.

The life that is able to bring the vegetable creation to perfection, is also able to make our way perfect, when faith is given free course.

Evidence of the truth of the statement that Christ is the true vine was given at the very beginning of His ministry. At the wedding in Cana Jesus turned the water into wine. Water was put into the jars, and wine was drawn out. The same miracle is wrought every year. Water falls from heaven upon the ground, and is drawn up into the vine, and comes out wine. The miracle wrought in Cana was for the purpose of letting us know that every particle of water that is turned to wine in all the vines on earth, is changed only by the presence and power of Christ, the true vine.

The water that makes the earth fruit as is the water of life from the river of God. Ps. lxxv. 9-11. The water comes from the slain Lamb in the midst of the throne (Rev. v. 6; vii. 17), just as the water which the Israelites drank in the desert came from Christ. 1 Cor. x. 4. The Spirit of God is the water of life (John vii. 37-39), and the Spirit and the water and the blood agree in one. 1 John v. 8. This is shown by the water and the blood

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that flowed from the pierced side of Christ as He hung on the cross. John xix. 34, 35. The blood is the life. Thus we see that when Jesus gave "the fruit of the vine" to His disciples, at the last supper, He stated the literal truth when He said, "This is My blood." The fruit of the vine, which refreshes man, imparting to him life, is the blood of Christ, the true vine!

But this is not all. We can never exhaust the wonder that Christ is the real vine; but more wonderful still to our comprehensions is the fact that we are the branches, and as such are to bear fruit. It is the branches that bear the fruit. This is no cause for boasting, for it is the vine that bears the branches, and the branches produce nothing, but are wholly dependent on the parent stock; but when they are joined to the vine by a vital connection they bear the fruit. "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." John xv. 16.

From this we see that Christ expects us to do the work that is done on this earth, or, rather, that He expects the work to be done through us. He Himself said, "I can of Mine own self do nothing." John v. 30. "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." John xiv. 10. So the "miracles and wonders and signs" were what "God did by Him." Acts ii. 22. So we can do nothing apart from Him. He is the motive power, and we are the ones in whom the results are to be seen, and the fruit that is seen is counted to us as ours. God has placed us here in this world instead of Christ, who is with the Father. The Father is the keeper of the vineyard whose root and stock are in heaven, and the branches on the earth.

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." The fruit borne is "the fruit of the light." Eph. v. 9, R.V. Therefore we are exhorted, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. v. 16. The last message that goes forth, the last proclamation of the Gospel, which announces the hour of God's Judgment already come, is a message exhorting to fruit-bearing, in these words: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His Judgment is come; and worship

Him that made heaven, and earth and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. xiv. 6, 7. God is glorified by us only as we bring forth fruit; and it is by His power that is manifest in all creation, that we are to do this.

Thus it is that the last message to mankind calls special attention to God as Creator. When the Lord comes His glory is to cover the heavens, uniting with the glory that fills the earth. The glory of the Lord is to be revealed so that all flesh can see it together before the Lord comes. Isa. xl. 3-5. The cry, "Behold your God!" will be sounded in the ears of all, and they will be directed to the things that He has made in order to see it. Rom. i. 18-20. When they see Him working in the rest of creation, those who wish to bring forth fruit to the glory of God will be convinced that He is able to work as mightily in them, to cause them to bring forth the fruit for which He created them.

But in spite of the fact that that which may be known of God is manifest in all men, and that the invisible things of Him, even His everlasting power and Divinity, are clearly revealed in the things that He has made, people are apt to get so absorbed in themselves that they will walk in the midst of the revelations of His life and power as though they were blind. Therefore God has given us a memorial of Himself, that His wonderful works, and so He Himself, may be remembered. Ps. cxi. 2-4. He says, "I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Ex. xx. 12. This memorial endures to all generations. Week by week the Sabbath calls our attention anew to the fact that God is the Creator of all things, and that He creates all things very good. Thus we are continually reminded to put our trust in Him for salvation. He is the husbandman, and He keeps His vineyard day and night, watering it every moment. Isa. xxvii. 2, 3.

FRIENDS OF THE LORD

"Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And what does He command us?—To bear fruit. Strange that immediately after reading the first part of this chapter, in which the conditions of fruit-bearing are so clearly set forth, and it is shown that we ourselves do nothing of ourselves, but simply bear the fruit which the life of the parent stock begets in us, men will read this fourteenth verse, and imagine that they must by their own power do something to recommend them to the Lord, and gain His friendship! "This is the work of God, that ye believe in Him whom He hath sent." John vi. 29. His commandment to us is fulfilled by our trust in Him; "even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Gal. iii. 6.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. Abraham our father was justified by works when he had offered up Isaac, his son upon the altar, because "faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God." James ii. 21-23. God was Abraham's friend before this, but Abraham thus became God's friend. God is the Friend of all men, the Friend of sinners; but the sad fact is that very few will consent to be friendly with God. They have no confidence in Him.

"The friendship of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant." Ps. xxv. 14, R.V., margin. As other versions have it, God's confidential association is with them that fear Him. To such He makes known secrets about Himself, that only those can know who come close enough to Him for Him to whisper in their ears.

Friendship must be mutual. Friends exchange confidences. Jesus says: "I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." Whoever has friends must show himself friendly. If we wish to retain the friendship of God, and have a share in His secrets, we must not withhold from Him anything concerning ourselves. We must not have any secrets from Him. We must tell Him all, confessing all our sins. Not that He does not already know them, but this is the proof of our friendship. Then He reveals to us the secret of His salvation. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John i. 9. He will not betray our confidence. No; not only will He conceal our sins from public gaze at the last day, casting them into the depths of the sea, so that although they are sought for by our adversary the devil, the accuser

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they cannot be found (Jer. i. 20), but even He Himself will forget them. Heb. viii. 12. What a wonderful inducement to make friends with God! Delay not; for now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.

**"The Gospel of Isaiah. God's Care for His People. Isa. xxvi. 19-21;
xxvii. 1-6" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXVI. 19-21, XXVII. 1-6, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

19. Thy dead shall live; My deceased, they shall
rise:

Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust!
For thy dew is as the dew of the dawn;
But the earth shall cast forth, as an abortion,
the deceased tyrants.

20. Come, O My people; retire into thy secret
apartments;

And shut thy door after thee;
Hide thyself for a little while, for a moment;
Until the indignation shall have passed away.

21. For behold, Jehovah issueth forth from His
place,

To punish for his iniquity the inhabitant of
the earth;
And the earth shall disclose the blood that is
upon her;
And shall no longer cover her slain.

CHAPTER XXVII

1. In that day shall Jehovah punish with His sword,
His well-tempered, and great, and strong sword.
Leviathan the rigid serpent,
And Leviathan the winding serpent;
And shall slay the monster that is in the sea.

2. In that day,
To the beloved Vineyard, sing ye a responsive song.

J.3. It is I, Jehovah, that preserve her;
I will water her every moment;
I will take care of her by night;
And by day I will keep guard over her.

V.4. I have no wall for my defense;
O that I had a defense of the thorn and the briar!
Against them should I march in battle.
I should burn them up together.

J.5. Ah, let her rather take hold of My protection.

V. Let them make peace with me!
Peace let Him make with me!

J.6. They that come from the root of Jacob shall flourish, Israel shall bud forth;
And they shall fill the face of the world with fruit.

The student will notice the initials "J" and "V" before a few of the verses in the beginning. These stand for Jehovah and Voice, respectively, indicating a colloquy between the Lord and His people, which the translator supposes to be transcribed in the first part of the chapter. They are no part of the text, but simply express the translator's idea of it. The student will compare this rendering with that in his Bible, and take the suggestion for what he considers it worth.

Promise of the Resurrection .-"Thy dead shall live; My deceased, they shall arise." This is much plainer and more forcible than as it is rendered in our common version. There it is made to appear as though it were simply the prophet saying that his dead body shall arise; but the fact is that it is God who is speaking of His own dead,-of those who die in the Lord. Israel has been mourning, and God comforts her with the assurance that her dead shall live, for He claims her deceased ones as His own; and he that believeth in God, "though he were dead, and yet shall he live."

Joy in Dust .-"Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust!" Out of the dust the Lord God formed man in the beginning, and set him over the works of His hands. God took the dust to make a king, and a king that should bear rule over things in heaven as well as on earth. This is the assurance to us that "He taketh up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." 1 Sam. ii. 8. A heart broken and crumbled into dust (contrite), the Lord does not despise, because He knows the possibilities in dust. Indeed, that is the only material out of which a perfect man can be made. Therefore when man has in his pride and self-exaltation departed out of the way, and has fallen, God turns him again to dust, and says, "Come again, ye children of men." Conversion is the pledge of the resurrection, for it is but the working of resurrection power. God's people can rejoice over the grave, for since they have been created from the dust, and made to sit with Christ in the heavenly places, they know that death cannot separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus their Lord.

The Dew of the Morning .-There is not so much difference as there might seem at first glance between the rendering, "Thy dew is as the dew of herbs," and "Thy dew is as the dew of the dawn," which is found in other versions besides that of Lowth; for the dew of herbs is the dew that falls in the morning. The French of Segond has it, "a vivifying dew," which is very pertinent. The Hebrew expression is thus given in one lexicon, "a light-reflecting dew." How expressive this is of the joy and freshness of the resurrection, when God's people reflect the light of life.

But why is it that the dew of God's people is as the dew of the morning? the answer is found in Ps. cxxxiii. It is because they have brotherly kindness and unity, which is "the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

The Enemies Cast Out .-The reader will notice that instead of, "the earth

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shall cast out the dead," Lowth renders it, "the earth shall cast out, as an abortion, the deceased tyrants." If you examine the margin of the Revision, you will see that the word in the Hebrew is "Rephaim," which is the name of one of the wicked nations that the Lord promised to cast out of the land of Canaan, before the children of Abraham. See Gen. xiv. 5; xv. 20. So here we find an intimation of the fact that the resurrection is the time when the promise to Abraham shall be fulfilled.

The Avenger of Blood .-"Behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." All the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from that of Abel, cries to God for vengeance. Ever since nations have legalised murder if only committed by wholesale, it has been thought only a light thing to cause the death of men. Worldly men are so bent on carrying out their schemes, that they think nothing of it if a few just men are destroyed in the process. The slain sink out of sight, the earth covers them up, and drinks up their blood, and the oppressors think that the transaction is ended. Not so; soon will

the earth give up her dead, and will no more be an unwilling accomplice in bloody deeds.

Safety for God's People .-It will be a terrible time when God comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. The earth shall be "utterly broken down," and "clean dissolved." The prophet Habakkuk had a vision of that day, when God "drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow." "Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet." "The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of Thine arrows they went, and at the shining of Thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger." When the prophet saw the "great and terrible day of the Lord," he trembled; his lips quivered, and his very bones seemed to become rotten, and he desired for himself that he might rest in the day of trouble. Read Hab. iii. So God has promised that in the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, His people shall be delivered. Dan. xii. 1. He says, "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." The ninety-first Psalm tells where they will hide. There they will be during the thousand years that intervene between the first and second resurrections (Rev. xx.), and during the time when the fire of God's wrath consumes the wicked; but they will be no more safe then than during the seven last plagues, when they are here on the earth, in the midst of the destruction. All the time "the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Joel iii. 9-16.

God's Vineyard .-"A vineyard of red wine." Let it not be forgotten that "the new wine is found in the cluster," and that "a blessing is in it." Isa. lxxv. 8. The best wine is that which is procured by pressing the grape direct into the cup. See Gen. xl. 10, 11. Such wine it was that the Saviour furnished by a miracle for the wedding guests at Cana, which the governor of the feast pronounced the best. But the vineyard of the Lord is His people. Isa. v. 1-7. The miracle at Cana shows how the Lord's servants are to bear fruit to His glory. The servants obeyed the words of the Lord to the letter. They are nameless, and very little thought is given to them; yet they acted a most important part in the miracle. It was done by them. The vessels stood empty, and Jesus said, "Fill the water pots with water." This the servants did without any objection, although it must have seemed to them an unnecessary act. Then said Jesus, "Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." This was seemingly a more foolish command than the other, and one likely to cost the servants their position; for they might have reasoned: "It is not water, but wine, that is wanted; if we carry this water to the governor of the feast, he will think that we are insulting him, and we shall not only make ourselves the laughing-stock of the guests, but shall be discharged for unseemly action." Let it be remembered that it was water that was in the pots, and that it was water that the Lord told the servants to draw out and carry to the governor. They did as they were commanded, and some time in the process, we do not know at what point, the water became wine. Through the servants as agents of the Lord, the transformation was effected.

Thus would the Lord show us how we are to be branches of the true Vine. It is the branches that bear the fruit, yet they do not bear it of themselves. They are simply the channels for transmitting the water from the root to the clusters. They do not make the wine, but are servants used in the performance of the miracle. Those servants in Cana acted the part of branches in a vineyard. The Lord did by them what He ordinarily does by the branches of the grape vine. If we, like them, do whatever He says to us, we shall also be fruit bearing branches of the living Vine.

God's Care for His Vineyard .-"I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." This agrees with what we have just learned. If we abide in His Word, He will water us continually, so that we may be fruitful. Read Ps. i. 1-3. A vineyard that is gently watered night and day, cannot but be a flourishing one. And not a moment does God forget His charge. "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." Ps. cxxi. 3-6. This is a most pertinent and cheering promise; for in the day when the Lord "with His great and strong sword" shall punish "that crooked serpent," which is the dragon and Satan (Rev. xii. 9; xx. 2), the sun will have power to scorch men with fire. Rev. xvi. 8, 9; Joel i. 19, 20. But during all the time when the fire of God's rejected grace shall be consuming the wicked, "there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and rain." Isa. iv. 6. Yet the safety of the people of God in that day will be by nothing else than by very same loving protection that is given them now day by day.

The Consummation .-"Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill

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the face of the world with fruit." This will be the completion of the work of the Gospel, the last proclamation of which is, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. xiv. 7. It is by our bearing fruit, that God is glorified. John xv. 8. When Israel fills the face of the world with fruit, then will the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. And this will be accomplished by recognising and honouring God as the Creator, the One by whose direct care and attention all the processes of nature are effected; "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

"Confessing Christ" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

The Saviour promises to those who overcome that He will confess their names before His Father and before His angels. Rev. iii. 5. This does not mean merely that in the judgment the Saviour will acknowledge that He knows the man whose name is called, but He will answer to the name as to His own. He has fully identified Himself with His people, so that they stand as His representatives on

earth, and He appears for them in heaven. They are to be so entirely one with Him that His name can fitly rest upon them, and He will not be ashamed to bear theirs. "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven." Matt. x. 32.

We would think naturally that Christ would be ashamed to have us bearing His name before our fellows, but if we are not ashamed to confess Him, He will see that there is no cause for shame. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren" whom He sanctifies (Heb. ii. 11), and "whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." Rom. ix. 33. "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion." Ps. lxxi. 1. If we had undertaken presumptuously to set forth the character of God, we might well fear to be put to shame, but it is God who has chosen to reveal Himself in us, and He will justify the putting of His name upon us. "Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." "This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise." Isa. xliii. 12, 21.

"Little Folks. God's Messengers" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

All of you know the story of Jacob, -how he had to flee from his home because his brother Esau threatened to kill him. This was because of his sin in deceiving his blind old father Isaac, so that he might steal away his blessing from his older brother.

The first night after he left his home, he lay down to rest in a lonely place, with his mind full of sad thoughts. How lonely he felt, cut off from his mother and father, his brother anxious to take his life, and, worst of all, his sin separating him from the God of his fathers.

"And he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And behold the Lord stood above it."

Do you think that this was something new and strange, some special favour that God showed to Jacob? Oh, no; but in his dream God opened the eyes of Jacob so that he saw what is really going on all the time, although he had not known it; for when he awoke, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

In the first chapter of the Gospel of John, we learn what is this wonderful ladder that rests on the earth, and reaches right up to the throne of God. Jesus said to Nathanael, "Ye shall see and the angels of God ascending and descending upon *the Son of man*."

Jesus Himself is "the Way," the only way by which any good thing can come to us from God. When man by his sin had cut himself off from God his Father, Jesus came to be the Way by which God could come down to him, and he could come back to God.

Jesus is called "the Arm of the Lord," because by Him God reaches down to His fallen children upon this earth, to comfort them, to help them, and to bring

them back to Himself. Nothing good can come to us except through Jesus, but by this Way "every good and perfect gift cometh down."

This is what God was teaching Jacob in his sad and sinful condition, showing him that through Jesus, the Friend of sinners, He could still send His angels with messages of love to him, to help him and keep him on his journey.

The earth is full of God's messengers not those only that we cannot see, the angels who are "all ministering spirits sent forth to minister" for us; but all things that we see around us are God's messengers to us. They all come to us by the one Way, Jesus, and bring as sweet messages from God as the angels carried to Jacob.

For Jesus is "the Life," as well as "the way," and wherever we can see that there is life, we know that there is Jesus, the Way from heaven to earth, and from and from earth to heaven, God reaching down to help and bless and keep us.

He is everywhere, for He fills heaven and earth, but He gives us all these sweet little messengers filled with His life, the birds, the flowers, the trees, and all living things, so that we may see that He is near, and not be like Jacob, who knew it not. "For that Thy name is *near*, Thy wondrous works declare."

The sweet, happy song of the bird, the fresh face of each wayside blossom, every butterfly and bee and tiny insect, is God's little messenger, sent to you, telling you to "rejoice evermore," because He is with you always.

The well-known traveller Mungo Park was once left alone in a dry desert place, without friends, no food, no water, no clothing, and his strength all gone. He sank upon the ground in despair unable to go any farther, and thought he was quite forsaken and that he must die there.

But just then one of God's messengers came to him. He saw a tiny plant springing from the dry sand, a little speck of green moss. And as he looks upon it, and listened to the message that it brought it filled his heart with the same joy and peace and hope that the angel messenger brought to Jacob. Like him, he said, "The Lord is in this place," and he began to rejoice, for "this little gleam of life assured him that God must be near." So with fresh strength and courage pressed on his way, and very soon found the help that he was sure would come.

Little children, do you not want to hear all the messages that your Father in as many sweet ways is sending to you all time? Listen, and all the things that He has made will tell you that Jesus is not the Way by which God can reach you, talk with you, and lead you, and bring you to Himself to dwell in His house ever.

"O give me Samuel's ear.

The open ear, O Lord,
Alive and quick to hear
Each whisper of Thy Word;
Like him to answer at Thy call,
And to obey Thee first of all."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

-Jamaica has decided to join the Imperial penny postage.

-Since the introduction of the Imperial penny postage the correspondence between the United Kingdom and Canada has doubled.

-A tariff war is feared between Canada and the United States in consequence of the failure of the Commission to arrange for reciprocal terms on exports and imports between the two countries.

-Germany's trade with Persia and the East generally, is growing rapidly in volume. A field of English merchant vessels has passed into German hands.

-A Vienna engineer has invented an electrical apparatus by which sixty thousand words per hour can be transmitted to any reasonable distance on one line of wire.

-A general strike throughout the Belgian coal fields has been decided on. The men demand a considerable increase in wages. The army is to be mobilised to preserve order.

-Trams are now being run in New York by compressed air at a speed of twelve miles an hour. It takes two minutes to charge the cylinders, and one charge is sufficient for a journey of sixteen miles.

-The Chinese object to the British taking possession of Kowloon, in the rear of Hong Kong, and fighting has taken place. The place is said to be foul and insanitary beyond description, and apparently the Chinese prefer to keep it so.

-The Anti-Roman movement in Austria is making rapid progress. A great number of Catholics in Vienna have decided to go over to the Protestant religion on the same day next month. The event will be marked by much ceremony.

-The Russian Government has just decreed that women fleeing completed the necessary courses of study and obtained their diplomas shall have the right to practise as doctors with exactly the same status and rights as are accorded to men.

-The latest combination reported from America is one organised by the beggars of Philadelphia. The city is divided into districts which are divided among subscribers. Blacklegs are crushed out by organised and overwhelming competition, or by complaints from the union beggars, masquerading as indignant citizens.

-The New York city officials intend to dismiss the large force of office boys from the various departments and replace them by office girls. The boys were found to be lazy, insolent, and given to smoking cigarettes and reading penny dreadfuls. In fact, they proved a general nuisance. Experience shows that girls are more satisfactory.

-Investigation into police corruption in New York is bringing to light the existence of secret arrangements between saloon-keepers and some of the police officers by which the latter were to receive a certain sum monthly, and one half of all robberies committed in the saloons. A further payment was made to the police for not interfering whenever complaints were made.

-The outlook in the Philippines is not reassuring from the American standpoint. A party of U.S. troops has been ambushed and captured, and their fate is unknown. General Lawton declares that it will take 100,000 men to subdue the islands, and the American troops, who are mostly volunteers, complain that

they did not enlist for the kind of work they are now doing. It is said that only seven per cent. of them are willing to remain, although extra pay is offered.

-Cardinal Vaughan announces that the Roman Catholic Church would celebrate the incoming of the twentieth century by pilgrimages to Loretto, Jerusalem and Rome. Crosses would be erected in cathedrals and all the principal churches, bearing a Latin inscription commemorating the movement. The Blessed Sacrament would be solemnly exposed from the evening of December 30, 1900, till the morning of January 1, 1901, when it will be administered to the people. On the same night, in country places, and specially on lofty eminences, bonfires should be lighted. Rome was to be the crowning point of the celebration by solemnities which would take place at that time.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

Joshua said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Did you ever stop to think that he did not say, "As for me, I will serve the Lord, and I will try to get my family to serve Him too." He spoke with positiveness, both concerning himself and his house.

He knew what his family would do. He was a true son of Abraham, of whom the Lord said, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Gen. xviii. 19.

This shows that the obedience of Abraham's family was not forced obedience. Abraham's commands were not arbitrary nor harsh orders, but consisted of instruction of such nature that the children would grasp it and be built up by it. So Joshua knew what he would teach his children, and what the result would be.

From these two men we learn what ought to be the case with every Christian's family. God expects that the children of Christians will also be Christians. This is shown also by the fact that He commanded the Israelites to circumcise their children. Circumcision was the sign and seal of righteousness by faith, and the giving of this sign to children indicated that there was no other expectation but that they would grow up in the faith.

When the children of professed Christians grow up and depart from the faith, there is something radically wrong with the parents as well as with the children. This of course does not refer to instances where the parents have themselves come to the faith after their children were come to years of understanding. But if children who are born to Christians do not become Christians as they grow up, there is a serious flaw in the Christianity of the parents. They are not born Christians, it is true; but they should become Christians as a matter of course, just as surely as they grow into men's clothing. If all parents realised this possibility, and their own responsibility in the matter, there would be fewer divided families.

It is said that on one occasion Cæsar gave a very valuable present, and the receiver remonstrated, saying that it was too costly a gift. The emperor answered that it was not too great for Cæsar to give. So it is with God. He delights to give

good gifts to His children. All heaven was emptied for the sake of fallen man, and now He says He "gives us all things richly to enjoy." Why not take them?

Mr. Moody in one of his sermons told this incident and made the application of it:-

I remember reading of a blind man who was found sitting at the corner of a street in a great city with a lantern beside him. Some one went up to him, and asked what he had the lantern there for, seeing that he was blind, and the light was the same to him as the darkness. The blind man replied, "I have it so that no one may stumble over me." Dear friends, let us think of that. Where one man reads the Bible, a hundred read you and me. That is what Paul meant when he said, "we are to be living epistles known and read of all men." I would not give much for all that can be done by sermons, if we do not preach Christ by our lives. If we do not commend the Gospel to people by our holy walk and conversation, we shall not win them to Christ.

"Children obey your parents. . . . Honour thy father and mother; . . . that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long upon the earth." This is a wonderful commandment, and means much. It is not that the Lord's blessing is given simply because the child obeys its parents, or honours its father and mother, for the parents might require some things not right. But there is a principle involved. The implicit obedience that will lead a child to obey its parents when they speak, will also lead it to obey God when He speaks. Then when the child comes into harmony with God's laws, physical and spiritual, it will be well with him, and long life will be given. It cannot be otherwise, for here is the promise, and God's word is sure. Samuel must have known what it was to obey the first time spoken to, else he would not at his age, and in the night-time, have responded so quickly when the Lord spoke to him. If we would have our children grow up in the Lord, teach them obedience, for this is a small child's religion.

"Turned unto Fables" *The Present Truth* 15, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

In the charge which the Apostle Paul gave to Timothy, the Spirit of God has spoken directly to every minister of the Gospel concerning his duty, and has at the same time foretold a condition which we see quite fully developed in the church at the present time. Here is the inspired charge:-

"I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heed to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ear from the truth, and turn aside unto fables." 2 Tim. iv. 1-4.

A most literal fulfilment of this last statement is furnished by the pastor and congregation of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A. A new man has just been called to succeed Dr. Lyman Abbott, who recently resigned, and in order to make the Sunday evening services popular, he has adopted the plan of

selecting themes and characters from popular novels, instead of the Bible. "Three of his recent, sermons were founded on Hawthorne's 'Scarlet Letter,' Hugo's 'Les Miserables,' and one of George Eliot's novels. The innovation won popular approval, and the church was crowded, the congregation being intensely stirred by the pathos of the stories. The Brooklyn booksellers are doing enormous business owing to the demand for the standard novels used in the sermons."

This is not an isolated instance. The writer calls to mind a series of ten sermons that were preached a few years ago by a popular clergyman from Poe's "Raven;" and similar cases are of frequent occurrence. See the quotation from *The Christian*, on page 263 of this week's PRESENT TRUTH. It is true that no sensationalism is there reported, but out of twenty sermons listened to, in only three of them was there "any approach to a clear statement of the Gospel way of salvation by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Nor was there any reference to the necessity of conversion, nor to the work of the Holy Spirit." It is also stated that there is very little in the sermons we now hear, to convince of sin, and to lead to genuine repentance and conversion.

Why is this? Simply because the time has already come when men will not endure the sound doctrine. Solid, Bible teaching is at a discount, and when men turn away their ears from the truth, the very next thing is to turn to fables. But just as light is most needed when it is darkest, so whom men turn away from the truth to fables is there the more need of faithful preaching of the Word.

May 4, 1899

"The Wondrous Name. Christ Betrayed and Arrested. John xviii. 1-14"
***The Present Truth* 15, 18.**

E. J. Waggoner

John xviii. 1-14

Two texts of Scripture may be taken as the key to the portion before us in this week's study. They are John xiv. 30, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me," and John xiii. 1, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end," or "to the uttermost."

Jesus had finished His last confidential talk with His disciples. It had been confidential indeed, as none other could ever have been, for the presence of the traitor was not there. Jesus had treated Judas just as He had the other disciples, so that not one of them had any idea of his true character; yet it was impossible that there should have been that close fellowship between him and the Master that there was with the others. Judas was continually repelling the Master and His instruction, while the others, faulty as they were, were receptive.

Very tender had the words of Jesus been. He had addressed them as "little children," and had made the most comforting promises to them. Now He led them to the familiar spot where He had so often resorted with them.

"And Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place." There was no attempt at concealment on the part of Christ. He would not hide. He did not do anything to court betrayal and persecution, but proceeded just as He had many times before. In sight of the cross the actions of Jesus were as calm and dignified as ever. The grandeur and dignity and authority, yea, the Kingliness of the Man stand out this last night more clearly than ever before.

"Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns

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and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?"

Think of it! A band of soldiers with weapons, going forth to capture a single unarmed man, who had never harmed a living creature, and who would not fight even in self-defence. Guilty consciences they all must have had, which made cowards of them. But strong as their force of men was, it was altogether too small and weak to accomplish their purpose, if it had been a contest of strength. Jesus was led as a lamb to the slaughter. He was the Lamb of God, bearing the sins of the world; but the world knew it not. Men do not arm themselves with weapons to capture a single lamb.

And now see Jesus stand forth before that armed mob. "Whom seek ye?" A pertinent question, truly. Whom should they be seeking in that place, in such a manner? The question should have put every man of them to shame, but they were not ashamed. Boldly they answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Who is He, whom this armed crowd are seeking as though He were a fierce desperado? It is Jesus of Nazareth, the gentle Being who had all His life gone about doing good, healing the sick, relieving the oppressed, and comforting the mourners. His tender touch had nothing but healing in it, for He came to save life, not to take it. And now they come for Him as though it were a bear they were after. In this foolish and unnecessary precaution, and in the calm boldness of Jesus, we see a fulfilment of the scripture: "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion." Prov. xxviii. 1.

"I AM"

To the question, "Whom seek ye?" the leaders of the mob answered, "Jesus of Nazareth;" to which Jesus replied, "I am He." "As soon as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground."

What marvellous power there was in those few words! Perhaps the mystery will be clearer if we consider closely what it was that Jesus really said. Notice that the word "He" is in *Italic*, indicating that it is an addition to the text. Christ's own words, as recorded in the Greek, are simply, "I am." To Moses in the wilderness, the Lord had said of this name, "This is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations." Ex. iii. 14, 15. By this name Jesus had declared Himself to the unbelieving Jews. John viii. 24, 28, 58. The time had now come, of which He had said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am." In the very hour of His betrayal, and to His persecutors, He

revealed Himself by that glorious name by which He delivered the children of Israel from bondage, and by which He delivers all who trust in it. In His answer to them, in making Himself known as the One whom they were seeking to put to death, Jesus revealed Himself to them as their Saviour. But they were then too blinded to receive the revelation. No evidence could affect them then, but afterwards some of the very ones who had been His betrayers and murderers found peace in believing on the I AM-the Author of life.

POWER OF THE NAME

There is wondrous power in this blest name. When Jesus came to His disciples in that stormy night on the sea, when they were tired with rowing against terrible odds, and were despairing of life, He brought courage and salvation to them by the word, "Be of good cheer; I am, be not afraid." Matt. xiv. 27. That same name was in this trying hour a protection to His loved disciples. As soon as He had uttered it, the armed crowd went backward, and fell to the ground as if struck down by invisible weapons. Here was evidence of the Divinity of Christ, which should have caused those men to desist from their purpose. The power of Christ was manifested on this occasion no less for the salvation of His enemies than for His disciples.

Christ's own name was as a shield round about Him. It was an impenetrable wall, effectually protecting Him from all foes. "The prince of this world" could find no access to Him. He had nothing in Him, and therefore there was no pretext upon which He could enter. By the utterance of that name Jesus showed that no man or men could deprive Him of life, but that He Himself gave it up willingly.

That very name, with the same protecting power, is ours to take with us. That little incident in the garden is recorded in order that we may know that the I AM, who is with us all the days, even to the end of the world, is our shield against all the assaults of the enemy of our souls. He puts His own name upon us. Into that name we are baptized. While we confess that name, knowing that Christ is come in our flesh, and that it is no longer we who live and have to meet the attacks of Satan, but Christ living in us, we can as certainly keep the roaring lion at bay as Jesus did the fierce mob. What a blessed lesson is conveyed to us in this simple narrative!

"Take the name of Jesus ever,
As a shield from every snare
When temptations round you gather,
Breathe that holy name in prayer."

SAVING TO THE UTTERMOST

"Of them which Thou gavest me have I lost none." By the manifestation of His power through the utterance of the words, "I am," Jesus secured the safety of His disciples. "He loved them unto the end." Here we see proof that the name of Jesus is a protection. Not, however, when used merely as a charm. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." Prov. xviii.

10. It must be known as a real thing, in which the soul lives, in order for it to be a protection. Some men who did not grow the Lord once attempted to use His name for their own selfish interests, and the result was most disastrous to them. See Acts xix. 13-16.

In all His trial, Jesus never lost sight of His disciples. His care was for them, not for Himself. He knew all things that should come upon Him, yet not for a moment was He terrified. He came to save others by the sacrifice of Himself, and not once did He forget His mission. A soul less firm than the "Rock of Ages" would have been disconcerted and thrown off his balance. But Jesus was as calm as when sitting in the house of Lazarus. In the hour of greatest trial He demonstrated His power to keep all those who flee to Him for refuge.

A PROTEST AGAINST WAR

"Then Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Jesus had said to His disciples, and to us as well, "I say unto you, That ye resist not evil," and here He showed that His words are to be taken in their plainest signification. If there was ever a place in the world when right was oppressed by might, here it was. If ever in this world

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the sword was drawn in a just cause, this was the time; yet Jesus rebuked it. Nothing else can be learned from this occurrence than that there are no possible circumstances under which it is justifiable to use weapons of warfare. Such sentiments as the following we find given very frequent and prominent place in religious journals:-

In the last resort,-when insult has been wantonly inflicted, when the obligations of honour have been wilfully repudiated, and when every resource of peaceful diplomacy has been exhausted,-no self-respecting nation will be found unprepared to maintain its dignity and enforce its rights by appeal to arms.

Let that serve for those nations and peoples who have no other method of maintaining their honour and dignity than that which is common to the brutes. Jesus showed that there is a better way to maintain one's dignity. He was insulted and abused, yet never did the native dignity of His character assert itself and shine forth more conspicuously, and so victoriously, too, than when He reproved Peter for using the sword. Unarmed, He stood before that crowd of armed men, and demonstrated Himself to be their Master. Every Christian who is such indeed, has the same armour that He had. Read Eph. vi. 13. For professed Christians, therefore, to take the sword in self-defence, or for any other purpose, is to admit that they know nothing of "the power of Jesus' name."

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES"

In His instruction to His disciples Jesus had also said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you." Matt. v. 44. Here He gave a practical illustration of that teaching also. Not only did He reprove Peter for his act of violence to the high priest's servant, but He again showed that He came to save, and not to destroy. He was already in the hands of the mob (Mark xiv. 46, 47), when the wound was inflicted by the zealous Peter, but He gently disengaged one hand, at the same time courteously saying, as if apologising for seeming to resist them even to do them a kindness, "Suffer ye thus far," and touched the servant's ear, and healed him. Could Divine kindness be more strikingly manifested? Truly, this Man was the Saviour of the world.

Here we may well rest and contemplate. It is but a brief narrative that we have been studying, but it shines with Divine light. Only one thing more need be said, and that is, "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Heb. iii. 3.

**"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Crown of Shame and the Crown of Glory.
Isa. xxviii. 1-14" *The Present Truth* 15, 18.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXVIII. 1-13, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards of
Ephraim,
And to the fading flower of their glorious
beauty!
To those that are at the head of the rich valley,
that are stupefied with wine!

2. Behold the mighty one, the exceeding strong
one!
Like a storm of hail, like a destructive tem-
pest;
Like a rapid flood of mighty waters pouring
down;
He shall dash them to the ground with his
hand.

3. They shall be trodden under foot,
The proud crowns of the drunkards of
Ephraim:

4. And the fading flower of their glorious beauty,
Which is at the head of the rich valley,
Shall be as the early fruit before the summer;
Which whoso seeth, he plucketh it imme-
diately;
And it is no sooner in his hand, than he
swalloweth it.

5. In that day shall Jehovah God of Hosts become a beautiful crown,
And a glorious diadem, to the remnant of
His people:

6. And a spirit of judgment, to them that sit in
judgment;
And strength to them, that repel the war to
the gate (of the enemy).

7. But even these have erred through wine, and
through strong drink they have reeled;
The priest and the prophet have erred
through strong drink;
They are overwhelmed with wine; they have
reeled through strong drink:
They have erred in vision, they have stumbled
in judgment.

8. For all their tables are full of vomit;
Of filthiness, so that no place is free.

9. "Whom (say they) would He teach knowledge;
and to whom would He impart instruction?

"To such as are weaned from the milk, as are
kept back from the breast?

10. "For it is command upon command; com-
mand upon command;
"Line upon line; line upon line;
"A little here, and a little there."

11. Yea verily, with a stammering lip and a
strange tongue,
He shall speak unto this people.

12. For when He said unto them:
This is the true rest; give ye rest unto the
weary;
And this is the refreshment; they would not
hear.

13. Therefore shall the word of Jehovah be indeed
unto them,
Command upon command, command upon
command;
Line upon line, line upon line;
A little here, and a little there;
That they may go on, and fall backward;
And be broken, and snared, and caught,

There are several different renderings of the first verses of this chapter. The student will see that the first verse differs somewhat in Lowth's translation from what it is in the common version. The Revised Version, however, seems to be

more consistent than any other, in that it keeps one subject throughout. In this it is the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim, which is the fading flower of his glorious beauty, and which stands at the head of the fat valley. In the others it

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would seem that the woe is pronounced against the crown of pride, and against the drunkards of Ephraim, as well.

There is, in fact, however, no difference, for since the crown of pride which stands at the head of the fat valley is undoubtedly the city of Samaria, it follows that the drunkards of Ephraim suffer in the woe pronounced against her.

Let no one think, because this prophecy specifies Ephraim and the city of Samaria, which long since ceased to have any importance as a city, that it is merely local, and all in the past. Look ahead in the chapter, and read in verse 22, and it will be seen that the destruction threatened against Ephraim is "the consumption" "determined upon the whole earth."

Remember that the earth was given to man in the beginning. It was to be the possession of a perfect people. Therefore when God brought His people out of Egypt, and gave them the lands of the heathen, "that they might keep His statutes," it was in fulfilment of the promise to Abraham, that he and his seed should possess the earth. Rom. iv. 13. All of God's dealing with his people, no matter how localised, had reference to the one great promise. This was the thing that God always had in view. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise." At any time up to the captivity of Judah, the people might have had the fulfilment of the promise, in the resurrection; and whenever God tells of judgments that shall come upon them because of their disobedience, it involves the whole earth. When God punishes those who have been His people, because they have become like the heathen, it follows that He will at the same time punish the heathen themselves.

Keeping those principles always in mind, we may read this prophecy as applying to us, that is, to the professed people of God in this day, no matter what their name. The glory of those who lift up themselves in pride shall be as a fading flower. "For all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Isa. xl. 6-8.

"And the fading flower of their glorious beauty, which is at the head of the rich valley, shall be as the early fruit before the summer; which whoso seeth, he plucketh it immediately; and it is no sooner in his hand, than he swalloweth it." So quickly will be the destruction of those who exalt themselves against God, and boast of their own security. "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. v. 2-3.

What a glorious prospect is held out in verses five and six. When the crown of pride shall be trodden underfoot, and the glorious beauty of the transgressors shall be a fading flower, "in that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people, and for a Spirit

of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate." The residue is the remnant, and the remnant shall be saved. God is from everlasting to everlasting; therefore those who have Him for their crown of glory, have a crown "which fadeth not away." The heavens and the earth shall wax old like a garment, but He remains the same, and His years do not fail.

Since God is to be the crown of glory to His people in the day of destruction to all in which haughty men boast, it is plain that in God alone should men trust and make their boast now. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things do I delight, saith the Lord." Jer. ix. 23, 24. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men." 1 Cor. iii. 20, 21. "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chose the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

The Lord is to be the crown of glory to His people. He Himself is to be the only ornament that His people will wear. Their adorning must be "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter iii. 4. This crown of glory will not be appreciated by the world. Indeed, the world may scoff at those who wear it, even as they did at Christ Himself. "The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." 1 John iii. 1. When Christ was on earth He had "no form nor comeliness;" and when men saw Him there was no beauty in Him that would cause them to desire Him; therefore they hid their faces from Him, and esteemed Him smitten of God. Isa. liii. 2, 3. Yet He had glory that could be seen by those who had eyes for it, even "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," but it was the glory of grace and truth. John i. 14. When the Lord comes, those who have this beauty, the beauty of holiness, will shine forth as the sun. Matt. xiii. 43. Those who will now show such appreciation of the beauty of the Lord that they will be content with it, and not put a slight upon it by seeking to supplement it with the adorning of the world, even though they be considered plain, have the assurance that through all eternity they will be as beautiful as the heavens.

The time is coming when "the saints shall judge the world," and angels as well. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. They will surely need the very best judgment then; therefore the Lord of hosts will be "for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment." It will be no human judgment that will be exercised in that day, but the judgment of the Lord Himself, working in men. But the fact that this perfect judgment is to be exercised by the saints in glory is set forth as the reason why they should not now act foolishly. God will now be judgment to those who trust Him, as well as in

the day of final judgment. Just as it will be His Spirit that speaks in His children when they are called upon to answer for the hope that is in them (Matt. x. 20), so will He now be wisdom and judgment for them in all the affairs of life. See Isa. liv. 13; Ps. i. 1-3; Col. i. 9, 10. But let it be remembered that this spirit of judgment is but

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the manifestation of the spirit of meekness with which God's people are adorned. "The meek will He guide in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way." Ps. xxv. 9. Is it not better to acknowledge that we have no wisdom at all, and to have the wisdom of God, which is perfect, than to boast of our independence, and be left to act foolishly? In other words, Is it not much better to act wisely, and give God the credit, than to act foolishly, and take all the credit to ourselves?

God says that the priest and the prophet, as well as the people, have erred through wine, and are out of the way through strong drink, and that therefore "they stumble in judgment." This is too true in the most literal sense, for it is a sad fact that very many professed Christians, including many who call themselves ministers of the Lord, are often filled with wine in which is excess, rather than with the Spirit. But there is a wine, against the use of which no temperance society that has ever yet been formed has ever protested, and that is the wine of Babylon, the wine of worldly pride. See Rev. xiv. 8; xviii. 3. It is very easy for Christians to become intoxicated with the prospect of worldly fame and applause, and thus to depart from the simplicity of the faith. Proud Babylon, the Church of Rome, whose religion is outward pomp and worldly prosperity and political power, is but the aggregate of the working of the spirit of worldliness in individuals. Beware of this form of drunkenness, lest you be where "there is no place clean." Isa. xxviii. 8. Compare Rev. xviii. 2.

Those who are drunken with the wine of their own pride, and who, trusting in their own wisdom, scorn to be directed by the plain and simple Word of God,—"the sincere milk of the Word,"—say contemptuously, "Whom will He teach knowledge? and whom will He make to understand the message? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts? For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." Vain in their imaginations, and puffed up with the pride of their own opinions, thinking themselves competent to sit in judgment upon the Bible, men resent being taught like little children. Yet in no other way can they enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matt. xviii. 3. Men of the world, "professing themselves to be wise," choose to reason things out, to work up complex "systems" of belief; children, however, learn by accepting simple statements of fact. The child grows in knowledge merely by believing, and consequently it grows rapidly. At no other period in a person's life does he learn so much and so rapidly as in the first three or four years, when he takes everything by faith. Afterwards, as he gradually "comes to years of understanding," that is, as he thinks that he must manufacture wisdom, instead of receiving it as a gift from God, his progress is much slower. But God designs that His children shall always remain little children, so that their progress in wisdom may be as great in later years as in the beginning. So He will continue to teach by giving precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line,

line upon line; here a little, and there a little. Constant repetition of simple truths which, although simple, contain infinity, is the way to acquire "the wisdom which is from above."

But how about the statement that this sort of teaching is to be given to the people, "that they might go and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken"? Ah, that is the same thing for which Jesus gave thanks, saying, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Matt. xi. 25. Men go with heads lifted up so high, looking so far off for wisdom, that they stumble over simple truth lying at their feet. Is it not a thing to be thankful for, that the only way the Lord makes the way of life hard for anybody is by making it easy? How can any of the wise men of earth, who stumble and fall over the teaching of the Lord, accuse Him of injustice in His dealing with them, when that which He set forth before them was so simple that a babe could understand it? To say that the way of life was too hard for them, would be to deny all their pretensions to wisdom, and to confess that they did not know as much as the babes. No; there is no excuse. The only reason why any err from the truth is that they will not hear. God not only offers them rest and peace, but says, "This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing;" but they refuse to hear. He would make them fellow-workers with Himself, but they will not. Let us not refuse to learn the lesson. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh."

"A Shining Light" *The Present Truth* 15, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

"Thy Word is, a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. cxix. 105.
"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light." Prov. vi. 28.

This is true of God's Word as a whole, but it is equally true of every portion of it. One does not need to eat all the corn there is in the world; in order to have life; there is life in every grain. So there is life in every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, for each word is living and active; it is life.

But the life is the light. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John i. 1-4. In every sentence of the Bible there is something to enlighten us. From the seemingly most obscure and meaningless statements, there will flash forth the most glorious light, if we but consider them attentively.

More than this, these very obscure passages, some of them seeming to be utterly irrelevant, will give light that will make a host of other things shine with increased brilliancy. Do you not know that a single ray of light flashed into a dark room will reveal everything that is in it. Let the sun but for a single moment flash out through a rift in a thick cloud, and the whole landscape will be transfigured, and objects that were before unnoticed will stand out in bold relief. So from a single text of Scripture, to which careful, earnest attention is given, will often come light that will flash through the entire Bible, making everything appear new.

Everybody who has given any real study to the Bible must have had some experience of this kind.

Therefore let no one lightly esteem any portion of the Bible; and let no one think it a waste of time to spend hours, and days, and months, and even years, in meditating upon and studying a small section of it. If one will do this, not neglecting of course to read the rest of the Bible, he will acquire such a knowledge of the whole as will not possibly be gained in any other way.

"One Thing I Do" *The Present Truth* 15, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

While crossing the Atlantic a short time ago, a man who had never been on the ocean before was conversing with another who had made frequent trips to America. The first one said, "I suppose you must have become quite well acquainted with the captain of this ship, having crossed the ocean so many times." The other one replied, "Though I have crossed the ocean many times in this vessel, I have as yet never so much as even seen him. The fact is, the high responsibility of his position and the vigilant oars necessary to insure the safety of the ship and the hundreds of passengers aboard will not permit of his mind being diverted from the trust committed to his care, and he is rarely seen but by very few of the passengers, and never mingles with them."

Then the thought came, how like his position is that of the ambassador of Christ. It is the studied purpose of the enemy to put every possible hindrance in the way of the advancement of the work of God. He will set in circulation slanderous stories to injure the worker, who would naturally seek to justify himself and defend his reputation. But if he should seek to do this, he would have no time for anything else, and this is what would delight Satan. When the enemies of the prophet Nehemiah would call him away from the work that God had appointed him to do, he sent word to them saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." That is the determination and spirit that God wants all His workers to have. The captain of that great steamer knew nothing but the sailing of it across the mighty deep and safely landing it at its destination. The Apostle Paul declared that he would know nothing "but Christ and Him crucified." So in the Gospel work of to-day, the ministers of Jesus Christ, and all His followers as well, are to know what God would have them to do, then follow on to do that thing, turning neither to the right nor the left.

"Little Folks. Between the Waters" *The Present Truth* 15, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

Have you thought at all during the past month, as you have seen the heavy "April showers" falling so frequently of the place where they all come from,-of "the waters that be above the heavens?"

Yes, you have looked up at the sky, and watched the clouds, and wondered how long the shower would last, how soon the veil would disappear from the face of the sun, and its bright smile invite you out again to play in its warm beams.

But have you thought of the great ocean of water that is above the firmament, bound up in the thick clouds? What holds it up there, and how is it that it stays floating in the heavens, instead of all falling to the earth and swallowing up every living thing?

Well, we can tell you what it is that holds up this mighty ocean of waters, but we cannot tell you *how it is done*, for that is something that no one in this world is able to explain.

In the Book of Job there are two questions asked that none of the wise men of this world have yet been able to answer: "Canst thou understand the spreadings of the clouds?" and "Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?"

It is the Word of God that upholds these waters in the clouds, for He "upholdeth all things by the Word of His power." When God said, "Let there be a firmament [an expanse or space] in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters," His Word, the breath of His mouth, went forth between the waters and divided them. "By the Word of the Lord the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water." Did you know that you are really dwelling "in the midst of the waters," in a tent between the waters, which are held back by the Word of God, and if He should withdraw His hand you would be at once overwhelmed and swallowed up, Just as Pharaoh and his host were in the Red Sea?

You may have thought, as you have read of the children of Israel journeying through the wilderness, how much you would like to have travelled with them, and seen "the mighty acts of the Lord,"-to have fed on the manna that fell from heaven, to have drunk of the water gushing from the rock, to have marched through the midst of the Red Sea and the River Jordan on dry land.

But *all* these things were only to show them and us what wonders God is doing for us all the time. He let them "see His works forty years," so that they might "learn His ways," might learn to know Him so well that they would be able to see Him working everywhere and in all things.

He fed them with bread from heaven so that they might know that *all* the bread they had came from heaven, and He the One who fed them always. He made the water gush from the rock upon which He stood, to teach them that all the water in the world flows from Him, "the fountains of living waters." He held back the water; of the Red Sea and the Jordan, and led them through the midst on dry land, so that they might see that they were all the time walking on the dry land in the midst of the waters which are held back by His power.

In the Book of Exodus we are told just what it was that divided the waters of the Red Sea. "The Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong wind;" "by the blast of His nostrils the waters were gathered together." God *breathed* between the water, so making a way for the children of Israel to pass, while His breath separated the waters and held them back.

And this is just what He did in the beginning, and has been doing ever since He first said, "Let there be a firmament." He breathed between the waters, and divided the waters that were above from the waters that were below the firmament.

This firmament we call the atmosphere or *air*, which is the breath of God in which "we live, and move, and have our being. The Lord stretcheth out the heavens, [or the atmosphere] like a curtain, and spreadeth them out as *a tent to dwell in*."

At one time God let the waters above and the waters below the firmament come together again as they were in the beginning. This was because the wickedness of the people in the earth was so great that God was obliged to destroy the world by a flood of waters.

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Then "the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the flood-gates of heavens were opened;" the world was turned again into one great ocean and every living thing destroyed except Noah and those who were with him in the ark which floated safely upon the waters. "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

Then "God made a wind to pass over the earth," and "the waters returned from off the earth continually." The waters were again divided, and "the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store."

How may we know that there will never be another flood of waters to destroy the earth? What has God given us to remind us of this? Think of this until next week when we will talk of it again.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

-Sea-bathing causes many diseases of the ear. Cotton should be put in the ear when it is the intention to submerge the head.

-A calculation is made that the beer consumed throughout the world in a single year would form a lake sufficiently vast to drown all the English-speaking people.

-The heart of a vegetarian is said to beat, on an average, fifty-eight to the minute; that of the meat-eater, seventy-two. This represents a difference of 20,000 beats in twenty-four hours.

-Norwegian legislators propose that girls who do not know how to knit, sew, wash, and cook should be refused permission to marry. Daughters of wealthy men are not to be excepted. -*Literary Digest*, *New York*.

-The third plague epidemic in Bombay, which has caused terrible ravages, is now on the decline. It is officially estimated that the deaths from plague in India since the commencement number over a quarter of a million.

-Telegrams from Manila state that the flower of Aguinaldo's army was annihilated at Galumph, after two days of continuous fighting. The Filipinos made use of artillery, and showed considerable tactical skill in their defence.

-The demand for pig iron which has for years past been almost a drug in the market is now rapidly overtaking the supply, and prices are now 15 per cent. higher than the average for last year. Blast furnaces which have been closed down for years are being restarted.

-Reports from Russia show that the condition of things caused by the famine is not improving. It is said that a considerable portion of the relief intended for the

starving peasants finds its way into the capacious pockets of the dishonest officials. One paper says, "It is the lack of men to till the fields, as much as any other cause, which has brought about this famine. The men are serving in the army-over a million of them."

-In the Hungarian Diet the Foreign Minister was asked whether Austro-Hungary had any intention of acquiring a "lease of territory on the Chinese coast." Reply was given that no such intention existed, because there was a lack of business initiative in Hungary, the navy was not proportionately equipped for such an enterprise, and financial considerations forbade the idea. The thought that China might not perhaps desire to "lease" her territory did not seem to be taken into account at all.

-Although China is said to be one of the Powers invited to the Peace Conference, she continues to improve her armaments, like the rest of the Powers invited. "The Grand Council recently approved with the utmost enthusiasm a new arm invented by the general of the Kang-au troops. This weapon consists of a stout piece of wood 3ft. long, to which is affixed a sharp plate of iron, shaped like a shovel. The general claimed for his invention that Chinese soldiers armed with this weapon would be able to decapitate their enemies at a single blow."

-M. Edmund Rod, the distinguished French littÉrateur, visited the stockyards as Chicago to witness the slaughter of cattle. Seeing the animals being killed at great speed all round, he exclaimed, "Mon Dieu! What barbarism!" and immediately fainted. He did not recover immediately, and was carried out. His friend who accompanied him afterwards pressed M. Rod to witness some more of the slaughtering, as he had not yet seen any hog-killing, but he could only murmur feebly "sufficient. It is too horrible!"

-Some further experiments in wireless telegraphy demonstrate that vessels in rapid motion can be communicated with, and that the current can be concentrated upon one point to the exclusion of others. In this way it will be possible to secure as much privacy for a message as is afforded by the wires.

-It seems probable that the Russian calendar will soon be changed to correspond with that adopted by the rest of Europe. A committee has been appointed in St. Petersburg to examine the question and several of the Government departments favour the adoption of the proposed reform at an early date.

-An African traveller, Dr. Esser, who received a decoration from the Kaiser, has been proved by another African traveller to be an impostor. The latter was approached by one of Esser's friends with a bribe of 3,000 marks to keep silent, with the remark, "You know we African travellers are all swindlers, more or less."

-In view of the immediate prospects before Europe, the Berlin *Post* concludes that England's only hope is a resort to universal compulsory military service. It says, "No people can maintain their position in the world unless the entire effective manhood serves with the 'Colours.'" When that is the case no nation in the world will have any position worth maintaining. Many of the leading nations are already on the verge of bankruptcy through taking men from their work to serve in the army.

-The Roman Catholic Bishop of Liverpool told the annual Catholic Conference at Blackpool that "as Ritualists were doing the work of Catholics amongst Protestants and Anglicans they should welcome and sympathise with them. Catholics must be patient with Ritualists, and encourage them to take one step, the last of all steps, to the Catholic Church. Ritualists had not confidence in their Bishops, and were being led to the belief that there must be a Church where there was perfect unity with infallible teaching." Yet, if the Roman Catholic Church only knew it, they will gain nothing by persuading others to follow them. When the blind lead the blind the goal before both is only the ditch. Matt. xv. 14.

-Mr. Richard Croker, the chief of the New York "Tammany" ring, sailed for England recently. Crowds saw him off, and it was with difficulty that a passage was made to the steamer through the mass of his admirers. Such a scene had never been witnessed at the dock. The British Ambassador and several other distinguished persons sailed by the steamer, but they were comparatively unnoticed. The parting words of this idol of popular affection were doubtless worthy of him and the crowds who cheered him. They were that "his only object in visiting England was to bring back more English money from English racecourses." A commissioner is at present investigating Tammany's municipal corruption.

-Intended for the benefit of the poor and needy the State pawnshops in France are being turned to the advantage of well-to-do citizens. French apartments afford but scanty space for the storage of bicycles, and it costs money to hire accommodation, so that the owners have adopted the ingenious plan of pawning them for the winter months. For the housing, cleaning, and general safekeeping of their machines, all they have to pay is the very moderate interest charged upon the money borrowed, and as these people are by no means necessitous, they ask only for five shillings, thus securing the hospitality of the Government for the merest trifle. The pawnshops are now blocked up with machines to the exclusion of all other pledges.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

The following extract from a sermon by Dr. Parkhurst, of New York, having for its text the story of Peter's attempt to defend Christ with the sword, will go well with the lesson from the eighteenth of John, in this number of PRESENT TRUTH. The paragraph acquires additional significance from the fact that Dr. Parkhurst was formerly a zealous advocate of the use of politics and State power for the reformation of men:-

If you put cold lead into a man's heart for the sake of trying to civilise him, his children may be pardoned for receiving with only chill cordiality the Gospel you undertake to put in their hearts for the purpose of Christianising them. If Jesus had gone armed, it would have been a confession on His part that the brute force of the visible world is more than a match for the spirit power of the invisible world. You cannot make a man believe in God if you do not convince him that you believe in God yourself. Peter, by brandishing his sword, denied the divinity of

Jesus. And any other man cheapens God when he goes about to yoke God's Spirit alongside of carnal contrivances. It is the absence of such carnal contrivance that explains the rapid extension of Christianity during the first three centuries of our own era. God worked mightily because He had no backing. Up to that time, armies and navies were on the side of the pagans. Christianity is never so powerful as when it is unprotected, and evangelisation that depends upon soldiers and gunboats has no future.

The natural man never likes to acknowledge that he has done wrong. And if he is sorry in word it is after his sin has found him out, and a penalty is about to be inflicted. When Saul went contrary to the Lord's instruction to destroy Amalek, he sought to justify himself all the way along till Samuel said to him, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king." Then Saul could say, "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and thy words."

So it was with Pharaoh who prayed, "Entreat the Lord that He may take away the frogs from me." Commenting on this, Mr. Spurgeon gives utterance to some wholesome truth that it would be well to consider. He says:-

A fatal flaw is manifest in that prayer. *It contains no confession of sin.* He says not, "I have rebelled against the Lord: entreat that I may find forgiveness!" Nothing of the kind; he loves sin as much as ever. A prayer without penitence is a prayer without acceptance. If no tear has fallen upon it, it is withered. Thou must come to God as a sinner through a Saviour, but by no other way. He that comes to God as the Pharisee, with, "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are," never draws near to God at all; but he that cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner," has come to God by the way which God has Himself appointed. There must be confession of sin before God, or our prayer is faulty.

It is quite a common statement that the Mohammedans observe Friday as their Sabbath, the Jews Saturday, and the Christians Sunday. It is, however, not true that the Mohammedans observe Friday as a Sabbath-day. It is simply the day on which they go to the mosque for prayer; neither business nor pleasure is laid aside.

The idea of the Sabbath and of Sabbath observance is obtained only from the Scriptures. Of all nations known in history the Jews alone kept Sabbath, because they alone had the Scriptures. Heathen peoples know nothing of Sabbath-keeping. They had holidays and feast days, which are borrowed and perverted from the time when all men knew the Lord. For a knowledge of Sabbath-keeping we must go to the Bible. That book, and that only, tells us what the Sabbath is, and how it should be kept.

God does not put anything into the Bible to frighten people into being good; that is not what the Gospel is for. God tells of coming judgments in order that those who know Him may find comfort, for they know that He who permits them is their Keeper, so they need not "be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday." What a blessed comfort it is to know that we serve a God who can deliver us from all these things.

Fighting has been suspended in the Philippines, the insurgent army having asked for a cessation of hostilities. General Otis, however, insists upon unconditional surrender, and it is believed that this will not be long withheld.

We read in Acts v. 13: "And of the rest durst no man join himself to them; but the people magnified them." This is just the kind of people God would have His church composed of to-day. Not that this or that one shall be disfellowshipped, but that the church shall so speak and so live that no man who is not really "of us" will dare join himself to it. Are you helping to make the church of which you are a member such a body?

A terrific cyclone is reported from Missouri, destroying two towns, and causing great loss of life. Nearly one hundred bodies have been found. The cyclone swept a path a quarter of a mile broad. Heavy rain followed accompanied by intense darkness. A number of fires were caused. The roar and suction caused by the storm deafened everybody in its path for a minute, and many who escaped unhurt report that they were rendered unconscious for brief periods. The storm zone was in some places swept as clear as a threshing-floor, while bricks are strewn in a tangle knee-deep, but pulverised as though they had gone through a stone-crusher.

These frequently recurring and tremendously emphatic lessons are needed. They warn us not to put off to some future time the preparation for the great day of the Lord, but to get ready. At present these demonstrations of human insignificance occur mostly, yet not entirely, in districts where they involve comparatively small loss of life, but if the warning they give is not heeded, they will come closer home, with more and more urgent demands on our attention.

The time is at hand when "the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." Isa. xxiv. 1. It is necessary to turn the world upside down to get it in its right position. Men are calling good evil, and evil good. They are exalting the proud, when it is only the humble who are truly exalted. The Gospel puts things the right way up, and so the apostles were described as "these that have turned the world upside down." Now men may, by receiving the Gospel, be put right, but if they call not, God will not allow His world to remain for ever inverted, and the time is at hand when He will put it right. Then those who have not themselves been converted will drop out of it. The ninety-first Psalm tells how we may endure that time and pass safely through every lesser preparatory evil.

May 11, 1899

"God's Temple and Its Glory" *The Present Truth* 15, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

"The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven." Ps. xi. 4.

"Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool." Isa. lxvi. 1.

"Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." Jer xxiii. 23, 24.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isa. lvii. 18.

God has a dwelling-place in the heavens, yet not so that anybody can locate Him in one place to the exclusion of all others; for He is everywhere; He fills all things. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." Ps. cxxxix. 7-10.

Therefore all creation is the temple of the living God. The Jews and the Samaritans quarrelled over whether God's house was in Jerusalem or in Samaria. If they had but known the Scriptures, they would have known that even the desolate wilderness is the house of God, and the gate of heaven. See Gen. xxviii. 10-17. "Verily Thou art a God that hidest

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Thyself, O God of Israel the Saviour." Isa. xlv. 15. Yet He does not hide Himself so that He cannot be found. Whoever uses his eyes, may see God revealed in every plant and tree, in every flowing stream, and in the birds that fly in the heavens. See Rom. i. 30.

From this it follows that man also forms a part of God's great temple. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. iii. 16. Read the whole of this chapter, and the two chapters following, and you will readily see that this language is addressed not to perfected saints, but to men who are living in sin. It is the Spirit's strongest appeal to men to live holy lives. God makes men His temples, in order that He may sanctify them by His presence.

The question at once suggests itself, If all creation, even fallen nature; is the temple of God, how is it that in His temple everything says, Glory? It is not ours to question how God's Word can be true, but by believing it to see its truth. The seraphim, who stand above God's throne, beholding Him day and night, declare, that "the whole earth is full of His glory," or, "the fulness of the whole earth is His glory." Isa. vi. 3. We are daily witnesses of this. In spite of the curse upon the earth, the glory of God manifests itself. From the bare trees of winter, victims of the curse of death, spring forth the green leaves and bright blossoms of spring, revealing the resurrection power and glory of the Lord. Every beauteous bud, every delicately-tinted flower, every gleam of sunshine, is but the shining forth of the glory of God, which cannot be wholly veiled even by the curse. The songs of the birds are but the echo of the voice that is heard in the chorus of the angels before the throne of God.

But there are many men who use their voices only in blasphemy of the holy name of God; how do they say, Glory? Again we must remember that belief of

God's Word gives us the explanation of it. God says that everything says, Glory, and so it must be. Every man who lives and moves is a monument of God's love and power "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Acts xvii. 25. Even the foul language with which debased men pollute God's temple, is an unconscious testimony to God's longsuffering and lovingkindness, and therefore a witness "to the praise of the glory of His grace." God makes even the wrath of men to praise Him. The fact that God gives men the breath with which they deny Him, shows His glorious grace.

God's will is sure to be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. No adversary can thwart God's will, which is that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea." Hab. ii. 14. Such is His glorious power that He advances His cause even by the attempts of the enemy to thwart it. Willingly or unwillingly, every creature that God has created, must contribute to His glory and praise. How much better to have it done with our consent, than against it! Since God can do such marvellous things and show the wonders of His glory even through those who are in opposition to Him, what can He not do with those who yield themselves to Him? Therefore "yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God," that ye may glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

**"Studies from the Gospel of John. Denying the Lord. John xviii.
15-27" *The Present Truth* 15, 19.**

E. J. Waggoner

John xviii. 15-27

Jesus had suffered Himself to be taken by the armed men which Judas had conducted, and was by them bound and led away to the mock trial. The disciples had protested that nothing could induce them to leave Him; but this was because they did not know what was coming. They were sure that they would not forsake the One who had so tenderly cared for them; and yet had showed Himself so mighty to deliver. They could not conceive of Him in any other state than as they had seen Him going about scattering blessings everywhere, except as they thought of Him taking the kingdom to Himself, driving out the Romans, correcting the abuses that had crept into the Jewish priesthood, and reigning in pomp and majesty. But now they saw Him bound and led away unresistingly; and although they had witnessed the power of the simple words "I AM" which He uttered, they could not hold out against the overwhelming shock of His capture, and "they forsook Him and fled." Mark xiv. 50.

Even Peter who had been most zealous in his protestation of loyalty to the Master and who had been valiant enough with the sword, could not keep his courage in the face of the Master's apparent defeat, and he fled with the rest; but when he found that the mob was content with Jesus, that it was the Shepherd and not the sheep

they were after, he turned round and "followed afar off." Luke xxii. 54.

We may be sure that it was not mere curiosity that prompted Peter to follow. He had intense love for Jesus, even as had the other disciples. True, they had not yet attained to that perfect love that casteth out all fear, but they loved Him nevertheless, even though they fled in terror.

John was an acquaintance of the high priest, and so found ready access to the palace. Peter was stopped at the door, but through the influence of John was admitted. As he passed in, the girl that kept the door recognised him, or thought she did, and said, "Art thou not one of this man's disciples?" Peter said, "I am not."

Peter's love for the Master caused him to desire to be as near Him as possible, for he was anxious to see what the outcome would be. Yet it was a perilous time, and he would not endanger himself by seeming to be very much interested in the affair. So he joined the group of servants and officers who stood round the fire, warming themselves, "and Peter stood with them warming himself."

It is not difficult to picture to ourselves the state of Peter's mind. Intensely fearful for his own safety, yet anxious about Jesus, compelled by fear to seem to be one of the indifferent crowd about the fire, listening to their rough jokes and loose gossip, which he could not have joined in even if his mind had not been distracted by anxious thought for the Master, and under the necessity of seeming to share in the conversation in which he had no interest and took no part, at the same time straining his ears to hear what passed between Jesus and His merciless persecutors. It was no pleasant position in which he found himself. It is never an easy thing to act a double part, and the circumstances in this case made it doubly trying. Besides, Peter was not hypocritical by nature, but blunt and outspoken. It was his fear that was swaying him now.

But Peter could not succeed in concealing his identity. Indeed, it is most likely that his very efforts to do so made it the more difficult. He was not one of the unfeeling crowd, and could not make himself appear so. He was ill at ease. He could not conceal the deep feeling that he had, and this uneasiness could not but draw the attention of the others to him as he "stood and warmed himself." "They said therefore unto him, Art thou not also one of His disciples? He denied it and said, I am not." Verse 25. This was the second positive denial of Christ that evening.

This, however, was not the end. The very words in which Peter denied the Lord, served to mark him as one of His disciples. Jesus was known as the prophet from Galilee, and His disciples were also Galileans, who spoke with an accent noticeably different from that of the dwellers in Judea and Jerusalem. So "they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them, for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto." But the more he denied, the more was attention fastened upon him. And "one of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?" John xviii. 26.

This was bringing Peter into close quarters. He was not only in danger because of his connection with Jesus, but he was likely to suffer because of his

rash zeal in the garden. The relative of the wounded man might be inclined to take revenge, if the act were settled upon Peter. And so doubly frightened Peter began to curse and to swear, saying, "I know not the man of whom you speak." Mark xiv. 71. Alas, what a change was this from the loyal Peter in the upper chamber in loving communion with Jesus a few hours before.

All this is recorded for our learning; but unfortunately we too often miss the lesson. It is easier to censure Peter's cowardice than to avoid it. Peter is not the only disciple who has denied his Lord. In fact, the flight of the eleven when Jesus was bound, was in itself a tacit denial of Him. Peter's denial was more marked than that of the rest, but this was but the natural recoil from his boastful profession of faithfulness: "Though all men should be caused to stumble because of Thee, yet will I never be caused to stumble." Matt. xxvi. 33. (See margin of revision.)

Moreover Peter's use of the sword tended to his discomfiture. If he had not used violence, he would have had no special cause for fear. Men are often applauded for bravery which they show in defending the right, or what they conceive to be right, with weapons of war. But that sort of defence, however zealously conducted, may be in reality only a manifestation of cowardice. It requires much more bravery quietly to suffer than fiercely to repel assault. Quiet endurance of injury is a far better expression of real zeal for Christ than are loud professions and vigorous blows.

There is a truth here that needs special emphasis at this time. Would that every Christian gathering might have this lesson strongly set before them. There is scarcely a meeting without resolutions denouncing this or that evil. Religious leaders become almost frenzied in their passionate denunciation of men and measures which they think, and which may really be, opposed to Christ and Christianity. They vie with one another in strong expressions of loyalty to Christianity, and hatred of evil doing; yet when the test comes to them personally to suffer alone and unknown for the truth's sake, too often they are ready to compromise. It is well to speak boldly for truth, but it is better to hold to the truth and say nothing, than to use strong language for it and not live it.

In Titus i. 16, we read of some "who profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him." This is done every time a professed follower of Christ does that which is inconsistent with the character of Christ. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27. Whether one has had the reality of this experience or not, the act of baptism indicates that one surrenders himself to Christ; yea, more than this, that he lays down his own life, and takes the life of Christ, so that it is no longer he, but Christ who lives and walks about among men. The old man is declared to be dead, and the new man who takes his place is the Man Christ Jesus. So he calls himself by the name of Christ-a Christian. Now so long as he professes to be a Christian, he says by everything which he does, "This is the way Christ does; this is Christ's character." But if he does those things which are inconsistent with the character of Jesus of Nazareth, then he is denying Him as surely as Peter did, and his guilt may be even greater than was Peter's.

One may deny Christ by his association with others, even though he utter not a word. Peter's mingling with the rude, unfeeling crowd in the court room was in itself a denial of Christ. Not that it was wrong to associate with sinners; this Jesus Himself did; He went in with publicans and sinners and ate with them. But it must be remembered that when Jesus associated with sinners, He did not try to make it appear that He was one of them. He associated with them to win them by His kindness and His example to a better life. And although His demeanour was such that they could associate with Him familiarly, yet when He most appeared to be one with them, there was always apparent the fact that He was far different from them. To stand in the crowd, or sit in the assembly where the rude jest and the coarse talk, and possibly the reviling of that which is good and pure, show that they are the enemies of Christ, is to deny Him, even though one say not a word. Unless one's very presence is a rebuke to sin, it is a countenancing of it: and that is a denial of Christ. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night."

It was the offence of the cross that caused the disciples to flee, and Peter to deny his Lord. It was not that they loved Christ any the less, but because they were unexpectedly brought face to face with a condition which they had not calculated upon. They had not taken the shame of the cross into consideration when they followed Christ. Jesus had told them of it repeatedly, in order that they might be prepared for this very time, but they had not comprehended His words. They had not counted the cost. They had been willing to accept Jesus as King, even though He was in poverty, and was hated and rejected by the priests and elders, because His power was visibly manifested before them. But they had not learned that God chooses things that are not to bring to naught things that are. So when Jesus seemed to have no power at all in the hands of the mob and on the cross, they failed.

If we would not make the same failure, we must make provision for the cross in our lives. We must not repeat that since to be a Christian is to have a name greater than that of the kings of the earth, we shall therefore always be held in high esteem because of our profession. We must remember that the world is in deadly opposition to Christ, and that the world never becomes converted. "Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James iv. 4. There can, therefore, be no more positive denial of Christ, than to be like the world, or to seem to be like the world. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Rom. xii. 2. Know that that which is highly esteemed by the world is an abomination to the Lord; and that "the base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen." 1 Cor. i. 28. The cross of Christ, which the world looks upon with scorn, is the power of God. Therefore "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." 1 Peter iv. 12. Confession of Christ means nonconformity to the world; and those who confess Him in His humiliation will be acknowledged by Him when He comes in His glory. Therefore let our sincere

prayer be, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Sure Foundation. Isa. xxviii. 14-18" *The Present Truth* 15, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXVIII. 14-18, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

14. Hear ye the word of JEHOVAH, ye scoffers;
Ye of this people in Jerusalem, who utter
sententious speeches:

15. Who say, we have entered into a covenant
with death;
And with the grave we have made a treaty:
The overflowing plague, when it passeth
through shall not reach us:
For we have made falsehood our refuge;
And under deceit we have hidden ourselves.

16. Wherefore thus said the Lord JEHOVAH:
Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation a stone,
an approved stone;
A corner-stone, precious, immovably fixed:
He, that trusteth in Him, shall not be con-
founded.

17. And I will mete out judgment by the rule;
And the strict justice by the plummet:
And the hall shall sweep away the refuge of falsehood;
And the hiding-place the waters shall over-
whelm.

18. And your covenant with death shall be broken;
And your treaty with the grave shall not
stand:
When the overflowing plague passeth through,
By it shall ye be beaten down.

Let the student read carefully again the first portion of this chapter, together with the twenty-second verse, and remember that the instruction and warnings given are for us no less than for the people in Isaiah's time. The word of the Lord is living, and is addressed to us just as directly as though we heard the tones of the prophet's voice.

The word of the Lord is here to those who are proud in their own conceit; who know so much in their own estimation that

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they are not willing to be taught. Scorning to be thought so ignorant as to need the simple precepts of the Scriptures, "precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little," they fail to

learn anything. The case of those of whom the Apostle Paul speaks in Rom. i. 22 is not peculiar to them. Whenever men profess themselves to be wise, they become fools; therefore, "if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." 1 Cor. iii. 18, 19.

The foolishness of those who profess themselves to be wise is seen from what they put their trust in for safety. They say, "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement. When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." Isa. xxviii. 15. They have thought to anticipate God, and to head off punishment that He would bring. They have bribed death to protect them; but death and hell are poor protectors. Falsehood and lies cannot save. The only place of protection that death has is the grave. To be at agreement with hell, is deliberately to go to perdition. It is the kid fleeing to the tiger for protection from the bear.

"No lie is of the truth." Whoever, therefore, rejects truth chooses falsehood. There are many people who pride themselves upon their honesty, that are nevertheless hiding themselves under falsehood. They might not themselves tell deliberate lies, but truth is a unit, and whoever deliberately rejects any truth that comes to him, thereby rejects all truth. That portion of truth which he elects to retain, he changes into a lie. Rom. i. 25. Satan works "with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10. And all who receive not the love of the truth will certainly perish, because it alone is a shield and buckler. See Ps. xci. 4.

Truth cannot be built up by a falsehood. Truth and falsehood have no connection. Truth is that which is, therefore truth is life. This is seen in the words of Christ, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John xiv. 6. And since truth is life, falsehood is death. So to make lies one's refuge, hoping by them to escape death, is like a man cutting his own throat to save his neck from the halter. Those who err from the truth, trusting in death to save them, have said, "When the overflowing scourge shall pass through it shall not come unto us." "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation. He that believeth shall not make haste: judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place." "And your covenant with death shall be disannulled and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it."

This sure foundation is truth, for Christ is the truth. John xiv. 6. And He is the only foundation (1 Cor. iii. 11) that will stand. Whatever is not in harmony with that will be swept away, for even death itself shall be destroyed.

A foundation is that upon which one builds. In the Hebrew the word "to believe" is from a root which also has a specification, to build, to establish. In 2 Chron. xx. 20, "Believe in the Lord, so shall ye be established," the words "believe" and "be established" are from the same Hebrew word, and the

sentence might be rendered, "Build upon the Lord your God, so shall ye be built up." Abraham built upon God when he believed in God.

Christ is the sure foundation. He is also the Word, the living Word. He is the truth, and His word is truth. Whoever, therefore, builds upon His word, builds upon the rock, and when the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon that house, it does not fall. Matt. vii. 25, 26. But whoever does not build upon His words,-that is to say, whoever does not let those words control him, and manifest themselves in his life,-builds upon the sand; and when the tide rises, and the rain descends, and the winds blow and beat upon that house, it will fall, and its destruction will be great. The rock will stand, because it is "the Rock of Ages." "In the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of Ages." Isa. xxvi. 4. Whoever builds upon God shall not be ashamed (Rom. ix. 33) nor confounded. 1 Peter ii. 6. As the text says, "He shall not make haste." He will not need to run when the storm comes, because he is already in a place of safety. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust."

This stone which God lays in Zion for a foundation is a "tried stone." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." God placed His character in Christ. He had pledged Himself to the redemption of the world, and sent Christ to do the work. He made a promise to Abraham, and to his seed, and confirmed it with an oath, that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus. Heb. vi. 13-20. Thus we learn that God swore by Himself that He would forgive the sins of all who sought forgiveness through Christ. Jesus Christ is the manifestation of God. If Christ had failed or become discouraged because of the difficulties of His task, God's oath would have been broken; but if God's oath would have been broken, God's own life would have been forfeited; and since He is the Creator and upholder of all things, everything would have ceased to be. Now we can see how well tried is the foundation upon which we are asked to build. God placed Himself and the weight of the entire universe upon it, and it stood the test. Therefore, we can rest upon it in confidence. It is a precious stone to those who believe.

The Word will be the only standard in the Judgment. The Word is righteousness, and righteousness will be the plumb line. The whole building must square with this foundation. Nothing must project over the edge; that is, nothing must go beyond the Word. Whatever is outside of the Word of God, will be swept away with the overflowing scourge. The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies. Read Job xxxviii. 22, 23; Rev. xvi. 21.

This tried stone which is laid for a foundation is a living stone. 1 Peter ii. 4. Whoever comes in contact with it is made alive. Living things grow, and so in

Christ "All the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." We read, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith." Col. ii. 6, 7. Thus

we see that the house built upon Christ and His Word, is not like an ordinary house built by men, which simply stands upon its foundation, but it is a living house, built upon a living foundation, of which it becomes a part, so that the house and the foundation are as firmly joined together, and as much a part of each other; as the tree and its roots. Therefore, there is no danger that the house will be swept off from the foundation, and the foundation be left standing. Every one who stands on God's Word and lives by it, will stand as long as God lives, and will be as immovable as He.

From the last lesson, in the first part of this chapter, we learn that those to whom the Lord is speaking, reject the simple instruction of His Word, and therefore they stumble and fall. They profess themselves to be wise, yet they stumble at that which is revealed to babes. Even so it is in their relation to this sure foundation, which the Lord lays, and upon which men are to build and be safe. While it is a foundation and a sanctuary, it is also a "stone of stumbling." Isa. viii. 14. "As it is written, Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." Rom. ix. 33. Here the two passages of Isaiah are brought together, and we learn that the same Lord who is the foundation which builds up those who build upon it, and makes them a sanctuary, is at the same time a stumbling stone. If men will not place their feet upon that which is made for them to stand upon, then they stumble over it. So the very thing which is salvation to those that believe, is destruction to those who do not believe. See 1 Peter ii. 6-8. This being the case, there is no possible chance left for anybody to accuse God of injustice. When that which causes some people's destruction is nothing other than the salvation which God provides for all men, God is surely clear when He judges.

There are now fifteen Protestant churches in the city of Rome. In 1870 there were none.

"Little Folks. God's Water-Carriers" *The Present Truth* 15, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

Nothing can live without water. Everything needs it,-the fishes live in it, the beasts drink it and bathe in it; the birds many of them, ducks, swans, and others, swim in it. And see how the little song-birds enjoy their morning bath, splashing the cool, refreshing drops all over their tiny bodies. The flowers, the trees, and all living things, need the water just as much as we do ourselves, and how could we possibly get an without it?

But there is only one way to get it, and that is *from the clouds*. "Oh, no;" perhaps you will say, "we have a 'constant supply,' and can get all the water we want just by turning on the tap."

But where does this "constant supply" come from, and how does it happen that there is any water in the taps? It comes from the river; but where does the river get it? From the springs and mountain streams, which get it from the rain and snow that all falls *from the clouds*.

Yes; all the water in our springs and fountains everywhere, the broad rivers rushing to the seas and oceans, once floated over our heads in *the clouds*.

Think, then, of how much importance are these "waters above the firmament," and how thankful we should be to see the clouds, even if they do sometimes shut out some of the bright sunshine from us.

Read the eighteenth chapter of the first Book of Kings, and see how eagerly Elijah the prophet waited for the first sign of a cloud when one had not been seen for more than three years, and perhaps you will watch them with greater interest and thankfulness. For if we had all sunshine, and no clouds, everything would soon become parched and baked, and barren and dead; the earth would be a desert place where nothing could live.

But God works through the sun itself to form the clouds. We read of Him that "He covereth Himself *with light* as with a garment, and stretcheth out the heavens like *a curtain*." The powerful sunlight, God's glory streaming over the earth, itself creates this cloud curtain, which shelters the earth, and refreshes it with cool showers, and prevents it from being burned up and destroyed by its brightness.

"I gaze o'erhead,
Where Thy hand hath spread,
For the waters of heaven their crystal bed,
And stored the dew
In its depths of blue
Which the fires of the sun come tempered
through."

Here we see again what we have noticed so often, how "all things work together for good." This will remind you of what we learned about the frost itself forming a protection from the cold, making a warm snow blanket for the earth, and an icy sheet to cover the waters. Also of how the sun, by painting the flowers and other things with deep colours makes them better able to endure its own heat. How gentle is our God in His greatness, and how fearless we may be in His presence.

But now let us see how the clouds are formed by the sun, and how God works through it to draw up the waters into the air in the form of vapours. You have seen the steam rising from a pan of water on the stove, or from the copper when it was full of boiling water. This is because when water gets to a certain heat, it changes its form, and passes into the air as vapour or steam.

The sunlight falling on the surface of the oceans, seas, rivers, and lakes all over the world, warms the water so that it *evaporates*, or turns into vapour. But why does this vapour rise upwards to the heavens, and float therein the way we talked of last week?

This, dear children, "the balancings of the clouds," is "the wondrous work of Him who is perfect in knowledge." When He made the firmament by His wisdom, and "stretched out the heavens by His discretion," we are told that God "made a weight for the winds," (the air) and "weighed the waters by measure."

He "measured the waters in the hollow of His hand," and weighed the air, and made them both exactly the right weight so that the watery vapours, being lighter, should rise and float in the air, just as a cork does in the water because it is lighter than the water. (Some time we hope to tell you more about the weight and wonders of the air.)

And these watery vapours form the beautiful cloud curtain that we see in the firmament above our heads. They are God's water-carriers. They take up water from the places where there is abundance; then, borne up by the air, guided by the hand of God, and carried upon the wings of the wind, they carry the water to the places where it is needed, and pour it out upon the thirsty land.

We must wait until next week to tell you more about the clouds and the rain, and God's beautiful bow that He has set in the clouds as the token of His love and faithfulness. Find in your Bibles all the verses you can that speak of these things. You will be surprised to find how many there are, and how much God tells us about His wonderful work of making the rain, and sending it upon the earth.

"The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

- Sheep are used as besets of burden in India and Persia.
- The Russian Government has just placed a contract for the construction of a large warship and several large transport ships with a Danish shipbuilding firm.
- The Treasury Department estimates that the Spanish-American War and its present struggle in the Philippines has cost the United States 300 million dollars up to May 1.
- Another interesting fact has come out in the experiments with wireless telegraphy. It has been found that intervening cliffs do not in any way interfere with the passage or reception of the messages.
- An Orkney mail steamer ran into a whale last week. A violent shock was felt and immediately afterwards a large whale rose under her quarter with a fearful gash in its body, and throwing up blood and water from its blowhole to a height of 15ft.
- The exports of manufactured goods from the United States during March were greater by twenty-five per cent, than those of any previous month in the country's history. They were, also greater by fifty per cent. than the exports of February. The bulk of the goods were sent direct to Europe.
- Russia continues to gain ground in Persia, and is planning for the extension of a railway along the Persian-Turkish frontier. A Russian Mining society has leased from the Shah nearly the whole of northern Persia for purpose of exploitation.
- A terrible disaster has occurred in a Russian gold mine. A shaft in which ninety-nine men were working collapsed, owing to an inrush of water, and sixty-two of the miners were killed. The remainder were saved with difficulty, most of them being seriously injured.
- An agreement has been come to between England and Russia by which England has agreed not to undertake or encourage any railways by English persons or others north of the Great Wall, and Russia has made a similar promise with respect to the basin of the Yangsee.
- A Baptist clergyman of Georgia who has been preaching earnestly against lynching has incurred the anger of the mob, who wreaked the interior of his

church, one of the finest in the Southern States, afterwards flooding it. The clergyman declared that he will continue to denounce the evil.

-Cardinal Vaughan has had several audiences with the Pope, and each time the question discussed was ritualism and the best means of exploiting the Anglican crisis for the benefit of Roman Catholicism in England. The Pope has approved a project for the organisation in England of a great pilgrimage to Rome, and will utilise the occasion for a further appeal to the ritualists to enter the Roman Church.

-A peculiar victory for temperance is reported from Pennsylvania where the Catholic Abstinence Society has succeeded in closing a brewery carried on by the Benedictine monks. The produce of the brewery was famous throughout the States and was advertised as the only beer sanctioned by the Pope. It brought a big revenue to the Roman Catholic church. The strangest thing about it is that the beer will still be made for the monks and their friends.

-The Brooklyn clergyman who has taken to preaching sermons from popular authors instead of from the Bible, has now gone a step further. He commenced a prayer with the first two verses of Tennyson's "In Memoriam," and closed it with the last two lines of "Crossing the Bar." The congregation seemed delighted with the innovation. Still, if a man does not preach the word faithfully, it makes little difference what else he preaches, for it will be all alike unprofitable.

-In a recent prosecution for obtaining money under false pretences, a chemist gave evidence that a patent medicine which cost 2 1/2nd. per bottle was sold for two shillings and ninepence. It was claimed to be a cure for varicose veins, but the chemist said that it might be sold just as well for a hair-wash. It had little or no medical value. He went on to say, "Many patent medicines are absolute frauds. They depend for their success not so much on their intrinsic merits as on extensive advertising."

-Mr. Goschen, speaking in jest, said some true things about the navy at the Royal Academy banquet. He referred to the "long, low, evil-looking hulls" of the torpedo-boat destroyers, the "wickedest things afloat," and other "diabolical craft." But if they are diabolical, they are of the devil, and this vainglorious parade of England's power for destruction, is but the evidence that the Board of Admiralty, and the nation whom they represent, are following submissively in the path to perdition of the fallen angels. Satan is a murderer, and those who multiply contrivances to accomplish more effectively the deeds of their father, are manifestly his children.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

"The kingdom of God is . . . righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. xiv. 17. This kingdom is within men. Luke xviii. 21.

It is through much tribulation that we enter into the kingdom of God. Acts xiv. 22. This does not mean merely that one must pass through much trouble before entering heaven, but that one attains to righteousness, and peace, and joy in the

Holy Ghost only through tribulation. "Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope." Rom. v. 3, 4.

Let no one therefore think that the best man is the one who is free from temptations. Far from it. If you see a man whose peace flows as a river, you may know that he has passed through the most terrible temptations, and that he maintains his peace only by waging a constant and desperate warfare with the tempter. True, there will be little seasons when the devil will leave him, but only that he may renew the attack.

This is seen in the case of the One perfect Man, Jesus Christ. He "suffered, being tempted." Heb. ii. 18. He is the "tried Stone," and therefore He is the sure Foundation. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, and therefore He is able to succour them that are tempted. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice. Inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." 1 Peter iv. 12, 13. "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." James i. 2-4.

Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." John xiv. 33. The greatest tribulations that any man can suffer are the temptations that Satan brings to him through his flesh. Even persecutions are temptations of the devil, to cause men to abandon the faith. But Jesus gives this comfort for our tribulation: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." His victory is always at hand. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. x. 13.

This is the comfort which the Lord gives us in tribulation, -the comfort of victory assured, and that the temptation makes us partakers of the joy and peace of Christ's kingdom. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the suffering of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." 2 Cor. i. 3-5.

Are you fiercely tried and tempted? Then know that God has something for you to do. If you have been used by the Lord to do some good work, then is the time that Satan will take to seek to overthrow you, to prevent your being so used again. Are you engaged in some special work to which the Lord has called you? then expect that Satan will tempt you sorely, hoping thereby to hinder or stop the work. Do not make the mistake of envying some saint his "easy life," and do not become discouraged, and think that you are reprobate because you are subject to the fiercest temptations; but know that "in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

"There are so many different doctrines, so many theories, all claiming to be the truth, that I cannot tell what to believe. How can I know which is the truth?"

The answer is easy. The Saviour has given a sure guide in these words: "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man willeth to do His will, he

shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself." John vii. 16, 17, R.V.

Do not make a mistake in reading this. It does not say that if any man wishes to argue, he shall know of the teaching. Not if any man wishes to be able to make a display of learning, or be able to silence an opponent, or to be regarded as a leader; none of these things; but, if any man wishes to do the will of God.

Truth is for use, and God gives every man all that he will use. No man can have more, for that which is not used flits away. Truth is life, and life is activity, motion. Water that stands, loses its life. No man has any life except that which animates him; even so no man can have any truth except that which manifests itself in his life.

Whoever has the truth of God will necessarily use it for the benefit of others, for no man can receive the blessing of God without being a blessing; we are to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God." But in the search for truth we are to lose sight of everything but that, and the desire that it may have its proper place in our lives. Seek the truth for yourself alone, that is, that you yourself may do the will of God, and you will be certain to find it, whether you dwell in the crowded city or alone in the desert. And when you have it as your own life, it will flow out in streams of blessing to others, as surely as the rain falls from heaven.

Nothing in nature is selfish. The clouds gather up the moisture from the sea, carry it to dry places, and dispense it upon the earth. The earth does not keep it, but it is taken up by the herb and vine, and these in turn yield it up to man and beast. So we see that in nature every thing is giving and receiving. This is simply revealing the nature of God, and in all this working is saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

It is a physical law, well recognised, that a healthy body depends upon activity; that exercise, useful employment, will keep the system free from impurities, while inactivity results in an accumulation of waste in the system that generates disease and ends in death. The same is true of the church. A church whose members are actively engaged in ministering to the necessities of others, constantly watching for opportunities to do good, keeps out of difficulties. Church trials are unknown. On the other hand, an inactive church soon becomes sickly and dead, in spite of any amount of labour that may be bestowed upon it by a minister. The life of any church, as of every person, is activity.

May 18, 1899

"The King Before the Judgment Bar. John xviii. 28-40" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

John xviii. 28-40

A careful study of all the lessons set forth in this portion of Scripture would require many articles. We must therefore ask the reader carefully to study the text indicated, and will content ourselves with a few leading thoughts. All through

His earthly career, Jesus exercised royal authority, and showed Himself to be a King. On a few occasions He was greeted as King, as for instance by Nathanael (John i. 49), and by the multitude when He rode into Jerusalem. John xii. 13. But this occasion was the only time when He declared Himself plainly to be a King. When Pilate asked Him, "Art Thou a King, then," Jesus answered, "Thou sayest it because I am a King." John xviii. 37, R.V, margin. And then in saying, "My kingdom is, not of this world," (Verse 36), He plainly declared His kingship.

Jesus was accused to Pilate as a plotter against the Roman government, and dangerous to its peace. When Pilate sought to release Him, "the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not C?sar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against C?sar." John xix. 12. But Jesus destroyed the force of this accusation, by declaring His kingdom not to be of this world, and stating that since it was not of this world His servants would not fight.

In delivering Jesus up to Pilate, the Jewish rulers made it very apparent that they had no real accusation against Him. When Pilate said, "What accusation bring ye against this man," they answered and said unto him; "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee." This is the same as though a man should be brought before a court, and when the judge asks what charges there are against him, his accusers content themselves by saying. "He is a bad man." In so saying the Jews virtually confessed that they knew nothing against Him, and that Pilate must himself find

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out the character of Jesus by examining Him. But Pilate on examining Jesus, said, "I find no fault in Him." And Jesus expressly disclaimed any design against the power of the Roman government.

Verses 36 and 37 define the character of Christ's kingdom and of His subjects. He is a King, but His kingdom is not of this world. In declaring to Pilate that He was King, He said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." He is King of truth because He is the truth, and therefore truly a king. For since the king is the one who is above all, whosoever is the truth must be a king; because the truth is that which is highest, and which rises above all, no matter how much it is down-trodden.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again,

The eternal years of God are hers."

The truth is *that which is*; that which abides for ever. God is the truth. Truth cannot be destroyed. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John ii. 17. These facts taken together with the statement of Christ, prove that this world and the truth are in opposition; and that is shown in the very fact that Christ was on trial-it was the world against the truth. But the world passes away, while truth cannot pass away. Therefore, we find that the world is always in opposition to the truth, and thus always in opposition to Christ. The world crucifies Christ to-day, even as He was crucified from the foundation of the world. And it is by the cross of Christ that we are crucified unto the world and the world to us. Gal. vi. 14.

Christ is the Prince of Peace. Isa. ix. 6. He Himself is Peace. Eph. ii. 14. He came and preached peace. Verse 17. He rules by peace. Col. iii. 15, 16. It is by

"the peace of God which passeth all understanding" that Christ keeps His subjects. Phil. iv. 7. When talking to His disciples the very night He was betrayed, He said: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." John xvi. 33. All followers of Christ, therefore, have peace, and keep the peace, no matter how much war and trouble there may be in the world. Jesus conquered the world, not by war, but by peace: and only those who absolutely refuse to fight can conquer the world. When Christ's professed followers take up carnal weapons, they may be put to flight; indeed, the very taking of weapons is their defeat. But it is absolutely impossible to conquer the man who steadfastly and consistently and for Christ's sake refuses to fight. So long as he maintains his steadfastness, he is conqueror.

Christ says that if His kingdom were of this world, His servants would fight; but He Himself had only a few hours before sharply reprimanded Peter for drawing the sword, and had healed the wound made by it. Wherever, therefore, anyone makes use of weapons of warfare, he shows either that he does not understand the nature of Christ's kingdom, or that he does not rank himself among Christ's followers. Whoever fights shows himself the servant of another master than Christ, and no man can serve two masters.

Christ's kingdom is not of this world. It is of an entirely different nature from the world, and the world is opposed to it, and to Christ and to His followers. Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xv. 18, 19. This shows plainly that the world is opposed to and hates Christ's kingdom, because it is not of this world. Therefore it follows that it is impossible for man to be subjects of worldly kingdoms and at the same time subjects of Christ's kingdom. The followers of Christ, and the subjects of His kingdom, have of right nothing more to do with the government of this world than the subjects of the Czar of Russia have to do with the government of Great Britain.

Someone, without thinking, might declare this to be anarchy; but that would be only because they do not consider the nature of Christ's kingdom. Christ Himself was condemned as an anarchist, because the princes of this world did not understand; if they had they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 1 Cor. ii. 8. Christ's followers can never be anarchists, because the law of God is in their hearts. They represent the highest type of obedience to law. They are perfect keepers of the perfect law. Moreover, although they do not reckon themselves as subjects of this world, they are indeed the very best subjects, since they will even submit to the most unjust laws without opposition. The just are condemned and killed, but do not resist. James v. 6. Therefore the best subjects that any earthly king can have are those who profess to be and are only subjects of Christ, and not of the world. Earthly governments, however do not as a general thing know this, and so the men whose presence tends to the strength and stability of the government, are discriminated against and persecuted.

The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world, but outlasts this world. Being of the truth, it is an everlasting dominion. Christ is set at the right hand of God in heavenly places, far above all principality, and power and might and dominion. Eph. i. 20, 21. But this place was of right His even while He was here upon earth. For when talking with Nicodemus He declared himself to be "in heaven." John iii. 13. The King of the universe was on trial before an earthly court and an earthly judge; and on trial as to His right to rule. He showed His right to rule there, as everywhere, by bearing witness to the truth.

But even as Jesus is set at the right hand of God in heavenly places, far above all principalities, power, might and dominion, so has God raised all those who believe in Him, and made them sit together with Christ in heavenly places. Eph. ii. 1-6. He "loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." Rev. i. 5, 6. Therefore all Christ's subjects are kings, far higher in rank than any or all kings of this earth. Power is given them over the nations, the same as to Christ Himself. See Ps. ii. 8, 9; Rev. ii. 26, 27. All are called to be witnesses together with Christ. God says, "Ye are My witnesses. . . and My Servant whom I have chosen." Isa. xliii. 10. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His light." 1 Pet. ii. 9.

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Just as Christ the King was arraigned before the bar, so are all His followers on trial in this world. The court is continually set; the case is always on, and the witnesses are always under oath. If they are faithful and true witnesses, like the Master (see Rev. iii. 14), then are they kings indeed, and are never overcome, even though condemned. By the peaceful power of simple steadfastness to truth, the followers of Christ will yet be acknowledged even by the world to have power greater than that of the whole world.

Yet will they be like Christ, reckoned among the transgressors, for the sad fact is that "judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." Isa. lix. 14, 15. Nevertheless, although the truth may be scoffed at as impractical, and its adherents mocked and persecuted and even put to death, and error will seem to triumph, yet will the truth rise above everything, even as Christ, although mocked, put to death as a malefactor and counted as nothing, arose and took His seat on the throne of God. And at no time has He ever been greater than He was when His life was traded for that of a murderer. His humiliation and shame was His glory. His weakness was His strength; and the curse of the cross was the means by which He was raised to heaven to bless the universe.

**"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'The Righteous Judgment of God.' Isa. xxviii.
18-29" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXVIII. 18-29, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

18. Your covenant with death shall be broken,
And your treaty with the grave shall not
stand:

When the overflowing plague passeth through,
By it shall ye be beaten down.

19. As soon as it passeth through, shall it seize
you;

Yea, morning after morning shall it pass
through, by day and by night;
And even the report alone shall cause terror.

20. For the bed is too short, for one to stretch
himself out at length;
And the covering is too narrow, for one to
gather himself up under it.

21. For as in Mount Peratsim, Jehovah will
arise;
As in the valley of Gibeon, shall He be moved
with anger;
That He may execute His work, His strange
work;
And effect His operation, His unusual opera-
tion.

22. And now, give yourselves up to scoffing no
more,
Lest your chastisements become more severe:
For a full and decisive decree have I heard,
From the Lord Jehovah God of Hosts, on the
whole land.

23. Listen ye, and hear My voice;
Attend, and hearken unto My words.

24. Doth the husbandman plough every day that
he may sow,
Opening and breaking the clods of the field?

25. When he hath made even the face thereof,
Doth not he then scatter the dill, and cast
abroad the cummin;
And sow the wheat in due measure;
And the barley, and rye, hath its appointed
limit?

26. For his God rightly instructeth him; He fur-
nished him with knowledge.

27. The dill is not beaten out with the corn-
drag;
Nor is the wheel of the wain made to turn

upon the cumin:

But the dill is beaten out with the staff;

28. And the cummin with the flail: but the
bread-corn with the threshing-wain.

But not for ever will he continue thus to
thresh it,

Nor to vex it with the wheel of his wain;

Nor to bruise it with the hoofs of his cattle.

29. This also proceedeth from Jehovah God of
Hosts:

He showeth Himself wonderful in counsel,
great in operation.

The first five verses of the portion here given have already been considered, but we give them again in order to preserve the connection. Not only they, but all the preceding verses should be read in connection with this lesson. Remember that the Bible does not consist of isolated texts, but each writer has a message from the Lord. One can no more get the sense of the Scriptures by taking a verse here and another there, than we can get the meaning of a letter that we receive, by reading a sentence in the middle of it, then another near the beginning, and then another at the close. We must read it through from beginning to end, and then whenever we wish to refer to some particular sentence in it, we must take it in connection with the rest. We must at the same time we quote it, remember what has preceded, and what follows. Even so must we deal with the message which the Lord sends us by His prophets.

Those who recall not only the first part of this chapter, but the preceding chapters will know that the general subject is the judgments of God. The last days, and the very last judgments of God upon this earth, are very vividly brought to view. But let it never be forgotten that the idea is salvation rather than destruction. God comes to save His people. Too many always connect the Judgment with thoughts of revenge, as though God had in mind nothing except to destroy somebody. Let all remember that God is a Shepherd, and that His sole solicitude is for His flock. When He comes to deliver His sheep from the mouth of the lion, who would devour them, He is moved by feelings of the deepest love and compassion. The last judgment is only a wonderful manifestation of God's everlasting love for His people. Read again Isa. xxvii. 3-4: "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any

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hurt it, I will keep it night and day. Fury is not in me." God is love just as much when He destroys the wicked, who would destroy His people, as when He gives His life for the world. In the execution of His greatest judgments, "His mercy endureth for ever." See Ps. cxxxvi. 10-24.

Great as is God's power to destroy, so great is His power to redeem. The destruction of the wicked is only one part of the great work of redemption. This is shown in the death of Christ. Christ died for the world of sinners. He was made to be sin for us, and therefore He suffered the penalty for sin. He was made to be sin for us, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, and

even so He suffered as a sinner, in order that guilty sinners might be saved from wrath through Him. In giving His only Son to die for sinners, and giving Himself in His Son, God showed us not only the inevitable fate of sinners but also how much He longed not to see a single sinner punished. He has no pleasure in the death of any. See Eze. xxxiii. 11. The wicked who will be destroyed at the last day, will only be taking by themselves that which they would not share with Christ. The cross of Christ appears in everything. So in the description of future judgments, God is making known to us some of the sufferings of Christ for sinners, that we may know how great is His power now to redeem those who fly to Him for refuge.

Thus we may understand that when God arises to Judgment, and is "wroth as in the valley of Gibeon" (See Josh. x. 10, 11), where He smote the enemies of His people, and "slew them with a great slaughter," and "chased them," and "cast down great stones from heaven upon them," (Compare Rev. xvi. 21), it is for Him a "strange work." The angels were awed into silence, and the heavens grew black with astonishment, when God showed His marvellous love for man by giving His Son to die. Such a way of showing love, not for friends, but for enemies, could be conceived and understood only by the heart of God. Even yet the angels desire to understand it. See 1 Peter i. 10-12. Since no man nor angel can comprehend the love of God that is manifested in the death of Christ for sinners, let no one childishly accuse God of injustice and cruelty when he reads of the judgments that are to fall upon the hoards of those who reject the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Terrible things will come, too. "Even the report alone shall cause terror." The prophet Habakkuk saw in vision the time when the Lord went forth for the salvation of His people, threshing the heathen by the power that was hidden in His glorious, wounded side (Hab. iii. 4, margin, 12, 13), and he said, "I heard and my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in my place; that I should rest in the day of trouble, when it cometh up against the people which invadeth Him in troops." Verse 16, R.V. So Jesus, describing to His disciples the terrors of that day, said, "There shall be signs in the sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and of the billows; men expiring for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Luke xxi. 25, 26, R.V.

"In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isa. ii. 20, 21. All the men of this earth, both great and small, will flee to hide themselves, and will say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 15-17. But there will be no place for hiding; "for the bed is too short for one to stretch himself out at length; and the covering is too narrow for one to gather himself up under it." This is a striking figure, which all can understand.

Who has not at some time suffered with cold because of scanty bed-clothing? Try as you would, you could not get protection. Such an experience the Lord uses to illustrate the vain efforts of those who would escape His righteous judgments. There will be no place of concealment, for God will then "bring to light the hidden things of darkness." 1 Cor. iv. 5.

Here is an exhortation that comes to all: "Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth." Even as the Gospel is "to all people," so all people are interested in the account of these judgments. They come not upon one particular locality, but upon the whole earth. Compare with this the second Psalm, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." They will enter into an alliance with death and the grave against the Lord; but the Lord will laugh at their vain efforts. The Son, whom they despise, will "break them with a rod of iron," and will "dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." So the exhortation comes, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth." If not, the bands which they vainly think to break and cast off, will be made tighter; but if they will but submit themselves to the yoke of the Lord, then they will find the bands tokens of liberty, since they are bands of love.

Last of all in this chapter which we are studying, we have a lesson from the seasons, and the work which comes with each. Just as in the service of the Jewish tabernacle the whole work of the Gospel was set forth in figure each year, even so it is now, and has been from the beginning, in nature. Seed-time and harvest are yearly reminders to all men of the work of God for men, -of the Gospel and its consummation. Everybody is familiar with the growth of grain, and the harvest, so we have need only to read the last five verses of Isa. xxviii. to have material for many lessons.

The husbandman does not plough all the time, neither is he all the time sowing. When he has broken up the earth, and harrowed it, making the surface smooth, then he scatters the various kinds of grain. Each kind of grain has its appointed time, and is sown in its season. "For this God doth instruct him to discretion and doth teach him." Yes, the wisdom which men have to till the soil comes from God alone. There is nothing that men know, that they have not learned from God. Whatever men know well, when priding themselves upon their skill and dexterity in doing it, let them remember that God knows how to do it infinitely better, and can still

teach them more. Righteousness comes by faith. But righteousness is right doing. That is, the man who lives by faith will do whatever he has to do much better than the one who is not a Christian. If men have not always seen it so, then it is to the shame of the professed Christians; they have not lived up to their profession. Since faith makes a man righteous, a right doer, then it follows that faith-true and intelligent faith-will make a man a better farmer, a better carpenter,

a better workman in any line. God is "wonderful in counsel; and excellent in working," and those who trust in Him fully will find it manifest in themselves.

But this is only by the way, important as it is. It is a side lesson. The special thing to be learned from this reference to agriculture is that God works consistently, and adapts His means to the ends He has in view. The farmer does not thresh all kinds of grain with the same instrument. The machine that is used for threshing corn, would utterly destroy some more delicate kinds of seeds. So God adapts His judgments to the individual. There is only one standard in the Judgment, namely, the law of God, the perfect life of the Lord, but each person will be judged only by the amount of the light and knowledge of the law he has had. "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel." Rom. ii. 12, 16. "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Verses 13-15. In the Judgment, the man who has never seen the Bible, and who has had no knowledge of God, other than that which is revealed in the book of nature, will not be held accountable for the same light that the one is who has lived all his life amid the greatest Gospel privileges. It will then be seen, however, that there is no one who has not had an opportunity to hear the Gospel, and who has not both heard and seen it. "Have they not heard? Yea, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Rom. x. 18. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them." All are without excuse, because ever since the creation of the world the everlasting power and Divinity of God are clearly seen in the things which He has made. Rom. i. 18-20.

The seed-time is the giving of the news of salvation. "The seed is the Word of God" (Luke viii. 11), and Christ is the Word. John i. 1, 14. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John xii. 24. Christ is the Seed (Gal. 3:16), and He died and was buried to bring many sons unto glory. Every springing seed speaks, to all who will hear of the power of the resurrection, and so of the power of God to salvation.

"The harvest is the end of the world." Matt. xiii. 39. John says, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." Rev. xiv. 14-16. This is when "He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Rev. i. 7. Thus we see again

that the things spoken of in our lesson are no light thing concerning only a few Jews hundreds of years ago. They are matters of present and universal importance.

"But not for ever will He continue thus to thresh it, nor to vex it with the wheel of His wain; nor to bruise it with the hoofs of His cattle." "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide; neither will He keep His anger for ever." Ps. ciii. 8, 9. "For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and Mine anger in their destruction." Isa. x. 25. It is a strange thing for God to execute punishment upon His creatures; therefore He will not keep for ever before His eyes, and the eyes of the universe, the spectacle of people tormented in flames. Men may make a covenant with death and the grave, thinking thus to escape the righteous judgments of God; but that will avail nothing, for both death and the grave shall be utterly consumed in the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 14), so that "yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." Ps. xxxvii. 10. The wicked are chaff, stubble, and noxious weeds. "Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." Isa. v. 24. "The day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. iv. 1. As the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, "so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Matt. xiii. 40-43.

"The Secret of Power" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

The commission to the disciples was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation." So the one who is preaching the Gospel is really a minister of power. Of Christ it was said, "Never man spake like this Man." The reason is that no man ever lived as He did. The secret of His power was in His life. There are many Gospel workers who are longing to see more fruit from their labours. Let such remember that the power to convert men depends not upon the information they impart, but the life they live. The man that practises the truths which he preaches to others, carries with him the vitalising power of God, working through him to convert others from the error of their ways. But every ray of light must be cherished and walked in. Just as soon as we preach one thing

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and practise another, our words are as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Like Samson shorn of big locks, there will be no strength in the efforts we put forth.

"Witnessing for Christ" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

"Thy word is truth." "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Truth attracts and, like a magnet, draws the true in heart. These accept the truth, no matter at what cost. God could have commissioned angels to preach the Gospel, but that work is given to men. "As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you." In view of this commission, the only concern to us should be that this work be faithfully done. The lifting up of Jesus Christ in our lives is our work. When we sow and water, God gives the increase.

We never make headway in proclaiming the truth by finding fault. This repels instead of drawing. The injunction of the apostle is, "Preach the Word." Let error alone. The only work a Christian has in the world is to preach the truth, hold up the pure and the good.

Christ said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." That is the business of every Christian to-day. And since this is the Lord's commission, we may expect the Lord to open the way. Everywhere, amid all the "isms" that are rife at the present day, the honest in heart are searching after truth. What a wonderful privilege it is to have the truth to give them. If sometimes our own way seems hard, and we grow weary, this will disappear when we go to work for others. Just as activity is the life and strength of the physical body, so the spiritual life of a Christian depends upon his efforts to help the needy.

The Apostle Peter addressing the followers of Christ, said: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who bath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." A little farther on in the epistle he says: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts." These prevent the virtues of Christ from shining out in His people. A lighted lamp with a clean glass will shine brightly; but when the glass becomes smoked and dirty, the light is dim. So truth must have its sanctifying effect upon the receiver. It must be allowed to shine out, unobscured by fleshly lusts. The truth will transform a man's life completely, make him refined, gentle, considerate, self-sacrificing. Is it doing that for you?

To represent Christ is to *re-present* Christ present Him again. When He was upon earth, His whole life was spent in doing good, watching for openings to present the truth. At one time we see Him working with Nicodemus, revealing to him precious truths. Again, He is by the well talking to a fallen woman, teaching her the way of life. There was with Him no respect of persons. Now if we would re-present Him, we will make it our life work to look for opportunities to do good. It may be by a word fitly spoken, a kind act, or even a pleasant smile. We do not need to force the opportunities, but simply watch for souls as those who must give account.

What a need there is to-day of unselfish, consecrated effort in spreading the Gospel. Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. Yet in the face of the God says, "Arise and shine" or, as one translation has it, "Arise and

be enlightened, for thy light is come." The thing for all to do is to become enlightened, for the light is here; then let that light shine forth undimmed. There is but little of the real spirit of the Master now in the world, yea many are longing to see a revelation of Christ. Then let our constant prayer be, "Lord, enlighten me, and purge me of everything that will prevent Thy light from shining out through me."

"Little Folks. God's Footprints" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

We promised to talk to you again this week about the clouds and the rain, so perhaps you are wondering what these can have to do with the footsteps of the Lord. If you listen carefully, I think you will soon find out.

In Psalm 104 we read that God "maketh the clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind." Remember what we learned last week,-how the clouds full of water are carried "upon the wings of the wind." Then you will see what this water that the clouds hold really is, and what it is that the wind carries.

It is the outpouring of God's own life; for He is in the clouds, as He is in all things, giving out His life in blessing to the world. Think, then, what really comes to us in the rain. Since the clouds are God's chariot, it is God Himself who visits the earth in the waters which the clouds carry, and this is just what we are told in Psalm 65:-

"Thou *visitest* the earth and waterest it,
Thou greatly enrichest it;
The river of God Is full of water; . . .
Thou makest it soft with showers."

Think of these texts next time you see the rain falling, that "He maketh the clouds His chariot," and through them visits the earth, and pours out His own life upon it. Will you not, then, be always glad to see the rain, when you know that it is a visit from the Lord Himself?

And now let us see how we can trace His footsteps, how we can know the places that He has visited in this way. "The clouds are the dust of His feet," His Word tells us, and "His paths drop fatness." We have just read also that God "greatly enriches" the earth when He visits it in the rain. So by the riches that God leaves in the places that He visits we can trace His footsteps in the earth.

Think of the condition the world would be in if no rain were to fall. Nothing could grow, nothing could live. But the little raindrops carry *life*, God's life, for there is no other life, down to this earth.

The earth drinks in the raindrops, and the roots of the plants suck them up, and they are turned into beautiful flowers and sweet fragrance. This is the way that the life that is in the water shows itself in the plants. The beauty and sweet odours of the rose, the lily, and the violet,-what are these but the marks of God's visits to them in the water, His footprints showing that He has visited the earth?

Then there are other plants, the vines, and the fruit trees. These too drink in God's life that the water carries to them and in them this wonderful life shows itself in *fruit*. The sweet, refreshing and nourishing juices of the grape, the

orange, and all other fruits, is simply the rainwater which has been drawn up into plants by the roots, and changed fruit to make food for God's creatures in all the fruits of the earth we can see footprints of the Lord, for these too, are the results of His "visiting the earth and watering it."

And what would the birds do without the rain? There would be none, for there would be no fruit, nor anything for them to feed on, and nothing to drink. But they drink the fresh water, and eat the fruit, and give out again in beautiful songs the life which they have received.

"The bird drinks up the dewdrop, and turns it into music." All the sweet sounds with which the air is filled are also the results of God's visit in the rain. So even these are the footprints of the Lord, for they show that He has visited the earth.

Then, too, without the rain there would be no, grass for the sheep and cattle, and no corn nor grain for our food. But

"He watereth the hills from His chambers: . . .

He causeth grass to grow for the cattle,

And herb for the service of man,

That he may bring forth food out of the earth."

What blessing and joy His visits bring, when He visits and waters it. For, thinking of this, David sang:-

"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness

And Thy paths drop fatness;

They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness:

And the hills are girded with joy.

The pastures are clothed with flocks:

The valleys also are covered over with corn.

They shout for joy, they also sing."

Yes, everything that God blesses by His visits, rejoices, and becomes a blessing, -

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gives out that blessing to others. The healing that the water brings is *life*, so wherever there is life we can trace the footsteps of the Lord.

When the prophet Ezekiel saw the river of life flowing out from the house of the Lord, he was told, "Everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh." Do not forget what we have learned about the whole world being "the house of the Lord," because He "fills heaven and earth." Then you will see that all the water in the world is the out-pouring of His life, of "the river of God which is full of water."

"From Thy river in the skies

Streams through airy channels flow,

Bid the springing corn arise,

And cheer the world below."

And now, dear children, is not God visiting you continually? In the water that you drink you are taking in His life; and in all the food that you eat, for all the corn and fruit and food of every kind that comes from the earth we have found to be the springing forth of His life which He sends down upon it in the rain.

In the air that you breathe, and in the bright sunshine, in all these things God is visiting and blessing you with His life. What traces of His visits are to be found in you, and how are you giving out the life that He gives to you?

The flowers in beauty and sweetness, the birds in happy songs, the vine in fruit, all these things show the Lord's footprints. And so may you in all these ways show that He has visited you, and that you too have received the blessing of His life.

Let Him show forth that life in you just as the flowers, the birds, and the vine do, in just the way that He wants to; and His promise is that you "shall grow as the lily," that He will put "a new song" of praise in your mouth, and cause you to bring forth all the precious fruits of His Spirit (read Gal. v. 22, 23).

We must leave our promised talk about the rainbow for some other time.

"Why Men Are Sick" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

God never designed that man should suffer with disease of any kind. All suffering is due to transgression. "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh." Prov. iii. 1, 2, 24, 25.

In this we see that life and freedom from disease depend upon obedience, and one who renders perfect obedience, can never die. It must be remembered that perfect obedience necessitates perfect knowledge; but with Paul we may say that while we have not attained unto it, we "follow after" it. "The path of the just. . . shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The perfect day will come when we have a perfect knowledge, and are thus able to render perfect obedience. Then it will be that "thou shalt not be afraid. . . for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee."

The admonition to us in this is that we should earnestly seek after that perfect knowledge so that it can be truly said of us, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Rev. xiv. 12. "Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life." Prov. iv. 13. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ." John xvii. 3.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

-More than one-third of the revenue of the United States goes to its pension list.

-During the recent fighting in Samoa several of the rebels died without being wounded, from shock caused by the bursting of shells.

-The Vatican journals announce that the Pope has placed at the disposal of Cardinal Vaughan a sum of money to be used for propaganda purposes in England.

-All idea of the reassembling of the American-Canadian Commission in August has now been abandoned, as in view of the feeling on either side it is not expected that any successful result would ensue from a further meeting.

-The Peace Conference will be attended by the representatives of twenty-four nations. The sittings are to be secret. At the same time comes news that Austria-Hungary is about to reorganise her artillery at an expense of 40,000,000 florins.

-The greatest depth to which a ship has been anchored is 2,000 fathoms-considerably more than two miles.

-According to intelligence from Aden, a number of new British Consulates having been established in South-Eastern Persia, new Consulates will shortly be established by Russia in several Persian harbours.

-A plan for checking lynching has just been sanctioned by the United States Supreme Court. Its principle is that the victim's next-of-kin shall be entitled to not less than ?400 compensation, to be levied on the guilty district.

-Dr. Hill, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, thinks that science, as now taught, does not provide any mental training. Teachers should abandon text-books and put in their place the story-books of nature.

-The French Minister demands, as compensation for the recent imprisonment of a French missionary, the sum of ?180,000, together with certain mining rights in Sze-chuan. This sort of thing is not calculated to assist missionary work in China very much.

-*The London Alliance Review* estimates the London drink bill at ?20,000,000 a year, more than one-half of the present rateable value of London. The total expenditure of the London School Board could have been provided eight times over from the sum spent on intoxicating liquors.

-London tea merchants are concerned over foreign attempts to foist cheap, unwholesome teas on the London market. One of them who received a sample from Belgium at 6 1/2 d. per lb., says that it is injurious to the public health. The simplest way of avoiding these cheap and nasty products is to leave tea alone entirely. It is a nerve stimulant, and, as such, cannot fail at any price to be injurious to the public health.

-Bishop Tugwell is the subject of a criminal prosecution for libel instituted by the European community on the West Coast of Africa. The alleged libel was contained in a letter to the *Times*, in which he stated that probably seventy-five per cent. of the deaths among Europeans on the West Coast of Africa are to be attributed to habits of drinking at all hours of the day and drunkenness. The Bishop was admitted to bail.

-A gigantic exodus is being organised from Finland to the United States and Canada. Every week some four or five hundred young Finlanders, the flower of the country, are setting out for America, and sooner or later the great mass of young men who are liable for service under the new military law mean to follow them. A commission of leading men is to visit Canada in June in order to select a suitable district for a colony.

-A railway strike is reported from India which is believed to be due to a Brahmin plot against the Government. Several hundred signalers have made the following demands: An eight-hour day, a month's holiday annually, residences at nominal rent, the abolition of qualifying examinations, annual rises of wages regardless of ability, and second-class passes on the railway. The majority of the men being Brahmins, they object to natives of other castes being promoted over them.

-The Czar hopes to realise from the Peace Conference the firm establishment of one of two points, either a court of arbitration composed of representatives of the Great Powers, or the friendly mediation of a third Power. Italy has arrived at an understanding with Austria and Germany as to the maintenance of an identical attitude at the Conference. The idea of international arbitration is known to be regarded unfavourably by Turkey, owing to the fear that the Christian Powers would have a preponderance in an arbitration tribunal.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

"God is no respecter of persons."

That statement made by the Apostle Peter to Cornelius and his friends, did not create any new truth, but was simply the recognition of an eternal fact. From the beginning it has been so, and will be so as long as eternity lasts.

Rank and station do not count anything with the Lord. A man is a man, no matter what his earthly degree or wealth, whether he has fine clothing, or is naked.

God looks at all man, and sees that their hearts are all like. "All all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 23. When the body is viewed with the X ray, the clothing does not appear; one sees only the bare skeleton; the flesh is but a shadow before the eyes. Even so when God looks at a man, He sees the naked soul, and all the trappings and distinctions of rank that man make are nothing.

The day is coming, and is not far distant, when all differences of rank will disappear even to the eyes of men, and all the world will stand before, God, each man for himself, simply as a man. "And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller: as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him." Isa. xxiv. 3. The light of God's truth will then show everything as it really is.

There is a present, practical lesson in this for everybody. In the first place, man should learn that high position in this world does not absolve one from obedience to God. The prince is not under less, but rather more, obligation to serve God than the peasant, since his advantages are greater. What God says to one, He says to all, without exception. There is no legitimate calling on earth, in which God does not expect men to serve Him; and nobody has any right to place himself in a position where, if he should continue in it, he would not be able to keep God's commandments. God will listen to no excuses in the judgment, such

as, "I was at service, and my employers would not allow me to keep the commandments;" or, "I was at the head of affairs of State, and so was obliged to execute the laws, no matter how opposed to God's law." God's law for the lowest, is also the law for the highest.

The other thing which we are to learn from the fact that God puts no difference between men, is that the same way of salvation is equally open to all. God puts no difference between Jew and Gentile, purifying the hearts of all by faith. See Acts xv. 7-11. "It is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." Rom. iii. 30. The way of salvation is just the same for the rich as for the poor; for the ignorant as for the wise; for the high in this world as for the lowly; for the aged as for the young; and for all it is so simple that one may find it as easily as he finds air to breathe.

The comments of the religious press on the subject of seven-day journalism, continue to display a persistent misunderstanding of the real question at issue. The *Christian* says:-

The crusade against the *Mail* and *Telegraph* in their endeavour to force Sunday journalism on an unwilling community is steadily gathering strength.

One would think that people were being compelled to buy Sunday papers when they did not want them. It would be just as reasonable to say that beer-drinking was forced upon an unwilling community. Probably the greatest harm that is being done in the whole business is, the general promulgation by religious teachers of the idea that men cannot be expected to stand out for what they believe to be right, unless circumstances favour such an attitude.

The children of Israel ate of the bread from heaven, and drank of the pure water that flowed from the smitten rock, yet they all died. Then there is something necessary to sustain life beyond the purest bread and water. The Saviour said, "Man shall not live by bread alone." What more, then, is needed? "The just shall live by faith,"-faith in a Saviour who said, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never thirst." "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." The just live by faith; the others die. Would you live? Partake of that bread, and drink of that water which is Jesus Christ.

Everyone needs wisdom. No man has ever gone before over the pathway of his life, and there are so many decisions to be made in which a wrong course will prove fatal. Wisdom is necessary above all things. "All the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her." How then may we know, under all circumstances, the way that we should take?

"The way of the righteous is perfectly straight." Isa. xxvi. 7. Lowth's translation. So that if we want a perfectly plain course marked out for us, we have only to become righteous. This is a simple matter, for the righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe. Rom. iii. 22. Christ is made unto us wisdom as fully as He is made unto us righteousness. 1 Cor. i. 30. The Lord only requires one thing of us, that we should do justly. Micah vi. 8. If we are willing to let Him make us righteous, He will be our sufficiency for everything we lack. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi. 33.

What then shall be our first concern when perplexing questions arise? We may try to grapple with these and find a way out of the difficulty, but every step thus taken will involve us in greater darkness. The only question should be, "Are my sins forgiven so that the Lord is my righteousness and my Saviour from sin?" As soon as this question is settled right, the other trouble is set right too, and so we shall find it, for then the way becomes perfectly straight. "Unto the *upright* there ariseth light in the darkness." Ps. cxii. 1-5. Unbelief may say that being made righteous has no practical effect upon the solution of life's problems, but God says it is the only way to get them settled. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

May 25, 1899

"A Finished Work. John xix. 17-30" *The Present Truth* 15, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

John xix. 17-30

Jesus had been tried, found innocent, and condemned to death. He was condemned for being the Son of God, the Jews crying out, "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God;" and yet the law itself was full of statements of God's care of *them* as sons, and of declarations that He wished to be their Father, and have them act toward Him as sons. Jesus was condemned for being what all ought to have been and were not.

The world knew not Jesus as the Son of God. He was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. See Rom. i. 3, 4. He did not become the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, but the resurrection, was the proof, the demonstration, that it was such. He was as much the Son of God during His whole life before the crucifixion as He is now, but the resurrection is the proof of it. Even so with all who are true followers of Him. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we, shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." 1 John iii. 1, 2. This being the case, we need not be surprised if we should receive some of the same treatment from the world, that He received.

BEARING THE CROSS

"And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha; where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in

the midst." He could have refused to bear the cross, if He had wished, and none could have compelled Him. He "endured the cross, despising the shame." If we are His true followers, we shall also meekly endure what is put upon us. How often, on the contrary, we not only refuse to bear anything that we can possibly avoid, but we fret and complain over burdens and trials that we cannot escape. Thereby we not only show that we are not His disciples, but that we are positively unwilling to be His followers.

Jesus could have avoided the cross, but only by denying His mission, so we can refuse the cross, but only by denying Him. There are thousands of ways in which the world will crucify us, if we are really determined to be followers of Jesus, among which sneers, a mild pity for such impractical fanatics, or surprise that we should be content to bury our talents, and flattering invitations to "better our condition" are not the least. There will be many a specious temptation to engage in something which the world would make us believe to be perfectly consistent with our profession, but which we in our hearts know to be inconsistent. We refuse the cross of Christ, and deny Him, either by giving up the truth, or by acting contrary to its purity and simplicity.

KING OF THE JEWS

"And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city; and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written." This was a severe blow to the pride of the priests, and was all the poor satisfaction that Pilate got out of the affair.

Was this the proper title to put upon the cross, or was it a libel, which Pilate was willing enough to perpetrate in order to spite the Jews? A little thought will convince anyone that it was the simple truth. Jesus was and is the King of the Jews. When Nathanael greeted Him with the words, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel" (John i. 49), Jesus accepted it without rebuke or comment. There was nothing incongruous in the double title. As Son of God, He was also King of Israel, because God the Father makes Himself known even to us in this age, as the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; and it was only in their seed that all the families of the earth were to be blessed. He always declared Himself to be the Son of David; and the angel who announced His birth to Mary, said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. 32, 33.

It follows, therefore, that all subjects of Christ's kingdom must be Jews. All true Christians are Jews. Nowhere is Christ called the King of the Gentiles. All who are Gentiles are "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without

God in the world." Eph. ii. 11, 12. All Christians must cease to be Gentiles, and become Jews. Then is Christ indeed their King. "Salvation is of the Jews." John iv. 22. Let no one therefore despise that portion of the Scriptures which was committed-especially to the Jews. In it we find salvation and eternal life.

DIVIDING THE SPOIL

"Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also His coat; now the cost was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be; that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted My raiment among them, and for My vesture they did cast lots."

Even so must it be done with Christ's followers, when they become perfect representatives of Him. The reason why it is not done now is that, while there are true followers of Jesus, in whom His life is perfectly reproduced, they are so very few that they attract no notice. In the church as a whole the life of Jesus is not manifested. Among the great majority of professed followers of Christ, anyone who should be just as Christ was in the world, would be counted a fool and a fanatic, and thus is Jesus Himself condemned. Men think that they are followers of Christ, although they know that they do not do as He did; but they explain the incongruity, and satisfy their consciences by saying that times are different now from what they were then; the circumstances are so different that Christianity is obliged to adapt itself to them; but the principle is the same. This is but a delusion of the devil. The world is just the same now that it was then, and Jesus Christ is exactly the same. So when the life of Jesus is perfectly reproduced in His followers, they will share His sufferings and humiliation. "The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household?" Matt. x. 24, 25.

Therefore we are living in the last days, when the Son of man may be expected to return, and therefore when the work of the Gospel must be consummated, all those who give themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to keep His commandments, must do so with the understanding that it is to cost them all their worldly property. There have been those who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods (Heb. x. 34), and even so must it be again. In this we can see that Christ's followers are not to amass wealth for themselves. Whoever becomes really and truly a disciple of Christ, realising, that he must become as poor in this world's goods as was the Master, will never let considerations of property stand in the way of his obeying any truth of God.

EACH THE DISTRIBUTION OF HIS OWN

It is always much easier and pleasanter for a man to dispose of his own property than for another to do it for him. Therefore the lesson that should be

learned from the division of Christ's garments is that it is best for Christians themselves to do the "spoiling" of their goods, rather than to leave it to be done by force. When they came to seize Christ's goods, they found nothing except the clothes that He had on, and these were plain. Happy will those be who are in a similar condition when the decree goes forth that no man may buy or sell save he that has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

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See Rev. xiii. 17. Christians should learn to do their own dividing. In like manner they should not defer their gifts of property to the cause of God until they are dead. There is no virtue in giving that which one no longer has any use for, and which one must necessarily leave. It is like giving the Lord an old, worn-out garment.

CREATION COMPLETE IN THE CROSS

When everything had been accomplished, that the Scriptures had said should be done to Jesus, "He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost." In those words, "It is finished," there is a world of meaning. It was not simply that His sufferings were finished; not that He was now at liberty; no, there was in it no thought of Himself. The work of God was finished in Him for the redemption of the world. The new creation was prepared for all, and nothing could deprive them of it. The cross of Christ is the power of God (1 Cor. i. 18), and that power is creative power. Rom. i. 20. The cross creates. In Christ all things are to be restored as they were in the beginning, when everything that God had made was "very good," and man-perfect man-had dominion over all. The work of God was finished from the beginning of the creation (Heb. iv. 3), and therefore the rest was ready. The proof of this is seen in the fact that "God did rest the seventh day from all His works." Verse 4. Finished work necessarily brings rest. In Christ creation is renewed, so that He offers rest to all who will come to Him. Matt. xi. 28. He gives the same rest that God gave man in the beginning, and the sign of it is the same. The Sabbath of the Lord is the sign and seal of the cross of Christ.

THIS LAW ESTABLISHED

Christ came to do the law of God. Ps. xl. 7, 8. To the Father He said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." John xvii. 4. So the words, "It is finished," indicated that in Him the law had found its perfect fulfilment. But this shows the absolute perpetuity and immutability of God's law. God is not less wise than a man, and no man spends time and strength, and suffers pain, to accomplish a work in order that he may immediately destroy it. The more labour the work costs, the longer it is expected to stand. It cost the life of the Son of God, to do the perfect works of the law; that life was of infinite value; therefore the law will endure to eternity.

ACCEPTING THE LAW IN CHRIST

Since a finished and perfect work stands, it follows that all who accept Christ must accept the law of God to be manifested in their lives. Let no one say that since Christ perfectly fulfilled the law, therefore we have no need to keep it. He finished the work in order that we might keep it. In Him the law exists in its perfection, and therefore whoever receives Him must also receive the perfect keeping of the law. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Rom. iii. 31. The law is the perfection of the character of Christ. Whoever finds it a hardship to keep the law, thereby proclaims his dissatisfaction with Christ; and whoever reviles and rejects the law, is at the same time reviling and rejecting Christ. Why should one wish to do so? If we ourselves were required to exhibit in our lives all the virtues of the law, then we might well complain, for they are not only contrary to the desires of the natural man, but impossible of performance. Rom. viii. 7. But "it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13. By the blessed will power of Christ, we may be made both willing to do the law, and doers of it. He not only makes us able to do the will of God, but lovers of that will. Those words, "It is finished," contain for us all the blessedness and joy and power of the new Creation.

THE FAMILY OF CHRIST

We should not close this lesson without noting that which it teaches as to the relatives of Christ, and our relation to them. As He hung on the cross, He saw His mother standing by, and also His beloved disciple John, and He said to His mother, "Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, behold thy mother!" John immediately recognised the relationship, by taking her to his own home. This is something more than a mere item of history. It is recorded to teach us that we stand in the closest relationship to all who are related to Christ. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother." Matt. xii. 50. Therefore we are to recognise all such as our own kindred, equally with those who are our kindred by ties of blood, even by the blood of Christ. This tie also binds us to all for whom Christ died; but of course those who have accepted the sacrifice of Christ are thereby made near. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith." Gal. vi. 10.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Cause of Ignorance. Isa. xix. 1-14" *The Present Truth* 15, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XIX. 1-14, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city which David
besieged!

Add year to year; let the feasts go round in their course.

2. Yet will I bring distress upon Ariel;
And there shall be continual mourning and sorrow.

And it shall be unto Me as the hearth of the great altar.

3. And I will encamp against thee, like David;
And I will lay siege against thee with a mound;
And I will erect towers against thee.

4. And thou shalt be brought low; thou shalt speak as from beneath the earth;
And from out of the dust thou shalt utter a feeble speech;
And thy voice shall come out of the ground like that of a necromancer;
And thy words from out of the dust shall give a small, shrill sound.

5. But the multitude of the proud shall be like the small dust;
And like the flitting chaff the multitude of the terrible;
Yea, the effect shall be momentary, in an instant.

6. From Jehovah God of Hosts there shall be a sudden visitation,
With thunder, and earthquake, and a mighty voice;
With storm, and tempest, and flame of devouring fire.

7. And like as a dream, a vision of the night,
So shall it be with the multitude of all the nations, that fight against Ariel;
And all their armies, and their towers, and those that distress her.

8. As when a hungry man dreameth; and lo! he seemeth to eat;
But he awaketh, and his appetite is still unsatisfied;
And as a thirsty man dreameth, and lo! he seemeth to drink;
But he awaketh and he is still faint, and his appetite still craving;
So shall it be with the multitude of all the nations,

Which have set themselves in array against
Mount Sion.

9. They are struck with amazement, they stand
astonished;

They stare with a look of stupid surprise;

They are drunken, but not with wine;

They stagger, but not with strong drink.

10. For Jehovah hath poured upon you a spirit of
profound sleep;

And hath closed up your eyes;

The prophets, and the rulers; the seers hath

He blindfolded.

11. So that all the vision is to you, as the words
of a book sealed up;

Which if one delivers to a man, that knoweth letters,

Saying, Read this, I pray thee;

He answereth, I cannot read it; for it is
sealed up.

12. Or should the book be given to one that
knoweth not letters,

Saying, Read this, I pray thee;

He answereth, I know not letters.

13. Wherefore Jehovah hath said:

Forasmuch as this people draweth near with
their mouth,

And honoureth Me with their lips,

While their heart is far from Me;

And vain is their fear of Me,

Teaching the commandments of men;

14. Therefore behold, I will again deal with this
people,

In a manner so wonderful and astonishing;

That the wisdom of the wise shall perish,

And the prudence of the prudent shall dis-
appear.

What is Ariel? That it is a city, is plainly stated. What city? In the translation which we are using, it is stated to be the city which David besieged, which is not very definite, since David besieged more than one city. In the Revised Version we have the better rendering, "the city where David encamped," and when we put by the side of this the rendering of the common version, "the city where David dwelt," we have no difficulty in understanding that Jerusalem is the city referred to in the prophecy.

In the twenty-eighth chapter we have the case of Samaria set forth, and now in this chapter Jerusalem is dealt with; but in both it is the whole world that is involved.

The word "Ariel" means "lion of God." A few moments' study of the passages in which this word occurs may be of interest. Aside from this chapter, we find it in 2 Sam. xxiii. 20, and the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xii. 22, where it is stated that Benaiah "slew two lion-like men of Moab." The Revision shows us that the words "men of" are added by the translator. Literally it is "two Ariel of Moab," which is not a translation, and which to us does not mean anything. Translated it would read, "two lions of God of Moab." Now when we remember that the phrase "to God" is often used to express the superlative degree as to size, fairness, etc., (See Ps. xxxvi. 6; Acts vii. 20, with the margin of both cases), we understand that Benaiah slew two very great lions of Moab.

Again the word occurs in Eze. xliii. 15, 16, where it is rendered "altar." The marginal rendering is in one case "mountain of God," and in the other, "lion of God." This we can understand when we remember that the temple, the essential part of which was the altar, was on the summit of Mount Zion, and that Mount Zion and the temple stood for Jerusalem.

Jerusalem stands as the centre of the worship of the true God, and therefore all the judgments that come upon Jerusalem because of the corruption of the worship of Jehovah will surely come wherever that worship has been perverted. It should also be noted, in reading the text, that instead of "Woe to Ariel!" we may read, "Ho, Ariel!" as in the Revision and in

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the margin of our common version. So combining the various renderings, we may arrive at this: "Ho, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David dwelt! add ye year to year; let the feasts be observed in their courses, and the sacrifices be offered, yet will I bring distress upon Ariel, and there shall be mourning." That is to say, ceremonies and festivals, no matter how numerous nor how strictly observed, will never ward off judgments, nor take the place of personal righteousness of character. Compare this with verses 13, 14. It is the same lesson that is set forth in the first chapter of Isaiah, and one which cannot be repeated too often in this generation.

The reader will notice that Lowth's rendering of the first part of verse 3, is widely different from that in the common version or the revision. Lowth has it, "I will encamp against thee, like David," while the others have it, "I will camp against thee round about." The difference comes in this way: The Hebrew word for "circle" differs from the Hebrew of "David" only in the last letter, and those two letters are so nearly alike that one is easily mistaken for the other, and some ancient manuscripts have it David. It is really a matter of no importance, and attention is called to it only that we may see that little differences of that kind do not affect the meaning. If we read, "I will encamp against thee, like David," it is the same as though we read, "I will camp against thee round about," for that is the way David did.

We can now read the verses and see the picture which they present. Jerusalem, although very scrupulous in the observance of all the forms and ceremonies of the law, and of many of which the law knew nothing, yet disregarding the weighty matters of the law, namely, judgment, mercy, faith, was besieged by the Assyrians, afterward by the Babylonians, and still later by the

Romans, and laid low. These nations, heathen and wicked as they were, were the agents of God, so that God Himself could say that He was encamping against the city. And those judgments upon Jerusalem of old were only a foretaste of the final destruction which shall come upon all who choose to follow their own way rather than God's way. Compare verse 6 with 1 Thess. iv. 15-16; v. 3; Rev. vi. 12-17; and Rev. xi. 18, 19.

"And thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground." When Saul consulted a woman with a familiar spirit, the answer came out of the ground. See 1 Sam. xxviii. 7-13. Evil comes from beneath; all that is good comes from above. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." James i. 17. Christ said to the wicked Jews: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world." John viii. 23. "He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; He that cometh from heaven is above all." John iii. 31. The evil spirit speaks from the earth; Christ speaks from heaven. Heb. xii. 25. Jerusalem is to be visited with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, and storm and tempest, and the flame of the devouring fire (Verse 6), and its destruction is to be sudden. When they shall say, Peace and Safety, then sudden destruction cometh. 1 Thess. v. 3. The multitude of the proud shall be as chaff that passeth away. "For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. iv. 1. The time when this judgment shall be executed upon Jerusalem is very evident.

"And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision." The fact that men are instruments in the hands of God to execute judgments, does not necessarily prove that what they do is righteous. They are unconscious and unwilling instruments. They are intent upon carrying out their own purposes, but God overrules all in such a way that His purposes are accomplished. See the case of the selling of Joseph by his brethren. They were moved by envy and hate (Gen. xxxvii. 17-28; Acts vii. 9), nevertheless it was God's purpose that was carried out in the deed. Gen. xlv. 7, 8; Ps. cv. 17, 18: So it is when God allows unfaithful servants to fall into the hands of their enemies. What they suffer is but a part of God's judgment upon them, yet the men who execute this judgment are prompted only by their evil passions, and must themselves receive punishment for the judgments that they inflict.

One can readily see how Jerusalem will be the center of contention among the nations. Among all professed Christian nations the Turk is regarded as something to be got rid of. Professed ministers of the Gospel have been for years crying out for vengeance to be executed upon the Turks, and berating the heads of Government for their slowness to begin the war of extermination. The Turkish Empire would long since have ceased to be a part of Europe, if the other Governments could have been agreed as to who should be its successor. In process of time it will be drive out, and when the Turkish Empire is limited to Asia, Jerusalem will be the natural capital of it, inasmuch as it is the principal city in many respects. But since even now the cry has gone out for the Turk to be driven

off the face of the earth, so much the more will it go forth then. So that it will be at Jerusalem that the armies of the nations will chiefly be assembled when the Lord appears in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel.

When the Lord appears in the clouds, all the wicked will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. 2 Thess. ii. 8. This will be but the beginning of their destruction. At the appearing of Christ, all the righteous dead will be raised incorruptible, and will be taken to be with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. But the rest of the dead, the wicked, will not live again until the end of a thousand years, during which the righteous will be sitting in judgment with Christ, in heaven. Rev. xx. 5, 6. "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Rev. xx. 7-9. They go up with the intent to capture the city; but, lo, the city against which they now come is the New Jerusalem. Jerusalem has undergone a transformation while they have been asleep; and against this new city they are powerless.

When the psalmist went into the sanctuary of God, he understood the end of the wicked. He said, "Surely Thou didst set

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them in slippery places; Thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, Thou shalt despise their image." Ps. lxxiii. 17-20. So the multitude of those who come up to fight against Jerusalem shall be "as a dream of a night vision." They are to be "punished with everlasting destruction," and the fire with which they will be consumed is "eternal fire," yet they are "suddenly consumed, as in a moment." Their destruction is the more speedy simply because the fire is eternal, even the consuming fire of God's own glory. No matter how long a time is occupied in the act of consuming them, compared with the eternity to follow it is but a moment. "So shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against Zion."

Men who receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, have no alternative but strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. 2 Thess. ii. 10-12. The greater the light which God sends, the greater will be the darkness if it is rejected. Thus it is that the Lord pours out the spirit of deep sleep, and closes the eyes of the prophets and rulers. Verse 10. The rendering of this verse in the Revised Version is very striking and suggestive: "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes, the prophets; and your heads, the seers, hath he covered." The prophets and the seers are the eyes and heads of the people; when therefore these are drunken the whole body must necessarily stumble and fall.

A vision is a thing seen. To give a vision is to make something plain. Think then in what a condition of dullness people are, to whom a vision is as a sealed book, or like an open book handed to one who cannot read. In verses 11, 12 we

have a picture of a time of gross ignorance. What can be the cause of it? The Lord Himself tells us. The wisdom of the wise perishes, and the understanding of the prudent man is hid, because the people draw near the Lord with their mouth, while their heart is far from Him, and their fear toward Him is taught by the commandment of men. Here is something for serious consideration.

Compare the reading of verse 13 in the Revised Version: "Their fear of Me is a commandment of men which hath been taught them," or, as the margin has it, "learned by rote." There is no thought or reason in it, but they have been told certain things to do, and have learned them parrot-like, and do them mechanically. Ignorance, and not simply ignorance, but the inability to comprehend, is the inevitable consequence of such a course; for when men do not use the gifts that God has bestowed on them, those talents are sure to fall into decay. God has given all men minds which are to be used to their utmost limit, and that can take place only when He is allowed to use them; but when some men allow other men to serve as minds for them, they of course have no use for one of their own, and so it is removed. Only the commandments of men may be learned by rote. Men may attempt to learn the commandments of God in that way, but it is impossible. God's commandments are a living force, and wherever they are, there must be activity.

Commandments of men are not to be regarded. Of course this refers to matters pertaining to God. There is no man in the world so good that his word is to be regarded as of any authority in things pertaining to God. If it is his word, it is of no more value than the wind. But if he speaks the word of God, then the word will be with power, and will have the stamp of authority. No man is authorised by the Lord to speak his own words to the people, and whoever does so is a false teacher, seeking only his own profit. "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." John iii. 34. "To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them." Isa. viii. 20.

When the wisdom of the wise men perishes, and the understanding of the prudent men is hid, what will become of the poor people who trust in the wisdom of men? They will evidently fall into the ditch, together with their blind leaders. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh." Jer. xvii. 5, 6.

What then is a poor, ignorant man to do? His course is plain; he is to go to the Lord for wisdom; "for the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 6. If anyone, no matter how poor, lack wisdom, "let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James i. 5. "Through Thy precepts I get understanding." Ps. cxix. 104. "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation." Verse 99. God has not made any one class of men the depositories of wisdom. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know." The Book is open, and it is plain; let each one read it for himself, and whatever he finds there let him adopt, without waiting to inquire of some man. The most ignorant may become wise, simply by giving heed to the Word of God; while the wisest men become fools when they turn away from that Word.

Some will say, "We have no time to study the Word of God, and to become acquainted with it." That is indeed strange. It is like the captain of a ship who is so busy navigating his vessel that he has no time to consult the chart and compass, or to take observations. It is like a man who has no time for eating. Men live only by the word of God; therefore the study of the word is the only thing they have time for. Time is given to men for the sole purpose of enabling them to gain eternity. Yet how few will believe it. They will act as though this short life were all, and as though it depended on them to secure it; whereas this life is given by God, and is but the ante-room to the life eternal. Who will be wise? let him seek first of all the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and infinite wisdom and riches will be his.

"Little Folks. The Lord's Flock" *The Present Truth* 15, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

"May brings flocks of little lambs, Skipping by their fleecy dams."

Is it not a beautiful sight, this "footprint of the Lord." We learned last week that "the pastures are clothed with flocks" because He "*visiteth* the earth and watereth it." Think of this now as you see the flocks of sheep, with the dear, happy little lambkins skipping gaily about, so full of joyous new life.

And this beautiful sight is as old as the world, for in the fourth chapter of Genesis we learn that Abel, the son of Adam and Eve, was "keeper" or "feeder of sheep;" and we read also about the "firstlings" or lambs "of his flock."

Some of the noblest men of whom we read in the Bible, those whom God specially used in His work, were shepherds, keepers and feeders of sheep.

For forty years "Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law;" and it was "as he led the flock to the back side of the desert" that "the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush."

Moses' work in caring for the flock of sheep had given him just the lessons that he needed to teach him to do the work that was now given to him, to lead the Lord's great flock, His people Israel, through the desert to the promised land. God "led His people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron."

No doubt you will think too of the shepherd boy, David, who kept his father's sheep so bravely and faithfully. He too was being prepared to lead and feed the Lord's flock; for in Psalm 78 we are told that,

"He chose David also His servant,
And took him from the sheepfolds;
From following the ewes He brought him,
To feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance."

Through his shepherd life God taught David many precious lessons of His own love and care for His people; for "we are the sheep of His pasture." David saw how, for the sheep, everything depended upon the shepherd, their food, their comfort, and their safety. And he joyfully sang:-

"The Lord is *my* Shepherd; I shall not want
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.
He leadeth me beside the still waters."

A gentleman once asked a shepherd, "When do, your sheep lie down?" And the man told him, when they have eaten enough and are quite comfortable, when there is nothing to make them afraid. David knew this, and so you see how much he means when he says that the Lord wakes His sheep to "lie down." We may be sure that they will be well fed, and that they will have nothing to fear, because they are so safe in His keeping.

Sometimes David had to lead his flock through dangerous places, where there were wild beasts ready to spring upon them, but the sheep did not need to worry, because their shepherd was keeping them. David afterwards said, "When there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after him and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him."

Then as he thought of the tender watchfulness and great might of his own Shepherd, he sang:-

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death
I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

Though Satan, the great enemy of the Lord's flock, "goeth about as a *roaring lion*, seeking whom he may devour," His sheep and lambs need fear no evil, for Satan cannot touch them while their Shepherd is near. He knows that he has no power over them so he tries to draw them away from Jesus, so that he can seize and destroy them.

But a good shepherd keeps watch to see that his sheep do not stray. If one of David's little lambs strayed away from

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the flock, he went anxiously after it, and brought it back to a place of safety, and led it gently in the right way with the others. This was what taught him to sing:-

"He restoreth my soul:
He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for
His name's sake."

He would have felt it to be a disgrace to him as a shepherd to lose one of his flock; for a true shepherd is a *keeper* of sheep. So he knew that "for His name's sake," for the sake of His own good name, His reputation as a shepherd, the Lord would "restore his soul," and guide him in the right way.

Read the words of Jesus in the tenth chapter of John, verse 11: "I am the Good Shepherd, the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." David *risked* his life for his sheep, but Jesus *gave* His, for this was the only way that He could keep them safely, the only way that He could destroy the "roaring lion" who was seeking to kill all His sheep and lambs.

He says: "I lay down My life for the sheep;" but He says also: "I lay down My life that I might take it again." When He took up again the life that He had laid down for His sheep, He showed that He had conquered all the enemies of His flock, so that we need "fear no evil."

Nothing can hurt the Lord's flock without first taking His life, and this is not possible, for He is "alive for evermore." And so long as *He lives*, His flock are quite safe. So He says, "My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

Remember that you, dear little ones, are the lambs of the Good Shepherd's flock, and He says of you, "He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." What a "safe and happy shelter"!

"Gracious Saviour, tender Shepherd,
Little ones are dear to Thee;
Gathered in Thine arms and carried
In Thy bosom may we be;
Sweetly, fondly, safely tended,
From all want and danger free.

"Tender Shepherd, never leave us
From Thy fold to go astray;
By Thy look of love directed,
May we walk the narrow way;
Thus direct us, and protect us,
Lest we fall an easy prey."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

-An American Bicycle Trust has been incorporated in New Jersey with a capital of \$8,000,000.

-In a terrible railway disaster near Philadelphia, thirty-four persons were killed and many injured.

-Two hundred thousand families, it has been calculated, are living in London on about ?1 sterling a week.

-It is calculated that in ordinary everyday travelling the people of England spend about ?150,000 a day.

-The trusts in America do not help trade. A Boston railroad company has purchased 8,000 tons of steel rails in England owing to a trust having advanced the price.

-The conversion of Jews to Christianity seems to be a very expensive business. Recent missionary figures show that it cost over ?38,000 to convert twenty-eight Jews.

-The Russian Government is again taking exceptional measures against the Jews. It has just decided to prohibit their stay in St. Petersburg even in the case of Jews of French nationality.

-The Papal Nuncio at the Hague has received instructions to withdraw from the place while the Peace Conference is in session. This is intended to mark the Pope's displeasure at his exclusion.

-M. de Bloch, to whose influence the Czar owes his idea of disarmament, has proved by figures that in any Continental war the vast armies cannot possibly be

provided for, and must perish on account of their size from famine and epidemics.

-Russia has demanded a fresh railway concession from China which will enable her to run her railway to Peking. In its Note refusing the Russian demand the Chinese Government says it can no longer believe in Russian promises of friendship.

-The Swedes are much exercised over the late Russian move in Finland because they see in it an ultimate menace to their own national independence. Russia has always desired an ice free port, and this could only be had on the Atlantic coast of Scandinavia. The possibility is one that is being actively discussed in Sweden.

-The Philadelphia Steel company has just secured from the Indian Government the contract for the construction of the viaduct over the Goktiak Gorge on the Burma Railway. The viaduct will be one of the largest in the world, measuring 2,260ft. long, and standing 320ft. high. It will involve the use of 5,000 tons of steel.

-The Transvaal has not been invited to send a delegate to the Peace Conference, for fear of giving offence to England, but the Dutch papers are writing bitterly over the exclusion, and point out that Bulgaria, which stands in the same relation to Turkey that the Transvaal does to England, has been admitted. It is difficult to imagine how peace can come out of the turmoil and jealousy which centres in the Conference

-The Chicago committee appointed to examine the food being exported to England finds that condensed milk preserved by means of wood alcohol is poisonous, and that this material is used for embalming bodies. It has also been discovered that tarred rope is used to adulterate ginger pulverized clay is mixed with flour, corn starch is an adulterant of powdered sugar, ground-up cocoanut shells are sold as buckwheat flour, jellies are made of apple cores and parings mixed with . . . and butter is made of tallow and marrow.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

The fact that the Peace Conference sits at The Hague at the same time that the battalions of the Dutch army are undergoing their annual exercises in the same city, is suggestive of the irony of the affair. Talks of peace with preparations for war will go on side by side until the last.

In connection with the little article on another column, entitled "Dividing the Prey," setting forth that there are no Christian nations, but that all are essentially savage, like wild beasts or birds of prey, read the following from the *Daily Chronicle*, on the peace problem that is now attracting so much attention:-

The sad fact is, as we have had to point out more than once since this great problem was propounded that the temper of the Great Powers is not conspicuously Christian. Their enormous armaments and their balanced alliance have provoked a condition of morbid watchfulness and mutual suspicion. The chief preventive of war is the fear that if it came, it would be infinitely terrible and

ruthless. There is but little sign among the Great Powers of any willingness to obey any law other than the law of force.

"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also." That is going home. The aim of the whole Gospel is to bring us home. Whether we recognise it or not, God regards us as children and as such, He desires us to share in the home. But if we refuse to take the place that belongs to children, to come borne to the Father's house, then we cannot share in the blessings of home. So the invitation is everywhere in this Gospel-Come. That one word sums up the whole Bible from beginning to the end. When the Lord would save righteous Noah from the coming flood, He said to him, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark."

Almost the last thing in the Bible is that gracious invitation, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him halt hearth say, Come. And whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." Following this is the promise, "Surely I come quickly." Then, the response: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This is the longing desire of hearts sinsick and weary everywhere, and it can be realised, for the invitation is a personal one, the salvation is a personal one, and the home that Jesus has gone to prepare is a real home. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."

An apprentice at Whitehead's torpedo works, a lad of nineteen, has invented an electric gun that is described as "deadly, noiseless, and smokeless." It is said that "the most satisfactory experiments have been made with the model, which weighs only seven pounds. A target was shattered at a distance of five miles. The velocity of the shot is estimated at five and one-half miles in two seconds. It is said that the Admiralty have offered the lad ?75,000 for his invention, and that he has refused it, but at their request he is engaged in manufacturing a gun that will weigh one hundredweight, to be ready in July. Thus the work of preparing war goes on apace. What a terrible time it will be when the nations, armed with such murderous weapons, become really angry.

The *Daily Chronicle* gives expression to the sentiment that all right-minded people must feel, when it says that a world organised on a war basis, such as we see at present, to an extent greater than at any previous time since creation, "is not good," and that "the thing cannot go on as it is." And adds the striking statement which is true enough, and which should be remembered at the close of the Peace Conference:-

It is important to remember also that by the very fact of entering a Conference the nations have intensified the problem. Risk of war and burden of preparation were bad enough before, when no one mooted the question of a better way. But if a Parliament of the world is convened to find that better way, and is obliged to say that no way can be found, then the war cloud will be blacker than ever, and the risk of an actual Armageddon will be nearer.

"Dividing the Prey" *The Present Truth* 15, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

There is probably no man who is better acquainted with the political condition of the nations of the world than Henry Norman, or one who can more accurately state the causes that are operating to bring about certain results. An article contributed by him to the New York *Independent*, entitled, "China: A Coroner's Inquest," is very interesting in that it shows incidentally that now, just as always in the past, the lust of nations for conquest is restrained only by the power of other nations to resist.

He regards China as already dead, and says, "it can be shown that there is no hope for China on the inside, and that as regards the relations of the great Western nations with her the golden time has been let slip, that consequently partition is to be expected in the future, and that the struggle for partition may mean war."

Continuing, he says; "China is less able to-day than at any period of history to protect herself against outside interference, however humiliating and disastrous this may be, and the only alternative to successive amputations of her territory is a successful rising of the many revolutionary and disaffected parties within her own borders.

Again: "Hopeful people thought the result of the war with Japan would enlighten even China, and that she be compelled to organise some kind of army and navy, to give pause, at least, to intending marauders upon her. Nothing of the sort has taken place." As a consequence all the great Powers are talking about "the partition of China." Yet five years ago it was not so. Then, Mr. Norman says, "the Chinese army was supposed to be a huge, more or less disciplined force, which would at any rate make a rough and ready struggle when rifles were put into its hands; . . . the Chinese navy was believed to be a factor in Eastern affairs." "The fateful words, 'partition of China,' were then never heard."

All this is told as a simple matter of fact, not with any thought of reflecting on the Christianity of the peoples which ready to pounce upon and divide up any nation that cannot defend itself. China is a dead carcass, and the other nations are perched round like vultures, anxious to devour it, hindered only by their dread of one another's talons.

We still hear people talk about the "Christian nations" as though there were such a thing, and yet it is taken as a matter of course that they will act the part of highway robbers wherever they can do so without successful resistance. And while this is so, many of the religious leaders are accepting this as perfectly legitimate, and are zealously advocating the observance of forms and ceremonies and days. Thus they say, "Is not the Lord among us?" while the earth is becoming filled with violence.

June 1, 1899

"Standing for Principle" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

The stand that the three Hebrew children took as they faced the fiery furnace is one that every Christian must take every day. Every morning we are commit our ways to God, for we do not know what will befall us. The thing is to be ready for the furnace no matter whether it comes or not. No harm can come to us when we are hidden in Christ, and whatever He permits will always be for a purpose.

It was because these men had taken up the position of adhering closely to principle long before, that they were ready for the experience they were now called upon to pass through. So we, if we would be prepared for the fiery trials that will surely come to all, must begin now to be loyal to God; study to know His will, and then fearlessly do it no matter what the surroundings are. The very thing that was intended for the utter destruction of these worthies, set them free. This is God's way of working.

When king Nebuchadnezzar made a decree

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that all people, nations and languages should worship the golden image which he had set up, music was an important feature of the occasion. The instruments used were the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery-just the instruments used in the worship of God. It is therefore nothing in the instrument, but the use of it, that makes it evil or good. So it is with us; we can yield our members "as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin," or "as instruments of righteousness unto God." The use to which we put them-that is the important thing. And more, the higher the capacity for right service, the greater the harm done when they are put to a wrong use.

"Studies from the Gospel of John. Christ Risen. John xx. 11-20" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

John xx. 11-20

If Mary and the disciples had only believed what Jesus had told them, they would not have been surprised to find an empty tomb that morning, and no tears would have been shed. He had told them "how that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and rise again the third day," but other plans for Him and themselves had so occupied their minds as to shut out His words. And so it is now. Many unnecessary tears are shed because the Lord's words are not believed. But so tender is the love of the Lord toward us that He has compassion upon those who weep, even though it be unnecessarily, and He sends words of comfort and help. And so two of the angels who were even then about Mary, and who are constantly watching over us, became visible to her, and inquired, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Her answer reveals an earnest desire to know where her Lord is, and so she finds at once that He was not far from her. "She turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus."

What a pity to see Jesus and not know Him! To be within the sound of His voice, and yet not to recognise Him! Jesus asks the same question of Mary, and

she is still intent upon finding the body of her Lord, little thinking that an angel had rolled away the stone and that He was alive for evermore. It took but one word to reveal the truth to her, one word spoken in the familiar tone of love, and that word was her own name, "Mary." It required but one word from her to show that her heart was still true to Him who had forgiven and cleansed her, and that word was "Master." And then having made Himself known to her, He gives her a message to the disciples, and that too in words which show that He still identifies Himself with them. Although "they all forsook Him and fled," yet He speaks of them as His brethren, and His Father is their Father, and His God is their God. And we learn from the record given by Mark that it was not sufficient to mention the disciples as a company, but Peter is singled out and referred to by name. And why? Ah, because he had denied his Lord with cursing and swearing, and he would need some special assurance that the Lord thought of him still as one of the disciples.

There can be but one purpose in His ascending to His Father immediately after His resurrection. He will receive in person the assurance that His sacrifice is accepted, and that in Him, the Man Christ Jesus, the second Adam, the human family are again brought into the Father's presence. The path to glory was by way of the cross and the tomb, and the journey has been completed. During His earthly pilgrimage He had been shut away from His Father's face, not because of His own sins but on account of the sins of these same brethren, but now He has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself and He, as the representative of His brethren, freed from sin, ascends to the Father.

What a meeting was that! When the *prodigal* son "was yet a great way off the father saw him, and had compassion and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him," but what a welcome shall He receive who had carried at the cost of a life of suffering and a death of shame the message of love and pardon from the Father to a prodigal world! If "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth," who can measure the joy over the triumphant completion of that work through which *all* sinners may have salvation? It was for the glory set before Him that He endured the cross despising the shame. But this joy He shares with every one who will share with Him in the travail of soul for the lost. Sufficient reason, then, had Paul the apostle to say: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

The message was delivered by Jesus, but "they, when they had heard that He was alive and had been seen of her believed not." It is a typical experience, often realised by the messenger of good tidings. We too have heard His voice, and have come to know that Jesus lives, but often, those who hear our message from Him to them believe not. Oh, for a testimony of greater power, which will carry a greater conviction to many hearts!

Jesus would give the fullest opportunity to all the disciples to know that no one had taken away His body, but that He has really risen from the dead, just according to His own word. That very night, when the disciples were assembled, although the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, yet Jesus came "and stood in

the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." And then "He showed unto them His hands and His side." No other one bears these evidences that He is the crucified Lord. And these wounds witnessed then, as they will to all eternity, to the love that gave its all on Calvary. "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

The tidings of the Lord's resurrection had been brought by Mary Magdalene to the disciples "as they mourned and wept," but they did not credit her report. Afterward the two disciples, to whom the Lord

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had made Himself known at Emmaus, "returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed," "neither believed they them." It is therefore perfectly clear that the disciples were not gathered together to celebrate His resurrection, for they had persistently refused to believe that He had risen, and Jesus Himself "upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen." The Lord Himself has never placed any special honour upon the day on which He was raised. The fact of His resurrection is the foundation of every Christian's hope, and a memorial has been provided which is appropriate to the experience. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life." Baptism when rightly administered appropriately symbolises the death and resurrection of our Lord and our union with Him in that experience, but we have never been instructed to place any mark of distinction upon the day on which He was raised from the dead.

Gladness again filled the hearts of the disciples when they were convinced that they were looking upon the face of their Lord. It is always so with those who have become acquainted with the Lord. "They shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads." "In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

But it is not necessary to wait until the Lord is revealed in the clouds of heaven before we see Him and are glad. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth." This is a present experience. And this is what prepares us for that time when He shall come in power and great glory. It is those whose hearts have not been cleansed, and who have not recognised the Lord in His dealings with them, who shall be afraid: "pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them." The experience of such in that great day is described in the following scripture: "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks. Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Not having become acquainted with, and accustomed to, "the light of the knowledge

of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," He is to them a consuming fire. More desirable is it to them to be covered with the mountains than that the undimmed gaze of those eyes, which are "as a flame of fire," should be directed toward them. Now is the time to heed the word, "Look unto Me, and *be ye saved*, all the ends of the earth."

"Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord." Do we long for the time when He will reveal Himself in our midst, and shall we be glad in that day? We are already in the dawning of that day. "Look up and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

"God's Witnesses" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

"Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord." These words are addressed to His chosen people; and while they are applicable to His elect at all time, they are especially applicable in the closing scenes of this earth's history. On every side the evidence is abundant that the second coming of Christ is near. Soon "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." That event will bring the Judgment, in which every man has a case pending, when he will be rewarded "according as his work shall be."

Important as this event is to every human being in the universe, yet infinitely more important is it to God, for He, too, is on trial. He that is the "accuser of the brethren" has also accused God of injustice. Rev. xii. 10. True he is a liar, and "there is no truth in him;" nevertheless the charge stands against God before earth and heaven.

Who is to clear the Infinite One of Satan's accusations. God created the world to be inhabited with a race of beings who would reflect His image, who would be loyal to Him. He has such confidence in man whom He has created, that He is willing to risk His character with him, and to this end He calls upon men to be His witnesses, witnesses of His loving-kindness, of His great mercy, of His willingness and power to forgive sin-witnesses who will tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

A witness is supposed to know whereof he speaks; then how important that every soul who essays to stand up for God and His truth, should know for himself what the character of God is. How dare he be a witness when he knows not whereof he speaks? A witness for Christ will live a life of unselfish devotion to helping others. He will be willing to serve. There will be no dissension, no jealousy, no envying, no more striving for place and position than two blades of grass growing side by side. When such a man goes forth to labour for others, his credentials will be of heaven, not of men; but all men will take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. Acts iv. 13.

The trees of the field, the birds of the air, the dew and the rain, the heavenly bodies in their wondrous march through space, are God's witnesses-they speak a language that is understood in every tongue. Now God desires that His children shall be witnesses, not alone with the tongue, but with the life. But it is by the Holy Spirit that men are made true witnesses for God, and for this purpose Christ

came to earth, suffered and died, that by His life man may be as He was, a "faithful and true witness." Then in that great day God will stand clear, for the redeemed in heaven will say, "Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are Thy judgments;" "just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints."

"The Trial and the Victory" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

When three Hebrew children were brought face to face with the fiery furnace, their reply to the king was, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace. . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Here is presented the principle that is to be followed by every one who would be loyal to God. We do not know whether God will deliver us from the trial, or in the trial, or whether the victory to the world will be apparent at all or not. No matter what the results, we are to stand faithful to

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principle. Victory will come some time, and we can afford to wait.

Trials are not pleasant; they are furnaces of affliction, and by them the child of God is purified. They are the means of perfecting character. But the hardest of all trials to bear is that where the world sees only defeat. When Christ was brought to the test of the cross, who of His followers thought that for Him it was a victory that day? There was but one who believed He was King, and that was the thief upon the cross by His side. "Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." And yet there was no day in all the earthly experience of Christ when He was more of a victor than He was that day.

By faith the Christian can see victory where the world sees only defeat. The earth belongs to the meek-"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"-but they are not yet in possession of it, and present appearances do not indicate that they ever will be, but time will prove it. "God is not slack concerning His promises." His eternal purpose and the principles of the Gospel are bound to prevail. The question with each of us should be whether when they triumph,-and triumph gloriously we they will,-we shall be there to triumph with them.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'Too Deep for Jehovah.' Isa. xxix. 13-24" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXIX. 13-24, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

13. Wherefore Jehovah hath said:

Forasmuch as this people draweth near with
their mouth,

And honoureth Me with their lips,

While their heart is far from Me;

And vain is their fear of Me,
Teaching the commandments of men;

14. Therefore behold, I will again deal with this
people,
In a manner so wonderful and astonishing;
That the wisdom of the wise shall perish,
And the prudence of the prudent shall disappear.

15. Woe unto them, that are too deep for Jehovah
in forming secret designs;
Whose deeds are in the dark; and who say,
Who is there, that seeth us; and who shall
know us?

16. Perverse as ye are! shall the potter be
esteemed as the clay?
Shall the work say of the workman, He hath
not made me?
And shall the thing formed say of the former
of it, He hath no understanding?

17. Shall it not be but a very short space,
Ere Lebanon become like Carmel,
And Carmel appear like a desert?

18. Then shall the deaf hear the words of the
Book,
And the eyes of the blind, covered before with
clouds and darkness, shall see.

19. The meek shall increase their joy in Jehovah:
And the needy shall exult in the Holy One
of Israel.

20. For the terrible one faileth, the scoffer is no
more;
And all that were vigilant in iniquity are
utterly cut off.

21. Who bewildered the poor man in speaking;
And laid snares for him, that pleaded in the
gate;
And with falsehood subverted the righteous.

22. Therefore thus saith Jehovah the God of the
house of Jacob,
He who redeemed Abraham;
Jacob shall no more be ashamed;
His face shall no more be covered with confusion!

23. For when his children shall see the works of
My hands,
Among themselves shall they sanctify My

name;

They shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob,
And tremble before the God of Israel.

24. Those that were led away with the spirit of
error, shall gain knowledge;
And the malignant shall attend to instruction.

The chief thing necessary in order to an understanding of the prophecy of Isaiah, is to keep in mind the fact that it all applies to the very last days. It was indeed a present, personal, practical message to those who lived when Isaiah was writing, but it has a still greater application to us since we are nearer the time of its fulfilment than they were. We are, however, no nearer than they might have been if they had believed the message. If in our study we watch for the expressions which plainly indicate the application of the prophecy to the end of time, we shall have much less difficulty in reading with profit.

There is no profit in hypocrisy. Those who honour God only with their lips, while their hearts are far from Him, will soon lose what little of reality they have to begin with. Whatever is not used, degenerates, and ultimately goes to decay.

In our common version, as well as in the Revision, we read in verse 13, that the people "have removed their hearts" far from the Lord. The Norwegian has it, "They hold their hearts from Me." Compare this with the first chapter of Romans, where we read of those who hold down the truth in righteousness, and note in both places that the same result follows.

We very often hear of one who has "learned a thing by heart." That is the only way men can learn the things of God. But that does not mean learning them by rote, like a parrot. It means that the Scriptures must be translated into the life—must become a part of one's being. Because men have removed their hearts from the Lord, their understanding wanes and vanishes. The only difficulty there is in understanding the Word of God, is of the heart, and not of the head. It is because of the unwillingness to have the life conformed to the law of the Lord, that men find difficulty in understanding the Bible. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine."

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Because men have been content with the wisdom of this world, and have despised the wisdom that comes from God only, because they have taken the commandments of men instead of the commandments of God, the Lord will work in a way so wonderful that the wisdom of the wise shall fail; it will perish and disappear. That means simply that He will do such wonders that they will be compelled to stand in open-mouthed astonishment. Their science will be utterly inadequate to account for His working. But mind that this inability comes because they have trusted in human wisdom. That indicates that if they had trusted the Lord, and had allowed Him to instruct them, they would understand His working. Why not? Those who faithfully learn the simple lessons that the Lord gives them, may well go on to deeper things. The Holy Spirit is given us in order that we may know the things that are freely given us of God. 1 Cor. ii. 12. But God give us all things. Acts xvii. 25. Therefore the Holy Spirit will teach us all things, even "the

deep things of God." But without the Spirit of God, no one can really know anything as he ought to know it. Do not forget that God does not arbitrarily deprive anybody of wisdom. No, He continues to give more light and knowledge, so that all may understand, and men lose their understanding solely because they have refused to let God teach them as children.

A woe is pronounced upon those who think to hide their deeds from the Lord. What a terrible disappointment it must be for men who have imagined that they were "too deep for Jehovah" to find out that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Heb. iv. 13. "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth even as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." Ps. cxxxix. 11, 12. For a time it seems as if everything were well concealed. But "every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it." When the Lord comes, He will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." 1 Cor. iv. 5. In the Judgment it will be as though every evil deed that has been done in secret had been performed in open daylight before all men. Ah, but many things that are done under cover of darkness would not be done if all men could see them; then let us remember that the light is always shining, and let us walk as children of the light. It is not wise to try to have any secrets from the Lord. Whatever secrets we have, let us share them with the Lord.

"O what perversity!" That is what we have in many versions in place of "turning things upside down," in verse 16. The same idea is in Lowth's translation. Perverse means the same as turning upside down. This saying by those who think to hide their deeds from the Lord, "Who seeth us?" is a turning of things upside down. It is as though God were inferior to man. It is as though the clay were greater than the potter. "Shall the work say of the workman, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He hath no understanding?" There is nothing about the clay that the potter does not know; the carpenter understands all about the wood with which his works, and therefore understands to the full that which he has made; even so, and infinitely more, does God know the secrets of every man, and not only all that he does, but all that it is possible for him to do.

"Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed a forest?" God can in very deed turn things upside down, but when He does so, it is only the putting of things right. Things that men have perverted shall not be allowed to remain in that condition. See in chapter 24 how and when God turns the earth upside down.

In that day, the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. Now the learned say that they cannot read the words of the book, but then even the blind shall read, and the deaf shall hear it. And the result will be that the meek shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. The face of the covering that has been cast over all people, and the veil that is cast over all nations shall then be removed, and all will be able to see things just as they are. Now many are held in bondage, the bondage of the fear of men who

are over them. Parents coerce children, husbands tyrannise over wives, and many who occupy the place of ministers of the Gospel lord it over God's heritage. There are many who, through their very fear of God are held in bondage, because they mistakenly suppose that those who thus hold them are in the place of God to them. The very spirit which would make them obedient to the will of God, if they rightly understood it, hold them subject to those who have gained the mastery over them. But the time is surely coming when the terrible one shall be brought to naught; and even before the time comes that the scorner is no more and the vigilant in iniquity are utterly cut off, their influence will be so destroyed that all the honest ones whom they have held in bondage shall be set at liberty.

On verse 21 the Revised Version is better than the others. It reads, "That make a man an offender in a cause, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in a cause, and turn aside the just with a thing of naught." Compare James v. 1-7. "Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you." Snares will be laid for the men whom God has set to reprove the world for sin, the innocent will be made out to be offenders, and the just will be condemned without evidence. Thus it has been since sin entered the world, even so was Christ declared guilty, and so it will be until the Lord takes all power to Himself and reigns. At that time the house of Jacob, God's people, shall not be afraid nor ashamed. No more will their faces grow pale with fear of the oppressor.

Verse 24 contains a great comfort for the faithful workers in the cause of God, who often feel, as they look at their work, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain." The promise is, "They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." In the days following Pentecost thousands who had been led into error came to the knowledge of the truth. Many who had cried out, "Crucify Him," yea, and a great company even of the priests, some of whom had been the betrayers and murderers of Christ, were obedient to the faith. Acts vi. 7. But "better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof." If the early rain yielded such abundant fruits, much more will the latter rain bring forth. Let the children of God expect great things of Him, and great things will be done by Him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

"The Privilege of Being Light Bearers" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

It is God's idea that His people shall be the head and not the tail. Deut. xxviii. 13. In taking the Israelites out of Egypt into the Promised Land, the design was to make them a light to all the world, for Palestine was the highway of travel between all nations. By coming in contact with them, all nations would learn of the true God. For a time they were true to their trust, but later because of their iniquities, they were carried away captives to Babylon, yet even while captives in a strange land, God through them gave the light, for the light must be given. Just so to-day, the Lord has a message to give, light for the children of men, and to each one of us individually in his place, He grants the privilege of helping to give this light and truth. If we refuse, God will give the privilege to some one else, for

now as in olden time, the light must be given. To embrace the opportunity, is to become a co-worker with Christ, a joint heir with Him in that kingdom "which shall never be destroyed." To refuse means death and eternal destruction. There is nothing arbitrary about it,-it is a question of choice,-and every one is left free to accept or reject. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart."

"Preach the Word" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

"Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." Error abounds on every hand. Men refuse light, and because of this they are left to believe a lie. 2 Thess. ii. 11. They loved darkness better than light. John iii. 19. By their actions they say, "We have made lies our refuge, and under false should have we hid ourselves." Isa. xxviii. 15.

The Gospel comes to them as a message of life. It comes to them with a warning that when the "overflowing scourge" shall pass through, they "shall be trodden down by it;" for "the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the water shall overflow the hiding place."

This message the Lord has committed to men, and the charge is "*Preach the WORD.*" Why? Because "Thy Word is TRUTH." That is the only sure foundation. That is the rock on which the house was founded that the storm could not sweep away. "His *truth* shall be thy shield and buckler."

Definite as is this charge "to preach the Word," and the Word only, yet have you ever noticed how often the messengers make the mistake of telling what the Gospel *is not* instead of what it is? This is a trick of the devil. He knows that time spent in debating, and arguing *about* the truth, and time spent in "answering objections" will never save anyone. This being so, it seems as though it was his studied purpose to go about the churches and elsewhere among religious people with a chip on his shoulder; and he is never so happy as when he cannot induce some overzealous, inexperienced, or pugnacious theologian to turn aside from preaching Christ and Him crucified, and devote his attention to knocking the chip off his Satanic majesty's shoulder. The very best way to worry the devil is to pay no attention to that chip, but instead to go right forward faithfully preaching the Word. Why not? The most successful way to combat error is to preach the truth. Get the truth in the *heart*, and then the heresy will leave the head. "Preach the Word."

"A Wonderful Sacrifice" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

It is stated that at a meeting held in behalf of mission work in the West Indies, when it was made known how impossible it was to reach the slave population on account of the widespread separation between the and the ruling classes, two Moravian missionaries offered themselves and said: "These poor people must know of Jesus. We will go and work on the plantations as slaves, and toil under the lash, that we may get right beside them." So they left their homes, and went to the West Indies as slaves, lived in the company of slaves, fared as they fared,

that they might get close to the hearts of the poor oppressed people. And the slaves heard them, and rejoiced in the knowledge of the Saviour, because the missionaries had humbled themselves to the condition of those they would help.

We look at such self-sacrifice and say that it demands the highest praise; and so it does. But infinitely greater is the self-sacrifice of Christ. While we were yet rebels, He left the courts of heaven, laid aside His glory, came to this earth, and was "made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." But for all this only the basest ingratitude was shown, for after "being approved of God by miracles, and wonders and signs," He suffered the ignominious death of the cross at the hands of the very ones He came to save. When we think of it, and try to comprehend in a slight degree what a sacrifice it was, do we not from our inmost soul cry out,-

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

"Water" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

During the war of the Rebellion in the United States, after a severe engagement, when the disabled soldiers were being removed from the field, a wounded man lying in the hot sun cried, "Water, water!" It was brought to him, but it was warm and muddy, for that was all there was at hand. He took only a sip or two, and then handed the cup back, with the words: "Oh, for a draught of water from my father's well!"

There are to-day thirsty souls everywhere-thirsting to death for the water that is in their Father's well, yet they will not take of it and drink. "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; and the water that I shall give him will be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." May the longing of each heart be that of the woman at the well, who said, "Give me of this water."

"Little Folks. The Cattle" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

Read the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses of the first chapter of Genesis, which tells us that "God made the . . . cattle after their kind." Everything that God made belongs to Him. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," because He made it and filled it. "The sea is His, for He made it," and we ourselves belong to Him "for it is He that hath made us." And so God says of the cattle that He has made, "Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."

And God thinks of and cares for everything that belongs to Him, and so "He maketh grass to grow for the cattle." He who made them knows exactly what they need, and creates just the right kind of food for them.

At the time of the flood, we are told, "God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and *all the cattle* that was with him in the ark." He thought not only of Noah and his family, but He "remembered the cattle" also which were just as much His.

And again, when Jonah was angry because the Lord did not destroy Nineveh as He had purposed to do, God reminded Jonah that there was "much cattle" in the city, as well as many thousand people. To His own people, the children of Israel, He gave special instructions about the treatment of their cattle.

All these things show us with what loving care God thinks of His cattle, and we may be sure that He notices just how they are treated by those who have the care of them. God made man "to have dominion over the cattle," to rule them. That meant that he was to take care of them, to guide, protect, and feed them. God is the Ruler of the whole universe, and has dominion over all, because He has the power to supply all the needs of every creature.

If you have some animal pets, a kitten, a bird, or some rabbits, given to you for your own, you know that makes you responsible for them,-you must see that they are well supplied with the right kind of food, and kept comfortable and happy so far as it is in your power to make them so.

So when God gave to man the whole animal creation, He meant to use man as the channel through which He would supply all their needs, and keep them in a state of perfect happiness.

But oh, what a sad change sin has brought, and how man has fallen from his dominion! For now, instead of being the one through whom the needs of all other animals are supplied, he takes from them all to supply his own needs. He takes the wool from the sheep, the skin from the cattle, fur and hair from other animals, the shell from the tortoise, the ivory from the elephant, and even the feathers from the birds, to make clothes and ornaments for himself.

If he feeds any of the animals for a time it is only that he may use their strength to do his work, or at last *feed on them*, use their flesh for his own food. If you could see some at the terrible sights in the slaughter-houses, where thousands of God's creatures are slain, sometimes with unnecessary cruelty, to make food for man, you would see how sadly true is God's Word which tells us that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain."

Think what terrible sufferings have been brought upon the animals through man's disobedience to God, and be sure that you do nothing to add to these groanings that go up to the ears of God; but be sorry for the sins that have made them suffer so, and do all in your power to relieve them. Always be kind to all the animals that you have anything to do with, and try to influence others to be the same.

God did not make the cattle *to be eaten*. He did not create them for our food, for He gave us "every herb bearing seed," and "every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree bearing seed," to be our food. He made the cattle for His own pleasure for "Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created." He gave all living creatures to man to care for so that he might share in "the joy of the Lord," the pleasure that He feels in giving life and happiness.

Thank God that the time is coming when God's loving purpose will be fulfilled, when all creation's groans shall cease, when in the new earth man's dominion

shall be restored. Then he shall again be king over the whole earth, not to "exercise lordship" over God's creatures

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and make them his servants, but to be the one through whom God shall serve and give life and happiness to all His creatures in this earth.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

-The *Daily Telegraph* has now followed the example of the *Daily Mail* in dropping its Sunday edition.

-A great look-out of all the industries connected with the iron and building trades of Denmark has begun all over the country. Its economic and social consequences are likely to be grave.

-Some of the machines for making matches turn out as many as 2,500,000 matches a day.

-On May 20th a company of 128 persons started from Stockholm for the Polar regions in search of Andr .

-Since January, 1898, 333 people were murdered by lynching in the United States. Of these only eight were white.

-Nearly 3,000,000 persons in the famine district northwest of the Black Sea are reported to be on the verge of starvation.

-The grain crops of Tunis this year are irreparably spoiled, which means desolation and misery for that country.

-Russia has just placed with a Berlin manufacturer, an order for forty-eight powerful locomotives for the Siberian railway.

-Russia's commerce by sea has grown to such an extent that a company for the classification of ships has been formed on the model of the British Lloyds.

-Cases of bubonic plague are reported from Alexandria, West Coast of Africa, and Hong Kong. Precautions are being taken against the disease at European ports.

-Reports from Manila state that the insurgents are renewing their aggressive attitude. The Philippine Commissioners will not accept a single condition of the American proposals.

-Owing to the encroachment of the sea, the Lowestoft Lighthouse will be moved further inland for the third time. Although it weighs 120 tons, an effort will be made to move it bodily.

-Some weeks ago the Czar sent a person of confidence to inspect the penal establishments in Siberia. The reports brought back are of so grave a nature, that the Czar has resolved to personally visit these places himself.

-At an inquest on the body of a furniture dealer who died at the age of thirty-eight, the medical evidence showed that his nervous system had been nearly destroyed by "tee poisoning," owing to the large quantities he drank.

-The Duke of the Abruzzi, an Italian Noble man, has recently organised a Polar Expedition, which will sail from Christiania Fiord, about June 15th. No expense or effort has been spared in the light of all past experience, to make this effort a success. It is expected that it will take two years to make the trip.

-Prompted no doubt by the rapid growth of trusts in America, the Chinese merchants of San Francisco and other leading cities of the Pacific coast are organising a "combine" to include all the great industries in which they are interested in Canada and the United States, with a capital of many millions of pounds. In connection with this project it is proposed to found a great bank.

-In a recent Temperance address, Lady Henry Somerset stated that in some districts in London there was one public-house to every 193 persons of the population. Manchester had one to every 180 inhabitants; Birmingham, one to every 215; Liverpool, one to every 279; Bristol, one to every 195 of the inhabitants; while in Ireland, in Clonmel alone, one out of every 11 houses is a licensed house, and in Waterford one out of every 25; in Dublin and Belfast one out of every 33. The Brewers' Almanac stated that ?230,000,000 were invested in the trade. The share list of Guinness and Co. bore the names of peers and doctors and of "hundreds of women." In the same company were 178 persons bearing the title "revered" excluding bishops, deans, archdeacons and canons. Another brewery company included 133 persons designated as "reverend."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

Writing on the prominent features of the May Meetings, Dr. Gritton says that out of eight conspicuous points, the "Sabbath question stands to the very front." This would be all right if it were true, but when he goes on to apply such terms as "Lord's Day," and "Divinely-given Rest Day" to the first day of the week, and to speak of Sunday keeping as one of "the blessings which flow from obedience to the Sabbath law of God," it is easy to understand that among the eight noticeable features, there is no reference to a closer study of the Word of God. If there were, men would quickly learn that the seventh day, and not the first, is still as it has always been, the Sabbath of the Lord, and the only Divinely-given Rest Day. It is noteworthy too that the exaltation of a spurious Sabbath is now the main object of religious effort. All who would follow the Lord and worship Him in spirit and in truth, need to turn from the traditions and wisdom of men to enquire, "What saith the Lord?"

One writer in the press calls attention to the enormous saving which might be effected if the ?226,000,000 which Europe now spends for military purposes could be used to benefit the condition of its people. There is little hope, however, of the different States uniting since even those of them who are at present joined together cannot agree among themselves.

At present Europe is split up into four empires' eleven kingdoms, two republics, and four principalities. Two of the Empires-Germany and Austria-Hungary-are "composite," and the cleavage in the latter between the German, Magyar, and Slav element is widening every day, while even the "eternal union" of the twenty-two German states sworn to with such triumphant vehemence at Versailles covers no small amount of sharp antagonism.

The words spoken to Nebuchadnezzar two thousand five hundred years ago, exactly describe the nations into which the iron kingdom of Rome was divided.

"And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Dan. ii. 42, 43.

The Coroner at Newington stated last week that in nine out of ten inquests held by him, death was due to strong drink. He said,

It is a shocking state of affairs, and the most extraordinary thing is that, when a medical man has made a post mortem examination of the body which shows conclusively that death resulted from alcohol, the relatives swear that the deceased was not addicted to habits of intemperance.

Probably the relatives are not often guilty of wilful perjury. There is a very prevalent idea that men may drink freely of alcoholic beverages and yet not be considered addicted to habits of intemperance. The smallest use of poisons is intemperate. The only true temperance is to leave them alone entirely. That which men call moderate drinking is that which unduly shortens their lives, and makes them too often subjects of a coroner's inquest.

The *Christian* says: "Popery in every form is no advocate of a spiritual Sunday." That is true, if for no other reason than that popery is no advocate of spirituality in any form whatever; for popery and spirituality are as much opposed as are darkness and light. But at the same time popery is the originator of the Sunday as the rival of the Sabbath of the Lord,-the seventh day,-and no one knows so well as its author how the day is designed to be observed. The papal use of the day is as a holiday; God's use of it is as a working-day.

In these days of busy activity, wealth, and worldly honour the real spirit of the Gospel has leaked out of the hearts of many of the professed followers of Christ. Everything else is subservient to the "cares of this life." But that is not as it should be. An old cobbler struck the keynote of true spiritual life when he said, "My chief work is to serve Christ, and I mend shoes to pay expenses." The Apostle Paul's chief business was to serve Christ,-"For I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified,"-yet for a living he made tents. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Trials come to all. They are blessings in disguise, although it is not always easy to say so. They are good for us. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So let them come, and God will give us grace to bear them, according to our need. But when they come, do not lose heart, and never, *never* let go of God. There is no possible situation that the devil can bring upon a single child of God, that will result in defeat when he has hold of God.

"The Fruit of Higher Criticism" *The Present Truth* 15, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

Dr. L. W. Munhall, an American evangelist, spoke lately of the way in which infidelity, under the title of "the higher criticism," is establishing itself in the pulpit. Professors of theology who are not themselves converted by the sanctifying

influence of the truth, find the criticism more to their taste than simple obedience and surrender to the living Word, and as a result the ministry is becoming permeated with men who know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. Dr. Munhall said:-

Nearly every objection raised against the integrity of the Bible by the present day higher critics can be found in Voltaire's works, and Paine's "Age of Reason." The plan of the battle has changed. The enemy used to be outside the breastworks; now he is inside-in our own pulpits, in our educational institutions and editorial chairs; and the weapons used against the Book are the very same the infidels have always used.

I know that in two of our theological schools the Old Testament professors are giving their students all the objections against the integrity of the record, and making no attempt whatever to answer such objections; and these students are going out to fill our pulpits with little or no knowledge of the Bible, their minds filled with objections to the Book which the Church commissions them to expound. Can we reasonably expect spiritual results from the ministry of such men?

I know of one of these young men who, within four years of his graduation, left the Methodist Episcopal Church, became pastor of a Congregational Church, then pastor of a Unitarian Church, and then a blatant infidel, all in the same town.

A wealthy member of our church me:-"I sent my eldest son to a Methodist educational institution not 300 miles from New York city. Before he left home he was considered by all who knew him to be a model Christian young man. While at school he came under the influence of a certain professor who is a higher critic. He returned home an infidel, and has not once been inside a church since."

June 8, 1899

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The New Life in Christ. Col. iii. 1-15" *The Present Truth* 15, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

This portion of Scripture contains material for many lessons, yet the real lesson which it teaches cannot be learned from the text referred to as composing the lesson. The first words of the chapter show this: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." We see that here is an allusion, to something that has preceded, without which this cannot be understood. Going back in the preceding chapter, to verses 10-13, we find the connection. The whole of this lesson is contained in those verses. With them in mind, the statements in this chapter are seen to follow most naturally.

Christ is the one in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the, Godhead bodily." This was its true of Him on this earth as it is now, for He is now the same Being that He was here on earth. "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things." Eph. iv. 10. And the "same

Jesus" that ascended to heaven, shall come in like manner as He went into heaven. Acts i. 11. He was born of a woman, was here on earth a Man, yet was filled with all the fulness of God. "And ye are complete [literally, "made full"] in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power, in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead."

Now we see that this new life in Christ must be preceded by a death and burial and resurrection. What a change for a human being to undergo while still here in the flesh, walking among men, the most of whom will not know anything about the fact of his having a new life! Crucified with Christ, yet living in the flesh, and yet not the same man who lived before his crucifixion, for it is Christ who lives in his flesh! Was ever anything more wonderful? But it is true, and whoever does not know it repeats but foolishness and falsehood when he says, "I believe in the resurrection of the dead."

We are "by nature the children of wrath," walking after the course of this world, "fulfilling the desire of the flesh and of the mind," under the control of "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2, 3), "foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." Titus iii. 3. It is not a pleasant picture, but it is a true one; it is what we should see every time we look at ourselves, if our eyes were not blinded. It is an empty life; the fulness comes only in Christ; but it is only when we are conscious of this emptiness in our own selves, that we are partakers of His fulness.

And now to die; to be circumcised with the circumcision of Christ, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, which is the same as putting off the flesh itself, since this flesh is only sin-utterly opposed to the Spirit of truth and righteousness. See Gal. v. 17-21. The only way any man can get free from the bondage of these sins, which are inherent in the flesh, is to die. He is to die and yet live; to be in the flesh, yet as though out of it. That is the life which Jesus lived, and it can be accomplished only through Him. He was filled with all the fulness of God; He ascended to heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, for the purpose of filling all things; and by His Spirit we, also may "be filled with all the fulness of God." Eph. iii. 16-19.

When Christ died He said, "Father, into Thy hand I commit My Spirit." That was what He had done through the whole of His earth life. He could speak of Himself as "the Son of man which is in heaven." John iii. 13. So we are to resign ourselves unconditionally into the hands of God. If we are moved, like Nicodemus, to ask, "How can these things be?" we are for answer simply reminded of the power of God as seen in the winds and in all creation. God works in ways and by means that are infinitely beyond the range of human comprehension. That life of God, which makes the air a means of life to plants and animals, which permeates matter, and manifests itself in countless myriads of ways, can work in human flesh to manifest its highest forms. The proof of this

we have in Jesus of Nazareth, and may have in ourselves also. But we must consent to die, to be wholly separated from "this present evil world." Gal. i. 4.

Death must be followed by burial. It is not fitting that a living man should be buried, nor that a dead man should remain unburied. So when we die with Christ, "we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. vi. 4. "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead." Col. ii. 12. It is for us to know, here and now, in our own bodies, "what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." Eph. i. 19, 20.

Who that has given himself to the contemplation of this wondrous truth, can ever descend to parley about the "mode of baptism"? As if there could be any question about the matter! To be buried beneath the water, completely covered up in the likeness of Christ's burial, is the emblem of our passing from this life of the flesh to that of the Spirit. Our immersion in the water signifies our absorption into

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Christ, "the Fountain of living waters." "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27. When one has come to the point of dying with Christ, of being crucified unto the world, he will never stop to quibble about whether or not he shall be buried. That will follow as a natural consequence. And he will not be content without being buried with Christ in baptism. Just as the sprinkling of a small handful of dust upon a corpse could not by any stretch of language be called burial, even so the sprinkling of a few drops of water on a person cannot be called baptism.

You believe that God raised Jesus from the dead? Very well, then remember that the resurrection of Jesus was simply the declaration, the demonstration, of the fact that He was the Son of God, with the power of holiness. Rom. i. 3, 4. The power by which Jesus was raised from the dead was the power by which He lived the whole of His life on this earth. Only God can understand the mystery, and He alone needs to understand it, since He alone can perform it; but we may know the fact. That which God did for and in Jesus of Nazareth, He is anxious to do for and in every human being. Will you let Him? Your faith in the working of God in Christ, makes the same power operative in your age. But we must remember that faith means humility, self-surrender. We can have no real faith in God's working until we are willing that He should work in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

It is finished! You are dead with Christ, and by being buried with Him in baptism you have signified the fact to the world. What then?-"Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." What those things are, we cannot recount to you; for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him." God alone can reveal them to you by the Holy Spirit, and

this He will do, for "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God, and is freely given to us, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." 1 Cor. ii. 9-12. Your life, being hid with Christ in God, can comprehend things that are hidden from those who know only the earth life. Christ is in heaven; you are to live in heaven; "for our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour." Phil. iii. 20. And when He shall appear, we also shall appear with Him in glory.

When Christ was raised from the dead, He was raised to heaven; therefore those who are raised with Him are made to sit with Him in the heavenly places. Eph. ii. 4-6. Sons of God on earth, yet living in heaven, even as Christ on earth was "in the bosom of the Father." The remaining portion of the third chapter of Colossians now naturally follows. Read it. What wondrous possibilities it unfolds. In the bosom of the Father, our life hid with Christ in God, it is possible to be unmoved by whatever agitates this world. Strong temptations may come, but they cannot ruffle even the surface of that life that is covered by the Divine Presence. Here is the secret of deliverance from irritability, impatience, anger, and passion. Therefore "let the peace of God rule in your heart."

"Excessive Zeal" *The Present Truth* 15, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

After God had miraculously delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar was very willing to acknowledge the God of heaven, but immediately with that acknowledgment, he made a decree "that every people, nation, and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill." It is a great deal easier to make a decree to tear in pieces every one who does not believe in God, than it is to simply trust Him yourself. The trouble with the king then was that he had not learned what it is to have the kingdom of God within him; that with God there is no such thing as compulsion. "If any man hear My words and believe not, I judge him not," are the words of Christ. He had no more right to make the decree that the God of heaven should be worshipped than he had to make the one that all people, nations and languages should bow down and worship the golden image that he had set up. The same difficulty exists with many of Christ's professed followers today. In their zeal to promote the cause of God, they resort to measures that abridge religious liberty. The religion of Jesus Christ never persecutes.

"Contending for the Faith" *The Present Truth* 15, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

The Apostle Jude exhorts all believers to "contend for the which was once delivered to the saints." Few texts of scripture have been more abused and misunderstood than this one. Men have supposed that it was a command for each one to attack every other one who did not hold to the faith, or who did not at any rate believe just as he did; and generally have taken it as a warrant for all sorts of controversy, from that conducted by tongue or pen to that which ended in

the weaker party's being brought to the stake. Men have quoted this text as though it made controversy obligatory, in face of the statement that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves." 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

It is worth while to give the exhortation a little careful thought, for it ought to be obeyed, and it cannot be heeded by those who do not pay enough attention to it to understand what it says. In the first place, it is very evident that the contention for the faith is for the purpose of preserving it when it is in danger of being destroyed. Now the truth of God cannot be destroyed, as truth, since it is as eternal as God Himself; therefore we know that whoever contends for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, must do so with the view of preserving that portion of faith which God has dealt to him personally. That is, each one must give diligence to guard his own faith, to keep himself in the faith.

Now how can this be? With whom must we contend? It is with every one who contradicts is, and who denies the truth which we believe? Not by any means; for no one can destroy our faith in that way. If I know a thing to be so, nobody can destroy any knowledge by saying that it is not so. Even so, some other person's unbelief cannot overthrow my faith. The only way that I can lose faith is to listen to doubt, and to give heed to the insinuations of the devil.

It is therefore with the devil, and not with any man on earth, that we are to contend, in order to preserve the faith inviolate? Exactly that, and nothing else. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places." Eph. vi. 12, margin.

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How shall we contend with the devil? Here are the instructions: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith." 1 Peter v. 8, 9. It is by using faith, that we are able to preserve it. Yes; the more one uses faith, the more of it he will have. And "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. x. 17. Continual prayerful study of the Bible is the only way to preserve one's faith, and that will so it always. Therefore we find that instead of being obliged to go about like a prize-fighter, challenging everybody to a combat, or even accepting somebody's challenge to debate, we have on the contrary only to take heed to our own ways, according to the Word of God. Ps. cxix. 9. So may we preserve the faith which God has delivered to us.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Worldly Alliance a Failure. Isa. xxx. 1-15" *The Present Truth* 15, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXX. 1-15, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. "Woe unto the rebellious children, saith Jehovah;
Who form counsels, but not from Me;

Who ratify covenants, but not by My Spirit:
That they may add sin to sin.

2. Who set forward to go down to Egypt;
But have not enquired at My mouth:
To strengthen themselves with the strength of
Pharaoh;
And to trust in the shadow of Egypt.

3. But the strength of Pharaoh shall be your
shame;
And your trust in the shadow of Egypt your
confusion.

4. Their princes were at Tsoan;
And their ambassadors arrived at Hanes;

5. They were all ashamed of a people that
profited them not;
Who were of no help, and of no profit;
But proved even a shame, and a reproach
unto them.

6. The burden of the beasts traveling south-
ward,
Through a land of distress and difficulty.
Whence come forth the lioness, and the fierce
lion;
The viper, and the flying fiery serpent;
They carry on the shoulders of the young
cattle their wealth;
And on the bunch of the camel their
treasures:
To a people that will not profit them.

7. For Egypt is a mere vapour; in vain shall
they help;
Wherefore have I called her, Rahab the in-
active.

8. Go now, write it before them on a tablet;
And record it in letters upon a book;
That it may be for future times;
For a testimony for ever.

9. For there is a rebellious people, lying children;
Children who choose not to hear the law of
Jehovah:

10. Who say to the seers, See not;
And to the prophets, Prophecy not right
things;
Speak unto us smooth things, prophecy de-
ceits.

11. Turn aside from the way; decline from the straight path;
Remove from our sight the Holy One of Israel:

12. Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel:
Because ye have rejected this word;
And have trusted in obliquity, and perversion;
And have leaned entirely upon it:

13. Therefore shall this offense be unto you
Like a breach threatening ruin; a swelling in a high wall;
Whose destruction cometh suddenly, in an instant.

14. It shall be broken, as when one breaketh a potter's vessel;
So that there shall not be found a shard among its fragments,
To take up fire from the hearth,
Or to dip up water from the cistern.

15. Verily thus saith the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel;
By turning from your ways, and by abiding quiet, ye shall be saved;
In silence, and in pious confidence, shall be your strength;
But ye would not hearken."

One of the earliest things taught by the prophet Isaiah is that the name of the Mighty God,-the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, on whose shoulder the Government rests, and in whom alone there is stability and everlasting dominion,-is Wonderful, Counsellor. Isa. ix. 6, 7. He only is "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Isa. xxviii. 29. Therefore it is easy to understand the woe pronounced upon those who do indeed take counsel, but not of the Lord. It is not an arbitrary curse captiously uttered, as though the Lord were angry because He has been slighted, but the simple statement of the inevitable result to those who despise the counsel of the Lord. There is no real counsel except from Him.

The text itself gives us the picture of the circumstances that called it forth. The Israelites, threatened by the Assyrians, were seeking help from Egypt, their ancient house of bondage. The Egyptians had evidently promised them assistance, which the prophet assured them would never be rendered. This is seemingly the sum of the transaction, but the case was not an ordinary one, and it has lessons for God's people to the end of time.

In the first place, we must consider what Egypt really is. We will not take time and space here to go into it in detail, but we find a key in Rev. xi. 8, where we read that the dead bodies of God's "two witnesses," who are slain for the true testimony that they give, shall lie in the street of "that great city, which spiritually

is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Now it was "this present evil world" that crucified Christ, because "it knew Him not." See 1 John iii. 1; 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8; John xvi. 1-3. The cross of Jesus is that by which we are crucified unto the world, and since we are to be crucified

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with Him, it is that by which He was crucified unto the world. Gal. vi. 14; ii. 20. By it we are delivered from this present evil world. Gal. i. 4. We may therefore set it down as a fact that Egypt represents the world, as opposed to Christ.

Christ as a little child went down into Egypt, that the saying might be fulfilled. "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." Matt. ii. 15. Israel was brought out of Egypt in order that they might keep God's commandments. Ps. cv. 43-45. All the children of God, therefore, -all Christians, must come out of Egypt; so long as they remain in Egypt they cannot render God the service due Him, for Egypt is "the house of bondage." Ex. xx. 1-3. The recognition of God as the one, true God, to the exclusion of all false gods, means coming out of Egypt.

Think what a marvellous change had taken place when the children of Israel could think of making the alliance with Egypt, and could deliberately seek help against their enemies, from the people who had made them "serve with rigour," and had "made their lives bitter with hard bondage." Ex. i. 13, 14. "All the service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour." "And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried" (Ex. ii. 23), for the Egyptians "evil entreated" them, "so they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live." Acts vii. 19. Yet to this same people the Israelites were now turning for assistance in their time of need. What a change time had wrought.

What and in whom was this change? Had the Egyptians become converted? Did they now acknowledge and worship the true God? Not at all. They were heathens the same as of old, and were as much opposed to God as their fathers ever were. They had crucified Christ in the days of Moses, for Moses esteemed it great riches to share "the reproach of Christ," and that reproach is the cross. See Heb. xiii. 12, 13; Ps. lxi. 7, 9, 20, 21. What then did it mean when the people of Israel turned to Egypt for deliverance? -It meant that they had forsaken God, the Rock of their salvation. The change was in the Israelites, not in the Egyptians. What blindness was there manifested! to go to the house of bondage to find deliverance!

Listen to the talk of some of the "progressive" leaders of the people on those days: "Why shouldn't we make an alliance with the Egyptians, for mutual help? Why should we always keep in memory the ancient differences? The Egyptians are very good fellows, when you come to know them; in fact, they are not so very much different from us. The world has made much progress in the last thousand years, and we ought to be liberal-minded enough to make some concessions to it. It's all very fine to talk about trusting in the Lord, but it isn't practical; "God helps those who help themselves," and common sense should teach us that our only hope of existence as a people is in joining our forces with the Egyptians. On some things we will "agree to disagree," and so we shall gain influence with them at the same time that they afford us material aid." Ah yes, we have all heard them talk.

What says the Lord? "The strength of Pharaoh shall be your shame; and your trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion." "For Egypt is a mere vapour; in vain shall they help; wherefore have I called her, Rahab the inactive." The help of the world is in vain, for, "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof." 1 John ii. 17. "But he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." "It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes."

Notice the various readings of the 7th verse. The common version has it, "Their strength is to sit still." That expresses the idea very well, but we need to know the meaning of the word "Rahab," in order to appreciate the text. In Job ix. 23 the word occurs, and is rendered "proud helpers;" and in Job xxvi. 12 it occurs in the sentence rendered, "He smiteth through the proud." In two or three other places in the Bible it is to be found, as in Ps. lxxxix. 10, and Isa. li. 9, but always as something hateful to God. The idea, it is plain to be seen, is that of proud boasting. "Rahab" is connected with Babylon, in Ps. lxxxvii. 4, and we know that Babylon originated in pride, and boasting was its ruin. So Egypt is called the people which make great promises and boasts, but do nothing. So their strength of which they boast, is nothing but emptiness. Recall the history of Pharaoh's haughty opposition to God in the days of Moses, and think how empty it was, and you will understand the force of this text, and will also better see the folly of Israel's going to the Egyptians for help. They say, and do not.

Going back to the first verse, we notice that where our version has "cover with a covering," Lowth has it, "ratify covenants." The margin of our Bibles has, however, "weave a web," or "make a league." In some versions it is rendered, "pour out a drink offering," which was a common way of ratifying a league, and which is perpetuated to this day in the custom which many have of pledging friendship with a glass of wine. The covenant which the Israelites were making with the Egyptians was designed as a covering, a protection; but the trouble was, it was not the covering of the Spirit of God. It was a flimsy web that they were weaving.

Why was it wrong for Israel to make a covenant with the Egyptians or with any other people?—Because such a covenant would have been a rejection of God, who had chosen them as His special people. He had made a covenant with them, to be their God, and to take them for His people. It was not because these people were better than others, that they were called God's people, but because they bore the name "Israel," and gloried in it. "Israel" means "a prince of God," a Christian, for all followers of Christ are kings and priests of God. Rev. i. 6. Whenever a people bear that name,—no matter what the form, whether Christian or Israelite,—they thereby proclaim that Jehovah is their God and their protector; for such to make any alliance with the world is to be untrue to God, for "the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James iv. 4.

The children of Israel were expressly warned, on going into the land of Canaan, not to make any league with the inhabitants of the land. God's plan for them was this: "The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Num xxiii. 9. Yet this did not mean that they should be exclusive and misanthropic. On the contrary, they were to be exponents of God's unselfishness

and loving kindness to mankind. Any people might join them, and share the blessings God had for them, but in so doing these other peoples were to give

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up their distinct nationality, and become simply Christians; for in Christ "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all." Col. iii. 11. Christians are a peculiar people, a nation with an invisible Ruler. They have everything to give "to all people," but no other people have anything to give them. For them therefore to make any alliance whatever with the world, is to deny their King and their profession. It is the same as saying that they do not receive all they need from the Lord, and to put the world in His place. It is to weaken the force of the Gospel to those other people, by conveying the idea that to be a citizen of any earthly country is as good or the same as being a Christian.

All that is said in this chapter applies to us as much as to the people who lived when it was written, because it was written "for a testimony for ever." The rebellious people are those who do not choose to hear the law of Jehovah; they are not willing to hear the law. Jehovah is the rightful King of all the earth; all who do not regard His law are rebels and outlaws, no matter though they rank as kings on earth. For Israel to make an alliance with Egypt,-for the professed Church of Christ to enter into any sort of alliance with the world,-is to declare that "the rudiments of the world" are as good as the law of God. God's law is the only law for all mankind; whatever is contrary to that law is rebellion and idolatry.

But the church has taken upon itself to make laws, calling them God's laws. "After their own lusts" have men "heaped to themselves teachers, having itching ears," and have turned aside from the truth unto fables. 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. They "say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits." Men choose their own teachers-those who will say the things that they like to hear-and then will quote the sayings of those teachers as authority, in opposition to the law of God. This is identical with the course of the heathen, who makes his own god, and then says, "Deliver me, for thou art my god." Yet these professed people of God will not believe that what the Bible says of the heathen applies to them.

What will be the result of all this?-Because men reject the word of the Lord, even the "Holy one of Israel;" sudden destruction shall come upon them, and they shall not escape; they shall be broken in pieces like a potter's vessel, and their destruction will be complete. Compare verses 12, 14 with 1 Thess. v. 3 and Ps. ii. They who put their trust in men will come to nothing, while "they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." Ps. cxxv. 1.

"For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." This, coming in the connection that it does, shows that the Lord affords practical, material aid. The Israelites were in great danger: the Assyrians were threatening their destruction; according to all human calculations they needed just such help as the Egyptians could afford,-men and horses and munitions of war. But God said, No; they will be your ruin; your strength is in quietly trusting in Me, in

returning to Me, and in absolute rest on My word, you will find complete deliverance. They did not believe Him, and people do not believe it now.

We know as a fact that they preferred to trust in men, whom they could see, rather than in God, whom they could not see, and that the Assyrians took them captive. Why should we not learn the lesson? It is for each individual, as well as for the whole church. It is recorded for the purpose of teaching the church that its strength lies in strict adherence to the Word of God, and in departing from the world. Conformity to the world, whether for the avowed purpose of winning worldlings to the church, or to induce the world to lend the church material aid, is ruin. The world can do nothing for the church, except to corrupt it, but it cannot do that as long as the church trusts in God alone.

But the individual lesson is the one that concerns us most; for if the individuals are faithful, the church must be right. Each person has troubles of various kinds; in the Lord alone is there help. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." Ps. xxvii. 5. We all know the ways of the world: Self-assertion, insisting on one's rights, bitterness, revenge; everybody who does not know the Lord, shows how he acts when he is in difficulty, when he is tempted, and when people irritate or injure him, and everybody who does know the Lord, can remember how he once did and how he is still tempted to do. Well, that is the way not to do; that is the way of the world; that is going down into Egypt for help-to the house of bondage for freedom. It is all in vain. "God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble." There is infinite strength in quietly giving up one's self, and resting in the Lord. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

"Ancestral Worship" *The Present Truth* 15, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

It is stated that in China \$26,000,000 is spent annually for paper money burned in ancestral worship. The people believe that the spirits of their departed friends remain near the home they occupied during life and the grave in which their body rests. As they are powerful to work good or ill to their descendants, these spirits must be propitiated by offerings. The more ignorant classes believe that the sham money burned in the ceremony is, by some unexplained process, transmuted into coin current in the world of spirits, and there serves to pay their expenses.

"Little Folks. The Birds of the Air" *The Present Truth* 15, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

The Lord Jesus is teaching us precious lessons in everything that He has made, and He has especially told us to "Behold the birds!" In the Spring we learned how He is working to multiply them in the earth, how at this season the birds, taught by His Word which is working in them, build their wonderful little nests, and lay in them the eggs which develop into baby birds.

During the past month or two, the trees and bushes have held many of those tiny cradles full of dear little living creatures. You may have seen the happy

parents flying home to their nests with food for their little ones, or hovering over them with anxious love and care, to see that all their needs were provided for.

The mother bird devotes herself entirely to her young ones. From the time that the eggs are laid she scarcely leaves the nest at all, except for a short "constitutional" each day for the good of her health, while the father bird takes her place on the nest. To "the queen of the air," always on the wing, this must be a great sacrifice, but lone makes it sweet, and these Spring seasons when her nest is full, are the happiest times in her life.

But now the time comes for the little ones to leave the nest, to try their little wings, and find their home in the air; for this is what God made the birds for, "to fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven." The parent birds, you will see if you are able to watch them, seem to take great pride and pleasure in teaching the little ones to use their wings, encouraging them to make the first flight, and watching near to see that they do not get into danger.

God uses this to show His tender love and care for His children. He says: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad bar wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so He guides and teaches and keeps His people. When the young eaglets are weary, the mother bird flies down underneath them, and catching them on her own wings, carries them until they are able to fly again.

The wings of the young birds soon get strong, and their flights longer and longer, until by the early autumn they are ready to fly away with the rest, over seas and oceans, to other lands where they spend the winter.

Did you ever think as you have watched the free, graceful flight of the birds, what a wonderful and delightful experience it must be? Of all the creatures that God has made, the birds seem to have the fullest and freest *life*. This is because they are the most filled with the air, which we have found to be the breath of God, His own life-giving Spirit. Read the article that follows this one on "The flight of Birds," and you will see how their bodies are formed so that the air that enters their lungs is carried through the whole body, making them light, and bouyant and free, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

But God did not mean that any of its creatures should have any advantage over man; for He made him His own son, in His own image, to be above all, and to have dominion over all. He was to have dominion over the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea, as well as over the beasts of the earth. But in order to rule the "birds of the air," he must have dominion over the air; and in order to rule "the fish of the sea," he must have dominion over the water. He must be more free in the air than the birds, and more free in the water than the fish and other creatures that God made to live there.

This is how God made man in the beginning, but through disobedience he lost the image of God in which he had been made, and so lost his liberty and his dominion-his kingdom. But when Jesus came to this earth as a man, He had the dominion over all things, because He had the perfect image of God. He was the Son of God, and in His life we can see what is "the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

Jesus could walk upon the stormy waters just as easily as upon the dry land. He had dominion over the waters. And when there was "a great storm of wind," Jesus "rebuked the wind," and "the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." He had dominion over the air. Then after His resurrection, when the time had come for Him to return to the Father, He could rise right above the earth and ascend in the air with perfect freedom.

Dear children, if we now let Jesus come into our hearts, He will restore His own perfect image there, and make us indeed the children of God. Then when He

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comes, as He is soon to do, and it is clearly shown who have really become His children, we shall rise from the earth as He did, to "meet Him in the air." We shall be able to "soar to worlds unknown," even to the very throne of God, to be with Him for ever.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

-A Trust has been formed in England to control the wall-paper trade, the capital to be ?3,000,000.

-The Suez Canal receipts last year were the highest on record, almost reaching 88,000,000 francs.

-Three-fourths of all the letters that enter the mails of the world are written in the English language.

-The Finnish Diet is making a stand against Russia, virtually rejecting the Army Bill submitted by the latter for one of its own making, which provides for the continuance of Finnish in-dependence.

-St. John, the most important town in New Brunswick, has been devastated by fire. A hundred buildings have been destroyed. The damage is estimated at ? 80,000, the half of which is covered by insurance.

-A recent consignment of funds from the United States to pay the soldiers at Manila, was paper money, enclosed in wooden boxes. Ants attacked it in the store house, and nearly the whole of it was mutilated beyond and recognition.

-On the day appointed for the Cuban soldiers to bring in their arms and receive seventy-five dollars each from the United States officials, not a single Cuban soldier put in an appearance, except a number of Cuban officers who ridiculed the proceedings.

-At the Tuberculosis Conference just held at Berlin, which was attended by a large number of eminent physicians, it was agreed that tuberculosis of the lung was curable, and that consumption was essentially a disease brought about by defective social conditions and by unhealthy occupations. Sanatoria provided the best means of combating the disease, but a course of treatment at these must not be followed by a return to the old unhealthy conditions.

-Education in Porto Rico is at a low ebb. A careful computation regarding the illiteracy of the inhabitants show that about eighty-seven per cent. can neither read nor write. There is a compulsory school law, but it remains a dead letter.

-During the last thirty-four years the main channel at the mouth of the Thames has narrowed from one and a-half miles to half a mile. At this rate it will not be long before large vessels will be unable to navigate the Thames with safety. The matter is receiving attention from the authorities.

-Coney Island, a famous summer resort of New York City, was almost totally destroyed by fire on the 27th ult. Two hundred hotels, saloons, etc., were wiped out of existence. The fire is supposed to be of incendiary origin, due to the late order to suppress gambling and liquor selling within its precincts.

-Five million people are starving in Russia and appeals are being made to England for assistance. This is one of the results of vast military expenditure, yet at the same time one Russian paper demands that the army be increased by 800,000 men, so that it may bear the same proportion to the total population that the German army does.

-The German government is making an experiment in the feeding of artillery horses by dieting them on a patent food, composed of fresh blood from the slaughter houses, mixed with sugar refuse and the screenings of barley, wheat and the like. The principal argument in behalf of this diet is that the cost of maintenance will be materially decreased.

-Dr. Wise, of Montreux, Switzerland, states in the *Lancet*, that household feathered pets, especially canaries, are often affected with tuberculosis, and the bacilli are easily communicated. In his investigation of the matter he found eighty cases of tuberculosis, a large number of which, it was believed, could be traced directly to diseased birds kept in the family.

-The Legislature of Michigan has enacted a law which requires the public-house drinker to carry a license. The charge, for the license is \$5, and payment of this fee confers on the holder of the license the privilege of drinking in a public bar; while no publican may sell liquid refreshment to anyone unable to produce his license which is not transferable.

-It is stated that a Dr. Blyden has been empowered by the Executive of the Liberian Republic to place before the American Government, on behalf of the Liberian people, a unanimous demand for an American protectorate over the territories of the republic. Failing the assent of the United States, Dr. Blyden is empowered to approach the British Government on the subject.

-Russia's only reply to the Chinese refusal to allow the Russian railway to be extended to Peking, is an intimation that Russian engineers will at once proceed with the survey of the best route, in accordance with their recent demand. And this at the very time when representatives of the two countries are meeting in a conference which is to establish the peace of the world.

-Mr. John Morley, in a recent speech, referred to the way in which ministers of religion glorify war, one of them having said that "war evokes some of the noblest qualities of mankind." Mr Morley said, "It used to be the fashion at public dinners to that propose 'The Army and Navy,' and then by-sad-by 'The Bishops and Clergy,' but if this goes on these toasts will have to be fused into one, and we shall have 'The Army, Navy, Reserve Forces, and the Ministers of all Denominations.'"

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E. J. Waggoner

"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And the base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are." 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. This is not according to the wisdom of the world; this is not as we would do. If we would confound the wise, we would not choose those of little knowledge, nor those that are weak to confound the mighty. But God does not work that way. When He would have a king for Israel, He passed by all the stalwart, well-favoured sons of Jesse and took David, the despised shepherd boy. When the Lord Jesus would have representatives upon the earth, He chose humble fishermen rather than the learned priests of the temple. And why was all this? "That no flesh should glory in His presence."

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." Therefore to glory in any flesh is a fatal mistake, whether it be our own or another's, God wants men to glory, but He wants them to glory in something satisfying and durable. So He gives them Himself to glory in. "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." When the Word emphasises the truth of human insignificance, it is never to discourage us, but to turn our minds to the unfailing source of boundless encouragement. It promises strength to the weak, wisdom to the foolish, and a kingdom to the beggar. It stops the mouth of those who protest that they are base and rightly despised, with the comforting assurance that such are the chosen of God.

An old man once said that it took him forty years to learn three simple things. The first was that he could not do anything to save himself; the second was that God did not expect him to; and the third was that Christ had done it all, and all he had to do was to accept the accomplished fact. There are many professed Christians who never know the sweets of Christian living, simply because they, like the old man, have failed to learn the secret.

"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. ix. 28. God does not desire that anyone should perish, but that all should live. The whole aim of the Gospel is to give life. But when this life is refused, turned away from, then the very means that He has ordained unto life becomes death. For in that day, those who know not God are "punished with everlasting destruction." It is not arbitrary on God's part that some are to be saved, and others destroyed; "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved." 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. When this salvation is in the hands of everyone, whoever turns from it condemns himself to death. "Turn ye, for why will ye die?"

Looking at it as a whole, it is not very difficult to see that the Lord was leading Joseph through all his experience, from the time he left the door of his father's tent to visit his brethren, till he was practically king of Egypt. When we read of the deliverance of the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace, and Daniel from the den of lions, we say with the king, "there is no other God that can deliver after

this sort." But where many of us fail in our Christian experience, is, we begin to murmur and complain when trials come. We forget that God is leading us just as He led Joseph; and that the perplexities, the hardships, the injustice, that we are called upon to bear will, if we will but let them, work out for us such a character as they did for him. We never hear of his complaining at his hard lot, or murmuring at the injustice done him; but while in prison, or working as a slave, he was just as true to God, and as faithful in his work as when he stood at the head of the kingdom. It was this faithfulness, when only God's eye was upon him, that gave him the character of a king, and the fitness for the place he ultimately occupied. God wishes us all to be "kings and priests" unto Him. We may be, but first we must learn to have dominion over ourselves; to recognise God's leading hand in every detail of life; then whatsoever we do will prosper.

So many people are worrying about their own salvation, but the Lord has promised that He will carry the good work on in us, when we consecrate our lives to helping others to know the salvation that is ours. Hear what Paul says: "Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom." 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.

The *Commercial Intelligence* says that half the "dust teas" brought into England should be confiscated, since in one thousand pounds of it there is often two hundred pounds of sand and earthy matter. "Sometimes there is as much as thirty-five per cent of mineral rubbish." No honest man can uphold fraud, but it is comforting to know that in this case it works beneficially rather than otherwise. The "mineral trash" with which the tea is adulterated is not one-tenth part as harmful as the "vegetable trash" that remains. The more sand in the tea, the less poison to be consumed, for the sand will go to the bottom of the tea-pot and the consumer will get his hot water just so much nearer pure.

What God desires in the world is simply men-men through whom He can work to do His good pleasure. Everything that is accomplished in the world *for* men, has been *by* man. All the wonders that have been wrought of God in man's behalf, have been through men who were surrendered to God. He gives to everyone the privilege of yielding his members as instruments of righteousness unto Him, and with this yielding comes the power. The more complete it is, the more power there will be in the life. God is longing for men to come into such a relation to Him that He can demonstrate to the world that He can do through human instruments.

"Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58.

June 15, 1899

"The Debt Forgiven" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

When the Saviour taught His disciples how to pray, He put into their mouths the words, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matt. vi. 12. It is clear from this that God does not hold anything against man. If He did, Christ would not have taught us to make such a request.

It is this truth, too seldom apprehended, which makes the message of the Gospel "tidings of great joy to all people." If only it were believed, it would lift every cloud that overhangs this life, and cause the hearts of men to sing for joy.

Every sin is committed against God. The Lamb of God bears the sin of the world. David confessed, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done, this evil in Thy sight." Psal. li. 4. Men realise that they are sinful in His sight, and that there is enmity in their own hearts. They judge God by themselves, and count Him "an hard man." It seems to them that God has nothing but stern condemnation for them, and they avoid His Word, because they fear its reproof.

But God is love, He feels the gap which men make between themselves and Him, and His one desire is to draw all to Himself. When Adam sinned, he sought from God, though he needed Divine help more than ever. God looked at His need, and sought out the trembling sinner, not to embitter his life with reproaches, but to bring the comforting promise of a Saviour who should recover what Adam had lost, and restore all things.

Ever since that time, sinful men have thought to hide from God, as though He were pursuing them in His wrath, but it was His goodness and mercy that followed them every day of their lives. Still God sends His messengers into all the world,

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not to condemn, but to speak the glad tidings to every creature.

And what is the message that the ambassadors bear? Theirs is a ministry, not of reproach, but of reconciliation. They declare that God was in Christ, reconciling sinners to Himself, "*not imputing their trespasses unto them*," and through them He beseeches all to be reconciled to Him. 2 Cor. v. 18-21. Since every sin is against God, if He does not impute sin, no one else can.

"Not imputing their trespasses unto them." Truly this is a message meet to be sounded in the ears of every sinful, discouraged creature. All have wished at same time in their lives that the miserable record of the past might be blotted out, as though it had never been, and they could start afresh. This is the very thing that the Gospel brings to men. The old debt is freely forgiven. They are clear with God, and can come to Him with confidence, for all that stood between them and Him is taken out of the way. He has destroyed the enmity, and asks simply that men will acknowledge that He does indeed love them, and be reconciled to Him.

If, after this, men die in their sins, it is their own fault entirely. God does not impute sin to them, but they choose to impute it to themselves by deciding to still bear it when God has set them free. It is not the sins of their lives that condemn men, but the fact that, with the chance of getting rid of the sins, they prefer to retain them. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light."

God challenges all men to declare one thing which He might have done for His people that He has not done in them. Isa. v. He gives every advantage that

the weakest can ask for. He declares the past to be disposed of, imputing nothing to men. In place of the sin which He takes away, He bestows His own righteousness, and imparts His own power, for the Gospel is the power of God. He takes away all the old things, and makes all things new, creating a clean heart. His angels are commissioned to minister to the heirs of salvation, and His Spirit is given without measure. He does for all exceeding abundantly above all that they can ask or think. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

"The Power Ever Present" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

Through a very small wire a powerful current of electricity can be transmitted, provided the proper connections are made. So the timid, trembling soul, when his humanity is linked with Divinity can be the medium through which Christ is manifested to the world.

And by the way, one unacquainted with the nature of electricity might think that it had but recently come into existence, since it has been so short a time since its utility has been recognised. Not so. There was just as much electricity a thousand years ago as there is now; and there is just as much in the forests of Central Africa as here, only it isn't utilised; it has not been harnessed, as it were, to do man's bidding. So it is with the Spirit of God, the energising power of creation. It is throbbing all around us, and God desires that through us it may be a current of life to the dying everywhere. More willing than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children, is our Heavenly Father to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Then since it awaits our demand and reception, why not receive it?

"A Devouring Fire" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

After Saul was slain, the Philistines thought to do away also with David, who was anointed king in his stead; but when they attempted it, they were smitten; and in the record (1 Chron. xiv. 11), David says: "God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters; therefore, they called the name of that place Baal-perazim," which means, literally, breaking forth.

In Isa. xxviii. 21, this incident is made mention of by the prophet to show the manner of Christ's coming. "For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim."

For many centuries God has been hidden from the children of men; yes not wholly, for He has revealed Himself and His workings to the people in messages of salvation. But His hiding will not be for ever. There will come a time when He "shall rise up as in mount Perazim,"-burst upon an astonished world in all His glory. "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son

of man be." That will be His coming the "second time without sin unto salvation;" when He will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God.

But this vengeance is not against the individual, as such, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Men are destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming,-His glory that is about Him as a consuming fire,-because they are inseparably connected with ungodliness and unrighteousness. There are others who will "dwell with everlasting burnings," and the reason that they can dwell there is because in them is no ungodliness nor unrighteousness.

It is a comforting thought, that though the "day of the Lord's fierce anger" is "near, even at the door," yet we need not be of them who cry for the rocks and mountains to "fall upon us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Having made the Lord our refuge, and the Most High our habitation, we can with joy look up and say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Waiting to Be Gracious. Isa. xxx. 15-38" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXX. 15-33, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

15. Verily thus saith the Lord Jehovah, the
Holy One of Israel;
By turning from your ways, and by abiding
quiet, ye shall be saved;
In silence, and in pious confidence, shall be
your strength;
But ye would not hearken.

16. And ye said: Nay, but on horses will we flee;
Therefore shall ye be put to flight;
And on swift coursers will we ride;
Therefore shall they be swift, that pursue you.

17. One thousand, at the rebuke of one;
At the rebuke of five, ten thousand of you
shall flee;
Till ye be left as a standard on the summit of
a mountain;
And as a beacon on a high hill.

18. Yet for this shall Jehovah wait to show favour
unto you;
Even for this shall He expect in silence, that
He may have mercy upon you:
(For Jehovah is a God of Judgment;
Blessed are all they that trust in Him);

19. When a holy people shall dwell in Sion;
When in Jerusalem thou shalt implore Him

with weeping:

At the voice of thy cry He shall be abundantly
gracious unto thee;

No sooner shall He hear, than He shall
answer thee.

20. Though Jehovah hath given you the bread of
distress, and the water of affliction;
Yet the timely rain shall no more be re-
trained;

But thine eyes shall behold the timely rain.

21. And thine ears shall hear the word prompting
thee behind,

Saying, This is the way; walk ye in it;
Turn not aside, to the right, or to the left.

22. And ye shall treat as defiled the covering of
your idols of silver;
And the clothing of your molten images of
gold;

Thou shalt cast them away like a polluted
garment;

Thou shalt say unto them, Be gone from me.

23. And He shall give rain for thy seed,
With which thou shalt sow the ground;
And bread of the produce of the ground;
And it shall be abundant and plenteous.
Then shall thy cattle feed in large past-
ure;

24. And the oxen, and the young asses, that till
the ground,

Shall eat well-fermented maslin,
Winnowed with the van and the sieve.

25. And on every lofty mountain,
And on every high hill,
Shall be disparting rills, and streams of
water,

In the day of the great slaughter, when the
mighty fall.

26. And the light of the moon shall be as the
light of the meridian sun;
And the light of the meridian sun shall be
seven-fold:

In the day when Jehovah shall bind up the
breach of His people;
And shall heal the wound, which His stroke
hath inflicted.

27. Lo, the name of Jehovah cometh from afar;
His wrath burneth, and the flame rageth
violently;
His lips are filled with indignation;
And His tongue is as a consuming fire.

28. His Spirit is like a torrent overflowing;
It shall reach to the middle of the neck;
He cometh to toss the nations with the van of
perdition;
And there shall be a bridle, to lead them
astray, in the jaws of the people.

29. Ye shall utter a song, as in the night when
the feast is solemnly proclaimed;
With joy of heart, as when one marcheth to
the sound of the pipe;
To go to the mountain of Jehovah, to the
Rock of Israel.

30. And Jehovah shall cause His glorious voice
to be heard,
And the lighting down of His arm to be
seen;
With wrath indignant, and a flame of con-
suming fire;
With a violent storm, and rushing showers,
and hailstones.

31. By the voice of Jehovah shall the Assyrian be
beaten down;
He, that was ready to smite with his staff.

32. And it shall be, that wherever shall pass the
rod of correction,
Which Jehovah shall lay heavily upon him;
It shall be accomplished with tabrets and
harps;
And with fierce battles shall He fight against
them.

33. For Tophet is ordained of old;
Even the same for the king is prepared;
He hath made it deep; He hath made it
large;
A fiery pyre, and abundance of fuel;
And the breath of Jehovah, like a stream of
sulphur shall kindle it.

Although the selection of Scripture for study is rather long, we need not
become confused by it. Do not expect to understand

every expression in it at first. There are very few parts of the Bible where we cannot find things that are hard to be understood, even when the general matter is very plain. In all such cases work in the line of least resistance. Do not spend time working backwards; that is, do not begin at the end and try to work to the beginning. In studying the Scriptures, always seize first upon that which is evident at first sight, such as simple promises. These will lead you gently along to the understanding of that which is not so obvious. Remember that the cross of Christ is the revelation of God to man, and that therefore it is through the promises that we are to understand all His sayings and dealings. Our previous study of Isaiah has shown us that it applies to us as well as to the men who lived when it was written; therefore we must study it for our own personal benefit. If in any lesson we perceive one truth that is new to us, or one new setting of truth, which will lighten our pathway, and make it easier for us to lay hold of Divine strength and to overcome, we are doing well. Sometimes we shall be able to find many such things.

STRENGTH IN QUIETNESS

For the sake of the connection we take in one verse that was in the preceding lesson. The fifteenth verse should be so firmly fixed in the mind of every one that it can never be forgotten. "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." Resting in the Lord! What strength it affords. All power is then exerted in our behalf. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." Lam. iii. 24-26.

"But ye were not willing." That was the case with Israel of old, and it is largely the case now. We show our heathenism by our unwillingness to trust the Lord. By fearing to trust the Lord, and thinking that in this case we must use our own skill to help us out of the difficulty, we show that we regard ourselves as gods, greater than the God of heaven.

"But ye said, No, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee." A horse is swift, and promises well as a means of escape from danger. For those who trust Him, God prepares a table in the presence of their enemies (Ps. xxiii. 5), where they can quietly sit down and eat while the enemy rages and spends its strength in vain: but people mostly become frightened at the roaring of the adversary, and fly from their place of protection. They think that there is greater safety in flight than in trusting the Lord. What is the consequence?-"Therefore shall ye be put to flight." Certainly; that is what we have planned for; and if we are put to flight, there will surely be some one pursuing, and they that pursue will be swift. We plan for defeat instead of victory.

Notice the contrast between those who trust the Lord and those who try to "fight their own battles." God's promise to Israel was that if they trusted in Him, and kept His commandments, one man should chase a thousand, and two should put ten thousand to flight. See Deut. xxxii. 30; Josh. xxiii. 10. But what a change takes place when God is forsaken. Then "one thousand shall flee at the

rebuke of one;" and at the rebuke of five ten thousand shall flee. The case is exactly reversed. Mind that it needs only a threat to make them flee when they do not trust in the Lord. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion." Prov. xxviii. 1.

EVERLASTING, UNSELFISH LOVE

And now comes a most unexpected and gracious promise. It is unexpected, because it is so entirely unlike human nature, and therefore it is all the more gracious. After recounting the stubbornness of the people, how they have said, "Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from among us," and have refused to rely on Him, choosing rather their own way, the Lord says, "Therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for Him." Why will the Lord wait to be gracious?-Because the people have been rebellious. The meaning of the word rendered "wait," is "to long for," "to desire;" and the statement is that although the people have rejected Him, there is nothing He is more anxious for than to do them a kindness. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. xxxi. 3. Was there ever a more perfect example of unselfish love? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. v. 8. Human love is selfish; people love for the pleasure that they derive from the object of their affection, and usually cease to love when they are slighted or neglected. With God it is entirely different. He loves, in order that He may give pleasure to the objects of His affections, and He finds His pleasure in the happiness which His love imparts to the loved ones. Hatred and abuse only call out greater manifestations of His everlasting, unchangeable love. Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. He knows the mortal disease from which sinners are suffering, and He longs with all His infinite soul to deliver them from it. Was anything ever more wondrously gracious!

"Oh, hope of every contrite heart!

Oh, joy of all the meek!

To those who fall, how kind Thou art!

How good to those who seek!

"And those who find Thee, find a bliss

Nor tongue nor pen can show;

The love of Jesus, what it is,

None but His loved ones know."

If we grasp this one truth it will be a most profitable lesson for us. To know the love of Jesus, which is but the manifestation of the love of God, is to know the wisdom of eternity. But let us remember that to know it means to make a practical application of it. We must accept it in order to know it. And acceptance of the love of God does not mean mere selfish enjoyment of its blessings. There is no selfishness in the love of God, and therefore nobody can selfishly enjoy it. The

acceptance of it drives out selfishness. If we indeed receive the love of God, then the hatefulness of others, instead of making us cold and hard towards them, will but increase our desire to do them kindness. You say that that is not natural, and that no man can do it. No, it is not natural, but it is spiritual; and it is not possible for any human nature to manifest such love; the only way it can be done is by having the love of God shed abroad in our hearts; and this is done by the Holy Spirit, that is so freely given to all who are willing to receive. Shall we not learn this lesson of Divine love?

JUDGMENT AND MERCY

Why does the Lord show such marvelous loving kindness and mercy?- Because "the Lord is a God of judgment." You thought that justice and judgment meant punishment? Oh no, not necessarily. Justice and judgment are the foundation of God's throne, and His throne is a throne of grace. God is just in that He is the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. Rom. iii. 26. That is a declaration of His righteousness, for God rests His claim to righteousness on the fact that He is faithful to forgive sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. 1 John i. 9.

"He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry." The Lord is looking for opportunities to do good. "He delighteth in mercy." Micah vii. 19. He is hearkening to hear what His people will say to Him. Mal. iii. 16. "No sooner shall He hear, than He shall answer thee." He bends down to earth, anxiously waiting to hear some cry. So intently does He listen that not only does He hear the faintest whisper, but the first impulse to call upon Him reaches His heart. He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, and responds to them. He is not like the unjust judge, who must be importuned and besieged before he would grant the righteous request. See Luke xviii. 1-8. God is a God of judgment, and is not unjust; therefore He hears and avenges speedily. Surely we have every encouragement that could possibly be given, to call on the Lord, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

This chapter abounds in gracious promises. Although we have had affliction as the necessary result of our own waywardness, yet our teachers shall not be removed from us, but our eyes shall see them. The Lord will not leave us to wander in ignorance of the way, but our ears shall hear a word behind us, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." How strange it is that we are so apt to think that timely warning and instruction are a hardship instead of a blessing! "It is not in man that walketh to direct his step," therefore we do well to pray, "O Lord correct me, but with judgment." Jer. x. 23, 24.

REFRESHING TEACHERS

In verse 20 we have an excellent illustration of the blessings of various translations of the Bible, instead of only one. All the languages of earth are only fragments of the perfect language of heaven. The blight of the curse is upon everything, so that even if we had all the languages combined we should still have only an imperfect reproduction of the original language. God's thoughts are

not as our thoughts, but are very deep, and higher than the heavens. Is it then impossible for us to understand the Word of God, because we have only one of the many imperfect languages at our command?—No, not by any means. It would be impossible for us to understand it, even though we were master of them all, if we were left to our own wisdom; but the Holy Spirit is given us, in order that we may know the things that are freely given us of God. 1 Cor. ii. 12. Nevertheless we are to make use of every means that God has placed in our reach, and among these is a knowledge of various languages, or the use of various translations into the one tongue that we understand. So in this instance we learn much from the fact that whereas in one translation we have the word "teachers," in another we have the word "rain" for the same thing.

There is no contradiction in this, no lack of harmony; for the fact is that the Hebrew word is correctly rendered both "teacher" and "rain." This is not because of the poverty of the language, but rather because of its richness, each word being so comprehensive. There is a lesson to be learned from it: a teacher is to be one who refreshes his pupils, as the rain refreshes the earth. There is no teacher like God (Job xxxvi. 22), for He is the fountain of living waters (Jer. ii. 13), "a place of broad rivers and streams" (Isa. xxxiii. 21), and is "as the dew unto Israel." Hosea xiv. 5. God pours showers upon him that is thirsty, and on the dry ground floods, even His Holy Spirit, which is the water of life. Isa. xlv. 3; John vii. 37-39. Therefore those who believe shall send forth streams of living water. Christ, the greatest of teachers, knows how to refresh the weary with a word. "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of My mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, My speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God." Deut. xxxii. 1-3.

THE LIFE-GIVING, CONSUMING BREATH

Gracious are the promises of God, and everlasting and infinite is His love; yet that does not mean that wickedness will be allowed to continue for ever. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." Those who persist in doing evil according to the hardness of their own impenitent hearts, are but treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his works. Rom. ii. 4-6. But in the visitation of punishment, there is no change in God. He is still the same God of love. "His mercy endureth for ever." The destruction of the wicked is only the natural, inevitable result of the rejection of the infinite love of Him whose favour is life. Take notice that it is the breath of God that kindles the fires of Gehenna. "He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked," yet "righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins." Isa. xi. 4, 5. That breath which destroys the wicked, is the breath of life,—the very same breath which is now given to all mankind, wicked as well as righteous, and without which there would be no life on earth. How then can it be that it will finally consume the

wicked?-Simply because they will not accept it for what it is. Not recognising God in the air that they breathe, they do not allow it to do the work for them which God designs, namely, to remove all iniquity from them. The breath of God is at work every moment in all the earth, consuming impurity, and making it possible for men to live. Every where and all the time God is showing us for what purpose breath is given: it is to purify and cleanse, and give life. Then when men identify themselves with vileness and sin, it is inevitable that they should be consumed by that which would be their life, if they were willing. "Our God is a consuming fire." The very same fire that purifies the gold burns up the dross. Everything therefore depends upon how we stand related to God. Shall we receive Him as our life indeed, by allowing Him to redeem us from all iniquity, or shall He be to us the devouring fire? "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

A LITERAL PLACE OF PUNISHMENT

Tophet was a part of the valley of the son of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, where the abominations of the heathen had been

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practiced, and where the Jews also practiced them when they apostatised. It was here that they made their children to pass through fire. See 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Jer. vii. 31. It was thus regarded as an accursed spot, and was the place for burning up the refuse matter of the city. From this comes the word "Gehenna" in Mark ix. 45, 47, and elsewhere. See margin of R.V. The word simply means, "valley of Hinnom." When Jesus spoke of it as the place where the wicked should receive their punishment, the Jews would well understand that it meant utter destruction-the place where the unrighteous should be stubble, and should be burnt up "root and branch." Mal. iv. 1. And it was not a mere figure of speech, either, for it is in that very place that the wicked will be gathered when the fire comes down from God out of heaven, and devours them. Rev. xx. 9. God does not speak at random, but means what He says.

"Deciding for the Right" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

What men lack in these days more than anything else is decision of character for the right. The world is not getting better, as many say; but rather is becoming worse and worse. Why? Certainly not because the people do not know the right for never has it been made more plain; but it is because while knowing the right, they haven't the moral backbone to do it.

There are many people who want to do right, and desire to be right; but when they see that it means the sacrifice of some cherished idol, the loss of some friendship or the giving up of some worldly prospect, they hesitate, and hesitation generally ends in a decision on the wrong side.

There are others who content themselves with letting some one else be their conscience. In a crisis, they wait till they see how some one in whom they have confidence speaks, and then they agree with him. They are like a man who can only walk with the aid of crutches. If the crutches are removed, and he tries to

take a step, he falls to the ground. So with those who have always made some one else their moral prop; when they have to act and speak for themselves, they are without strength of character, and are always found on the wrong side. God wants men who will stand firmly for the right, though the heavens fall. Such men He can use as He used Daniel, and Joseph and Noah, and through them He will carry forward His work in the earth.

"The Divine Teacher" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

In spite of all the attention bestowed on the best methods of education for several years past teachers cannot hit upon the right principles. Mr. Bryce, in an address delivered to the Teachers Guild, uttered a note of warning against the danger of making physical science too prominent. He declared that too much of this produced "a dry, gritty and unfertile type of mind, which was a menace to future generations."

The one thing which will solve the problem of right education is the recognition of the fact that He who made the mind is alone able to guide it on correct lines. The important question is whether God is available as an educator, and this He has promised to be to whoever will receive Him as such. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." Christ applied these words to those who would allow themselves to be drawn to Him. John vi. 44, 45.

There is no teacher like God. Job xxxvi. 22. The entire universe constitutes His school, and every created thing in it is an object lesson. Job xii. 7-9. He Himself is truth, and the fear of Him is the beginning of wisdom. Therefore this is the first thing the little ones should learn, "Come, ye children, hearken unto Me. I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Ps. xxxiv 11. It is the Spirit of Christ that speaks in this Psalm. 1 Peter i. 11. David says of himself, "O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth." Ps. lxxi. 17.

Everything in the universe reveals Christ and consists in Him. Rom. i. 20. Col. i. 17. To deal only with the facts, which abound on every hand, apart from their connection with God, is to miss the true lesson of the facts, and refuse their guidance to the knowledge of the Creator. Such incomplete study can only develop "a dry, gritty, unfertile type of mind." It is worse than useless. No man can learn any truth except as the Spirit of God is able to put it into his mind, and this same Spirit, if allowed to do so, will lead the recipient into all truth. Therefore it is the only educational factor of the slightest value.

Yet how few seek education for themselves and their children from God! What does it avail to study history if one does not become acquainted with the most sublime character that ever lived? What will it profit a man to learn the scientific name of every manifestation of force, if he does not learn to take hold of the power of God unto salvation? How often we read of college graduates, whose acquaintance with the "law of gravity" has not sufficed to save them from "gravitating" to the gutter, drawn down by the unresisted attraction of fleshly lusts. What is musical culture worth that does not help to qualify a man for a place in the choir which will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb?

In the Word of God, studied as His message to men and the key of His marvellous works, we have sufficient to make every man perfect, prepared for every duty of life (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17), and able to take his place in the very beat of society. Acts xx. 32. If parents would only educate the children whom God has given them in the lessons of the Book which He has given them, the results would be perfectly satisfactory. They would be sure of their living, at least (Matt. vi. 33), and in this respect alone they would occupy a better position than large numbers of university graduates. Godliness is the only thing that has a sure promise of the life that now is. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Then make the knowledge of God the first thing in the education of children, whatever else they may have to leave unlearned. Remember it is God who must do the teaching, so let the children come direct to His Word and works. None will have eternal life who have not been thus educated, for it is written of New Jerusalem, "the mother of us all," "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Isa. liv. 13.

"Little Folks. The Tree of Life" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

We have talked together often of how everything in nature is teaching us something of the One who made it,-of Jesus the Creator of all things, who lives and reveals Himself to us in every one of His works.

I hope you will remember what we learned in the Spring about the seed; that Jesus is the true Seed from which the whole creation springs, the beginning of all things, and the end, for everything in the whole creation of God is just the unfolding of His wonderful life. In Him *all fulness* dwells, and "the fulness of the whole earth is His glory."

Now let us see how He is teaching us this lesson in the trees that we now see around us covered with fresh green leaves, and many of them with sweet, fragrant blossoms, the promise of fruit and seed for the harvest.

Think of the thousands of these little leaves, and what it is that keeps them so fresh and green. It is the sap, the lifeblood of the tree, running through the twig upon which they grow, that carries life to them. If you take a leaf from the twig you will find that it will soon lose its fresh green appearance, and wither and dry up.

Suppose, then, that we break off the whole twig; would it and the leaves continue to live? No; for the twig, like the leaf, depends for its life upon something else, and this life is carried to it through the branch.

But the branch, like the twig, is only *the channel* for the life which flows through it, and it does not have life in itself. Remember what Jesus said about the branches of the vine, and this is just as true of every kind of branch: "The branch cannot bear fruit of itself," because it has no life of itself.

Every part of the tree depends upon the tree from which it springs for its life, and if separated from the tree is nothing at all, for it soon withers and crumbles into dust. The largest bough as well as the tiniest leaf is nothing if cut away from

the tree; it depends just as much as the little leaf, on the tree from which it has its beginning, for its life.

The water that the roots suck up from the earth becomes the sap or blood of the tree and circulates all through it, carrying the life of God to every branch and twig and leaf. For we have learned that all the water in the world is God's own life poured out upon it, to give life to all His works.

See, now, what this is teaching us of Jesus, and how we are joined to Him, and depend upon Him for all things. The Word of God teaches us that Jesus is "The Tree of Life." This wonderful Tree of Life fills heaven and earth, and its branches spread out into all God's great universe. Every living thing in the universe part of this wondrous Tree of Life. Nothing has any life of its own, the life of Jesus flows into all things, giving life and power. As the sap circulates through the tree, His life throughout all the world, and carries life to everything in it.

We take in the life of Jesus in our food, drink it in the water, breathe it in the air, and receive it in the life-giving sunlight. As the leaf and the branch live in the tree and by the life of the tree, so "in Him we live, and move, and have our being," and so does everything that lives and moves, as much the tiny insect and frail blossom, as all the great works of His hands.

"That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath, and took so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this wide universe."

All things spring from Jesus, as the leaves and branches from the tree, and all depend on Him each moment for their life.

But, dear children, there are so many who will not believe this, who think that they have life in themselves that will last for ever. And so they will have nothing to do with Jesus, who is their life, and the Giver of every good gift that they have.

But what would happen to the leaf, the twig, or the branch, if it refused to be joined to the tree from which it gets its life? It must *perish*, and being good for nothing, be destroyed. And this is just

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what must happen to all who will not have Jesus to be their life; there is no other life, and so there is nothing for them but death and destruction.

Jesus now gives life to all, to those who do not love Him, as well as to those who do; He makes His sun to shine upon the evil and on the good, and sends rain upon the just and on the unjust.

But when He comes there will be a separation, a cutting off from the Tree of Life of all who will not have Jesus to be their Saviour and their life, and like the withered and dead branches of a tree, these will be destroyed. But all those who love and choose Jesus will abide for ever rooted in Him, and bearing precious fruit to His glory.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

- Spain and America have now formally resumed their diplomatic relations.
- The West India humming-bird weighs only twenty grains.
- A London omnibus earns on an average 44s. per day from passengers, and 1s. per day from advertisers.
- The entire population of Porto Rico is being vaccinated by order of the United States military authorities.
- Grasshoppers grow to their greatest size in South America, where they grow to a length of five inches, and their wings spread ten inches.
- Since the beginning of this century no fewer than fifty-two volcanic islands have risen out of the sea. Nineteen have disappeared, and ten are now inhabited.
- In 1861 there were only 17 monasteries and 58 convents in England and Wales; now, according to statistics, there are 248 religious houses for men and 498 for women.
- A general strike has occurred at the great gun factories and engineering works of Creusot. 4,000 men have already come out. Work is reported as at a complete standstill.
- A party of Essex farmers has been touring in Holland, studying agriculture and the way to make the most of poor land. They expect that the help thus gained will aid them in Essex.
- Chief Chemist Wiley, of the United States Department of Agriculture, in an official Bulletin, states that fully ninety per cent. of the articles of food and drink manufactured in that country are adulterated to a greater or less extent.
- The United States has determined to continue military operations in the Philippines during the rainy season. The troops have suffered heavily from the heat, and the fighting has been very severe. Fresh reinforcements are to be furnished.
- A railway is to be constructed from Acre to Damascus. The Thames Ironworks, under contract with the railway company, has taken over the enterprise. The first section of the line from Acre and Haifa to the River Jordan will be opened within a year.
- A grant of £80,000 has been voted by the House of Commons to Lord Kitchener for his successful campaign against the Khallia. A number voted against the grant because the dead body of the Mabdi had been dug up and dishonoured, a protest which recalls the Saviour's observation on straining at gnats when swallowing a camel.
- President Kruger and Sir Alfred Milner, representing the Transvaal and England, have met in conference at Bloemfontein with a view to settling the points in dispute between the two countries, but have been unable to come to terms. The Boers want to be independent of England, and the Government will not consider this for a moment.
- American courts have lately been giving lessons on the lynching business. A South Carolina jury has assessed damages on a county where a lynching took place. A Kentucky jury has given a verdict of \$650,000 damages against members of a band of "white caps" that undertook to drive out the negroes. An Indiana

court has held the sheriff of a county with his bandsman liable for damages to the heirs of a victim of the mob, from whom the sheriff failed to protect him.

-Germany has bought from Spain the remnants of her colonies consisting of the Caroline and Ladrone islands. The price is fixed at about a million sterling.

-As an indication of how some American cities have increased in size, Chicago in 1850 had, according to the census taken, a population of 60; now it has over 2,000,000 inhabitants.

-A vessel bound for Gothenburg had to put into port on the way owing to a leak. On inspection it was found that the ship's copper bottom had been pierced by a sword-fish. Part of the sword was found embedded in a five-inch plank.

-Serious complications have arisen in Cuba, there being an open quarrel between General Gomez and Governor General Brooke. The complaint of the Cubans is "that they are being brow-beaten by the Americans, who daily tighten their grip upon them."

-The Dreyfus case seems at last to be nearing its end. The Court of Appeal has quashed his condemnation and ordered a fresh courtmartial. Esterhazy has confessed that it was he who wrote the documents which led to the condemnation of General Dreyfus. The former is to be prosecuted, also several others who were concerned in the case, and who must have known that the charges were based on forgeries.

-The French President was made the object of a violent and organised attack at a Paris race meeting, on the part of members of some ancient families. Several arrests were made, and seditious clubs have been suppressed. Desperate attempts are being made by agitators to make leaders of Major Marchand, and other popular Frenchmen, with a view to unseating the President, but, so far, no one can be induced to head an insurrection.

-The Peace Conference is showing itself friendly to the idea of arbitration, and several preparatory clauses have been adopted. If the Powers could approach a declaration of war with the same calmness that the Peace delegates can consider abstract theories, all would be well, but the value of the Conference remains to be proved, under conditions of intense strain and warlike excitement. The political history of the world is largely made up of broken treaties.

-Statisticians who have collected the figures of the cost of late wars, for use at the Peace Conference, give the following: the Crimean war, £840,000,000; the Italian war of 1858, £50,000,000; the Austro-Prussian war, £66,000,000 the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, £506,690,000 and the Russo-Turkish war, £258,000,000, a total of over £1,200,000,000 for five great European wars. The American Civil war cost £1,000,000,000 and £200,000,000 in loss of property.

-The Russian calendar is now twelve days ahead of the rest of the world; and if she should continue her present calendar, next year will be a leap year there, and not in the rest of the world, which will add a day there, making Russia thirteen days ahead. The Russian Council of State, however, has consented to reform the calendar, beginning with next year. This will be done the same as was done in 1552 by the rest of Europe by simply dating back the twelve days they are ahead.

-The demand for hot rolls on Sunday morning in the West End is leading to an increase of Sunday baking, and the County Council is being appealed to to take action in the matter, under an Act, by which informers are paid three shillings for reporting breaches of the law. It must be a bad law that has to call meanness to its aid, but every law that men make on religious matters is bad. When men set up a sabbath of their own, they have to protect it by works of their own, and both are alike wicked.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

"The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Are our hearts aglow to see Him as He is? Remember that without holiness, "no man shall see the Lord." This means a daily consecration, a constant recognition that we are not our own. Are we willing to make the surrender? Life and death are set before us, and we must choose this day whom we will serve.

David said, "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." This is the secret of Christian living. Where this is not done, there will be failure. The wise man says, "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." If those who are quick-tempered would only hide God's tender words in their hearts, and so have them ready for use when tempted, many heart-aches and sad memories would be saved. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

So many people have the idea that they cannot work for the Lord unless they are officially appointed by some organisation. This is a wrong idea. A man or woman who has tasted the sweets of the pardoning love of Christ, cannot but tell of it to others. When the Saviour left this earth, He gave "to every man his work." That means that there is something definite for every Christian to do in the Master's vineyard. The earnest inquiry of all, made direct to the Master, should be, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" When the answer is received, that work should be done unto the Lord with heart and soul.

If any have been in doubt whether the "Christian Science," of which so much has been heard of late, is either Christian or science, their doubts may now be set at rest. A colonial Q. C., who has been lecturing for the movement, said last week at Queen's Hall,

It is time that the world should see what the work of Christian Science is! It is the Second Coming of the Christ, doing the work that He did, healing the sick, raising the halt and lame, giving sight to the blind!

Now put beside these the words of Christ and it becomes clear that in "Christian Science," falsely so called, we have one of the deceptions of the last days.

Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; *believe it not*. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

These words dispose of any argument which may be drawn from the large number of fashionable people who attend the meetings of "Christian Scientists,"

and accept their doctrines. The warning of the Saviour goes on to show how infinitely far from the truth is their blasphemous claim to fulfil the promise of His second coming.

Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Matt. xxiv. 28-27.

"The Gentiles and Sabbath-Keeping" *The Present Truth* 15, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

One of the most common objections raised to the observance of the Sabbath of Jehovah is the claim that nowhere in the Bible is it made obligatory on the *Gentiles*.

Now there is a very great misapprehension among many people, who seem to think that there is such a thing as a *Gentile* Christian, and that they are subject to entirely different laws from what Jewish Christians were. All such should know that Gentiles, as such, have no part whatever in God, or Christ, or the kingdom of God. See Eph. ii. 11, 12.

All true Christians are the seed of Abraham. Gal. iii. 28, 29, God has visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name, but that is in fulfilment of His promise that He would build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down. See Acts xv. 14-18. The only word of God that we have is the Bible that was committed to the Jews, and written for the most part by Jews, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The great advantage that the Jews had was that the law was committed to them. See Rom. iii. 1, 2. Salvation is of the Jews. John iv. 22. And Christ, as the Son of David, is King of the Jews. Therefore, whoever thinks to excuse himself for breaking the Sabbath, by claiming that he is a Gentile, thereby simply declares his separation from Christ.

Call to mind that Abraham himself was of the Gentiles—a heathen by birth. (See Josh. xxiv. 2), so that the whole Jewish nation became such only through obedience to God and faith in Jesus Christ. And when they lost their faith in Christ, and their obedience to the law, then they ceased to be Jews in the sight of God. But the Gentiles who keep the law are counted as the true Israel. See Romans ii. 25-29.

The Bible does, however, mention Sabbath-keeping in connection with the Gentiles, who are "strangers from the commonwealth of Israel." God says: "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer." Isa. lvi. 6, 7. Gentiles, as *Gentiles*, cannot keep the Sabbath, neither can they be saved; but they are commanded to keep the Sabbath, even as God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent;" and they who do this will cease to be Gentiles.

June 22, 1899

**"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Gracious
Invitations. Hosea xiv. 1-9" *The Present Truth* 15, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

The call: "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity."

See how different the Lord's ways are from man's! With man, a great offence, a fall, is considered ground for casting one off. How often do we hear of a man "who is called a father," that has turned a son or daughter away from home because the child has fallen into sin. Because of this human characteristic, to make a fall into sin a reason for berating a man, people who think that God is like a man fear to come to Him when they have sinned. "I am so sinful, I don't believe the Lord can ever receive and forgive me," says the wandering one. Why, that is the very ground on which God bases His call for you to come. Why does He call us to come?-Because we have sinned, and not merely sinned, but have fallen by our iniquity.

"Oh well, perhaps Israel had not sinned so much as I have; in fact, I do not believe there was ever so great a sinner in the world as I am." It is well for each one to think himself the chief of sinners; for when anyone, no matter, who has a just sense of what he really is, he can see more sin in himself than he can ever see in any other man. The best man must therefore necessarily with all sincerity regard himself as worse than the worst man of whom he has any knowledge. That, however does not make any difference with God's reckoning. But let us see what we can find as to Israel's actual condition when this gracious invitation was uttered.

By comparing Hosea i. 1 and Isa. i. 1, we find that the two prophets, Isaiah and Hosea, lived and prophesied at the same time. Isaiah's inspired utterance, at the beginning of his ministry was that the people were "laden with iniquity," that they were corrupters, and that they were altogether corrupt-as bad as they could be. Of all the kings of Israel, after the division at the death of Solomon, not one was good. Jeroboam "sinned, and made Israel to sin," and the story of each succeeding king is that he was worse than all that were before him. Read the record in the books of Kings.

Coming to Ahaz, king of Judah, during whose reign the prophets Isaiah and Hosea prophesied, we find that "he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel." 2 Chron. xxviii. Then he was greatly troubled, "and in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord; this is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him; and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel." Moreover he shut up the house of the Lord, and cut in pieces the sacred vessels, and in all the cities of Judah he made high places, to burn incense to other gods. Verses 22-25. Really, things could not

have been worse than they were when God said: "O Israel, return thou unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity."

This invitation is the same as, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." There is no limitation, no exclusion. No sinner can be too vile, no backslider can have fallen too low, for the Lord to receive and pardon him. "Thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." That is unqualified. God does not say, "Return, because you haven't fallen very low yet,"

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but simply, "Return, because you have fallen;" and that takes in the fall to the very lowest depths. "This Man receiveth." Then give heed to the gracious invitation.

The Lord is very gracious, for He tells us just how to come to Him. He says, "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord."

"But what shall I say? I haven't a word to say for myself." "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up." Ps. xl. 12. Yea, words would fail you, if you had to find them yourself; but the Lord tells you just what to say, so that you can come with boldness to the throne of grace, knowing that your heaven-inspired plea cannot fail.

Here are the words that you are to take with you, when you return to the Lord: "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously." That is sufficient; when you have uttered those words from the heart, you may be sure that the prayer is instantly answered. God does not trifle with men, and when He tells us to come to Him with a certain request, and tells us just what to say in order to gain it, we can have no doubt as to the result.

Of course this means confession of sin. The request, "Take away all iniquity," indicates this. We acknowledge that we have sinned, and that everything that God calls sin is sin. In short, we accept God's estimate of us. This is necessary, in order that we may be made into what He estimates we ought to be. "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." Jer. iii. 12, 13.

See how large a request He tells us to make. "Take away all iniquity." It is just as easy for God to do a great thing, a complete work, as a little thing. In fact the work is already done, Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity." Titus ii. 13, 14. When God does a work, He does it thoroughly. Christ is given for our sins. Gal. i. 3, 4. When we accept that gift, we get the whole of His sinless life in exchange for our sinful life. So God receives us graciously, and takes away all our iniquities at once.

"Just as I am, with one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me;
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

"Just as I am, Thou wilt receive;
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;

Because Thy promise I believe;
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

"Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any morn to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods; for in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy." Hosea xiv. 3.

This is simply a recognition of God as the only God, in whom alone there is deliverance. "An horse is a vain thing for safety." The nations of earth depend very much upon horses for safety. The Governments of earth send agents abroad to buy up horses for the army. Without horses, an army would be very much crippled, if not useless, and without an army a nation would be helpless; but while "some will trust in hoes and some in chariots," "we will trust in the name of the Lord our God." The Lord often reproved Israel for their dependence on horses, from which we are to learn that in returning to the Lord we are absolutely to depend on Him. For a church or an individual to make any sort of alliance with the world, or to look to earthly Governments for help and support, is virtually to say that God is not sufficient; it is having other gods beside Him.

But would it not be a mare matter of form, without any reason, for us who have been brought up amid Christian surroundings to say, "Neither will we sap any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods"? We have never fashioned graven images for ourselves to worship. This is true, yet there is great need of our making just the prayer that the Lord here gives us. How often we have made gods of the work of our hands. Many, many times have we regarded with complacent self-satisfaction what we were pleased to call our good works. Who has not at Rome time in his life imagined that he would get credit for something that he has done? Have we never, after escaping from some danger, congratulated ourselves upon our own dexterity or shrewdness, and forgotten to give thanks to God? What was that but saying to the work of our hands, "Ye are our gods"? The man who has no other gods besides Jehovah, and who never trusts himself, will certainly be saved. It is good to trust in Jehovah, for in Him the fatherless find mercy, whereas mercy is not found in any gods of human devising.

"Not what these hands have done
Can save this guilty soul;
Not what this toiling flesh has borne
Can make my spirit whole.
"Thy work alone, O Christ,
Can ease this weight of sin;
Thy blood alone, O Lamb of God,
Can give me peace within."

There is a very significant statement at the close of verse 2: "So will we render the calves of our lips." The Revised Version, and some others, have it, 'So will we render as bullocks the offering of our lips.' The French of Second has it: "We offer Thee, instead of bullocks, the homage of our lips." The idea clearly is, that praise and thanksgiving, that is spoken out of the abundance of the heart, is more acceptable to God than offering of animals, and, moreover, that it was so in the days of Hosea. Remember that this is the Lord's own statement. It was not sacrifice that He ever desired, but faith and love. The verse is very similar to Heb.

xiii. 15: "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that bath horns or hoofs." Ps. lxi. 30, 31.

We have read the gracious invitation, now listen to the gracious promises: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for Mine anger is turned away from them." Through the prophet Joel the Lord said, "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten." Joel ii. 24. Restoration is the Lord's order. "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost." One saves the lost only by bringing it back again; so the Lord promises to make good all that His people have lost by the fall. He will heal all their backsliding, so that no trace of sin or the curse will remain. The Lord loves His people freely, fallen though they be; and the result of His love for the church is to present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 27.

Another promise: "I will be as the dew unto Israel; He shall grow [or blossom

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as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." A whole lesson is in this promise. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." Matt. vi. 28. How do they grow?—By the life of God that is in them. The life within makes the external beauty. Their life is their beauty, their clothing. See how the grass lifts up its head, and laughs for very joy of life, as the dew refreshes it. Now the dew is only one way in which God manifests His grace. What the visible dew is to the grass, that God is to His people. He can make them grow "unto a perfect man to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," as easily as He can bring the lily to perfection.

Not only will God bless His backslidden, fallen people, but He will make them a blessing to others. He will make the branches of Israel to spread, and "they that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." "The trees of the Lord are full of sap." Planted by the river of the water of life, they bring forth their fruit in its season, their leaves do not fade, and whatsoever they do prospers. Their fruit is of God.

Consider these things, and be wise. Remember that great as are the promises of God, so great is the loss of those who reject them. "The ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein." The very thing that enables some people to walk, causes others to stumble. It all depends on whether they are willing to stand in it, or are determined to ignore it. Whatever happens, the Lord's way is right. There can be no charge sustained against the One who makes such gracious invitations, and such glorious promises, which He is able also to perform. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

"Spirits of Devils" *The Present Truth* 15, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

Dr. Hyslop, of the Columbia University, has announced that he expects in the course of a year to prove scientifically that there is a conscious existence, after

death. He has been making experiments through a medium, and claims to have received a large number of bona fide communications from departed spirits.

This is an illustration of the science, falsely so called, which leads men astray. To study this subject in a scientific manner, without relying on the guidance of the only book which is based on an accurate knowledge of the facts, is impossible. God tells us what is the condition of the dead. He created men that they might live, and therefore the tree of life was placed in the garden of Eden. The death, which comes by transgression, was never planned for by God. It is an absolute undoing of His work, and whoever becomes subject to death, returns to the dust from whence he came, while the breath by which God made him a living soul (Gen. ii. 7), returns to its Giver. Eccl. xii. 7.

Thus we read of the state of the dead, that there is no consciousness nor existence about it, any more than there is in the death which befalls the beasts. Eccl. iii. 19, 20. "The dead know not anything." Chap. ix. 5, 6. Their thoughts perish. Ps. cxlvi. 4. Yet there is an almost universal idea that men live in death, that the essential part of the life continues in unbroken and conscious existence, in spite of the scripture statements that death is a sleep, and, without a resurrection, those that sleep have perished. 1 Cor. xv. 17, 18.

The receiving of communications from another world, which is neither peopled with angels nor departed dead, is no new thing. In the first recorded instance of such communication, we discover the secret source of the belief in a conscious existence after death, and learn also what manner of spirits these are which will help Dr. Hyslop to demonstrate that men live after death. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." Gen. iii. 4.

Why should Satan seek to convince men that they cannot perish?—Because he hates both God and men. He knows that God is the Fountain of life, and that there is blessedness for men in the recognition of the fact that it is in Him we live, and that apart from Him we can do absolutely nothing. Acts xvii. 28. He "holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved." Ps. lxxvi. 9. If men can be persuaded to forget their dependence upon God, they will fall an easy prey to Satan's temptations, and so the wily enemy of Souls set out by promising Eve that not only would she not perish, but by treading the path of disobedience to God's command, she would become as a god.

The same deception has taken a firm hold of men's minds to this present time, so that even Christians believe that death, which is the result of transgression, is the by death they shall become as gods. Thus, being deceived into thinking that death is better than life, men feel that sin cannot be a very terrible thing. So the serpent gains his point. His fallen angels find means of communicating with those who live on the earth, and by their knowledge of secrets, pass themselves off as the spirits of departed friends. The common teaching of the churches has prepared the way for just such a deception. Taking everything for gospel which is told them, by the spirits, men are led by Satan into every error that he presents to them, and in this way he is deceiving myriads, and carrying out his hellish purposes.

Spiritualism is one of the perils of the last days. By its wonder-working manifestations, and spurious communications, the spirits of devils unite the world

against God, and thus prepare men to be destroyed at the appealing of Christ. Rev. xiii. 13-17; xiv. 1; xvi. 13-15. That day is hastening greatly, and Satan is fastening his deceptions upon all who will receive them. When it is scientifically proved that departed friends can communicate with their loved ones on earth, then many will be convinced, and will hail the discovery as a boon. Satan will take care that the communications are such as to please the carnal heart, and lead men on to perdition.

Let no one think that this matter is comparatively insignificant, and need not be taken seriously. Dr. Hyslop is not a man of no importance in the scientific world. It is said of him,

The professor is not one of the common herd of spiritualists, but is regarded by his colleagues as a sound-minded, keen, scientific man. He is being helped in his investigations by other well-known psychologists.

The only safeguard its to believe the Word of God on every point, irrespective of what anyone else may do, and let it work our sanctification. "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. viii. 19, 20.

The searching of all the books of philosophy and science cannot do for the mind and morals what the Bible can do if it is studied and practised.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Reign of Righteousness. Isa. xxxii. 1-20"
The Present Truth 15, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXII. 1-20, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness;
And princes shall rule with equity.
2. And the Man shall be as a covert from the
storm, as a refuge from the flood;
As canals of waters in a dry place;
As the shadow of a great rock in the land faint-
ing with heat:
3. And Him, the eyes of those that see shall
regard;
And the ears of those that hear shall hearken.
4. Even the heart of the rash shall consider,
and acquire knowledge;
And the stammering tongue shall speak
readily and plainly.
5. The fool shall no longer be called honourable;
And the niggard shall no more be called
liberal;

6. For the fool will still utter folly;
And his heart will devise iniquity;
Practicing hypocrisy, and speaking wrong-
fully against Jehovah;
To exhaust the soul of the hungry,
And to deprive the thirsty of drink.

7. As for the niggard, his instruments are evil;
He plotteth mischievous devices;
To entangle the humble with lying words;
And to defeat the assertions of the poor in
judgment.

8. But the generous will devise generous things;
And he by his generous purposes shall be estab-
lished.

9. O ye women, that sit at ease, arise, hear My
voice!

O ye daughters, that dwell in security, give
ear unto My speech!

10. Years upon years shall ye be disquieted, O ye
careless women:

For the vintage hath failed, the gathering of
the fruits shall not come.

11. Tremble, O ye that are at ease; be ye dis-
quieted, O ye careless ones!
Strip ye, make ye bare; and gird ye sack-
cloth

12. Upon your loins, upon your breasts:
Mourn ye, for the pleasant field, for the fruit-
ful vine.

13. Over the land of My people the thorn and the
brier shall come up;
Yea, over all the joyous houses, over the ex-
ulting city.

14. For the palace is deserted, the populous city
is left desolate;
Ophel and the watch-tower shall for a long
time be a den,
A joy of wild asses, a pasture for the
flocks;

15. Till the Spirit from on high be poured out
upon us;
And the wilderness become a fruitful field;
And the fruitful field be esteemed a forest;

16. The judgment shall dwell in the wilderness;
And in the fruitful field shall reside righteousness.

17. And the work of righteousness shall be
peace;
And the effect of righteousness perpetual quiet
and security.

18. And My people shall dwell in a peaceful
mansion,
And in habitations secure,
And in resting places undisturbed.

19. But the hail shall fall, and the forest be
brought down;
And the city shall be laid level with the
plain.

20. Blessed are ye who sow your seed in every
well-watered place;
Who send forth the foot of the ox and the
ass.

"Behold, a King shall rein in righteousness." What need to ask who this King is, who reigns in righteousness? Jesus Christ? He it is of whom the Lord says: "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer. xxiii. 5-6.

He is supreme, but He reigns not alone, for it has pleased Him that others shall share His high state. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. With Him "princes shall rule in judgment;" for the Father hath bestowed this love upon us, that we should also be called the sons of God, even as He Himself is. 1 John iii. 1, 2. "Now are we the Sons of God," "and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Rom. viii. 17. "He hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." Rev. i. 5, 6. Yea, He hath made us alive from our death in trespasses and sins, and hath raised us up, and made us to sit together with Him in the heavenly places, at the right hand of God. Eph. i. 20, 21; ii. 1-6. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes," "even with the princes of His people," "and to make them inherit the throne of glory." 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8; Ps. cxiii. 7, 8.

"And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, and French versions have it, "Every man shall be as an hiding place," etc. Lowth, as we see, has it, "The Man." This would make it refer especially to Christ, to whom it unquestionably has chief application; but all the renderings are correct, since He is pleased to make us whatever He is. Every one whom Christ makes kings and princes and priests will be such only by virtue of His nature; and therefore they will share with Him the joy and honour of His salvation, not merely of being saved, but of saving others.

What a glorious prospect is this! Poor, fallen men, way-worn, famished, fainting, fallen, and helpless are themselves to be so transformed by the refreshing

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that they receive from the Fountain of life and the Rock of their salvation, that they will be to others in like condition as an hiding place from the stormy wind, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Yes, "Jesus is a Rock in a weary land," but He has left representatives here on earth, to carry out His work, and to be in His stead to men. What is more refreshing than streams of water in a dry, hot day? and this is the place that every child of God is privileged to occupy, for whosoever believeth in the Son, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John vii. 38. Think also of the shadow of a great rock in a fainting land. How wonderfully cool it is! It not only excludes the rays of the sun, but imparts a refreshing coolness. Just such help is every Christian intended to be to some fainting souls in this world. For understand that these promises are not confined to the future. Even now Christ reigns in righteousness, and now we are the sons of God, and therefore princes. When should it apply if not at a time when there are souls fainting and weary?

"Princes shall rule in judgment." Yea, for the heaven-inspired, and therefore to-be-answered, prayer for us is that our love should "abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment," or discernment. Phil. i. 9. Also the promise is that we shall "be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Col. i. 9. The fact that the saints are to judge the world and angels, is given as a reason why they ought to be able to exercise good judgment now in all the affairs of life. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. And well it may be; for this is the time of preparation for the duties of the world to come. This good judgment, the knowledge of what is right and fitting to be done on all occasions, does not come by any magic, but by giving good heed to the words of the Lord; "for the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 1-6. "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." Job xxviii. 28.

Sight, hearing, speech, and understanding are the gifts of righteousness. See verses 3, 4. And more, it is the princes who rule in judgment with the King of righteousness, who are to be instrumental in giving sight to the people, and making the hasty to understand knowledge. Only the difference of one letter changes "to him" to "not," in the Hebrew, and Lowth is undoubtedly correct in saying that this change has been made. True, the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and it will be because they will regard Him who is the light. They will see Him in those whom He has enlightened.

"The vile person shall no more be called liberal." From 1 Sam. xxv. 25 we learn that Nabal means foolish; and that is the word that is used here in the Hebrew; so that it is correctly rendered "fool," as Lowth gives it. And who is the fool? He is the one who does not regard the Lord, who acts as if there were no God. See Ps. xiv. 1. Since the fear of the Lord is wisdom, it follows what folly is unrighteousness. The fool is the one who bears false witness against God, and

thereby tends to weaken the faith of men,-to make the hungry and thirsty after righteousness still more empty.

In this connection it will be well to read what the Lord says by the prophet Ezekiel. Read chapter xiii. 17-23. Some have with lies made the heart of the righteous sad, and have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not depart from his wicked way, by promising him life. They say, either by their actions or by their words, that it will be well with the wicked, and that no matter what a man does he will live to all eternity. Thus they put no difference between him that serveth the Lord and him that serveth Him not.

In verses 13, 14 we have a description of the effects of the curse. Jerusalem is specially referred to, but the application is to all the earth. Because of man's sin, the earth was cursed. This was not an arbitrary curse, but God merely stated the inevitable consequence of Adam's sin. When he who was set to be master and lord of the earth fell, it could not be otherwise than that his dominion should go to waste. The field of the drunkard and the sluggard will bring forth thorns and thistles. This curse we see now, but it will increase rapidly as the end approaches, and "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." 2 Tim. iii. 13. At the last, the earth will be utterly desolate and waste, even as it was in the beginning before the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. See Gen. i. 2 and Isa. xxiv. 1.

The same Spirit that in the beginning brought order out of chaos, will effect the complete restoration after sin has completed its work of ruin. The Spirit of righteousness will undo the work of sin. When the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, "then will the wilderness become a fruitful field." "When judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field." Although violence shall fill the earth, even as in the days that were before the flood (see Gen. vi. 11; Matt. xxiv. 37), yet "the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." And since righteousness is to dwell in the earth simply because there will be righteous men, made so by the Spirit of God, it follows that this restoration of all things, and the bringing back of the reign of peace is effected through men. God is the great Author of all things, but He works through men who fear Him, and yield themselves to Him as instruments of righteousness. "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." 1 Cor. xv. 21. In like manner, since by man came the curse, by man comes also the blessing; since by man came the desolation, by man comes also the restoration. In every good work does the Lord associate His people with Himself, and He gives to them the glory. He gives them the glory, and they give it to Him.

"But the hail shall fall." Terrible commotions will accompany the work of restoration. Not without a struggle will sin be rooted out of the earth. There shall be voices, and thunders, and a great earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great," and there shall fall upon men great hail out of heaven, "every stone about the weight of a talent." Rev. xvi. 17-21. Yet even at this time the people will "dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." During the time of

trouble the saints of God on this earth will be as safe as they will afterwards be in heaven, for that is even now their dwelling place. See Ps. xci. 1-16; xlv. 1-5.

Verse 20 is based upon the manner of sowing rice, which grows upon wet soil, and is sowed even while the water covers

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the ground. Then the oxen and the horses are driven upon it, and by them the seed is trampled into the ground. Thus most literally is bread cast upon the waters, to be received with increase after many days. Blessed are they who have confidence enough in the Lord to sow the seed of righteousness, even the living Word of God, at morning and at evening, although the prospect is most forbidding. Sow beside all waters, and the harvest will reveal, instead of a watery waste, a land smiling with ripened grain, the fruit of righteousness.

"Using Creeds" *The Present Truth* 15, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

The Archbishop of Canterbury, in a recent address said some men professed to be teaching the Bible without the use of creeds, but that seemed to him like attempting to teach arithmetic without the use of the multiplication table.

Of course; that is just the reason why creeds are formulated. Men think that the infinite Word of God, which is nothing less than Himself (John i. 1), can be treated just like a simple problem in numbers. But the Bible gives us the thoughts of God, and these are too deep for human discernment (1 Cor. ii. 11), more than can be numbered (Ps. xl. 5), and too high to be attained unto. Ps. cxxix. 6, 17, 18. It is impossible to frame a table for what can neither be understood, nor measured, nor counted; and it is just as impossible to frame a creed which will condense the thoughts of God. The man who thinks that he can accurately and adequately restate the mind of God, in other and simpler words than God uses to express His thoughts, really claims to be infinite himself. If he does not wish to do this, he should let God speak for Himself, and confine his attention to listening to the Word; and pointing others to the pure water of life, flowing from the throne of God.

It is the *unlovely* in mankind that appeals most to Christ's tender sympathy.

"Little Folks. Lessons from the Trees" *The Present Truth* 15, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

"And on either side of the river was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month." This beautiful life-giving tree was in the midst of the garden that God first gave to man for his home. You will remember why He took it away from him after he sinned; "lest he should put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever."

Yet there were left in the earth many other trees "pleasant to the sight, and good for food," and all of these also were to give life to man. The trees and the vines give forth in fruit the life that God is giving to them, that through them He may give His life to us. In all the fruits of the earth God is giving us His own life.

Think again of what we learned last week,-how the life of God, which He sends upon the earth in the showers with which He waters it, is drawn up through the roots of the tree, and carried to every part of it, running through every branch and twig and leaf.

This life of which the trees are full, has been lately shown in the sweet blossoms with which many of them have been covered. Perhaps you have seen in the orchards the beautiful clusters of pink and white apple blossoms, the little cherry blossoms, and other flowers that have beautified the trees and filled the air with fragrance. Now these are all falling, for they are not the end but only the beginning of the giving forth of the tree's life for the benefit of God's other creatures.

"First the trees blossom, and then they unblossom;
And then there is a left but a little green ball
That will biggen and brighten and sweeten and
ripen,
And bounce in the basket, an apple, next fall."

If you remember our Spring lessons about the flowers, the bees, and the butterflies, and how these are used by God to cause the "fertilisation" of the plants, or to make them fruitful, you know that the pretty blossoms that so much delight our senses, and the honey that is found in them, are really only an attraction for these insects, so that the pollen, the flower dust which the seeds need to make them fruitful, shall be carried from one blossom to another.

For some of the plants the wind does this work of carrying the yellow pollen dust to fertilise the ripening seeds, but such plants have small colourless and scentless blossoms, that we should hardly call flowers at all.

So you can see that in all this and beauty, the real object is *fruit*. In it all we see the working of the same Word of life that multiplies the birds "that sing among the branches," and makes them bring forth their young ones every Spring season. For the same Word said also in the beginning: "Let the earth bring forth the fruit tree *yielding fruit* after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth."

Read Matt. xxi. 18-20, and see what became of the fig tree upon which Jesus found no fruit, "but leaves only." See also what He says in John xv. about unfruitful branches: "Every branch that beareth not fruit He taketh away," "and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." The fruit tree or grape vine that bears no fruit is good for nothing, fit only to be destroyed.

Did you know, dear little ones, that you are little trees that Jesus has planted in His garden, and that He wants you to bear fruit that shall give life to others? Of all who are His we are told "that they might be called *trees of righteousness*, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."

All "trees of righteousness" are trees of *life*, because righteousness is life, just as sin is death. In the first realm we read of the one who loves the Lord and walks in His way, that "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his *fruit* in his season." Jesus wants you to be so filled with the Spirit of life that, like the trees, you will give out the sweetness of it in life-giving fruit, "the fruits of righteousness," "the fruits of the Spirit" of which we read in

Galatians v. 22, 23: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Jesus has promised to give the Holy Spirit, which brings forth all these lovely fruits, "to them that ask Him." Ask Him for it, dear children, and believe that He gives it to you, for His promise cannot fail.

Let His Holy Spirit fill you with good fruits, that through your love and gentleness, your joy and peace, your longsuffering and patience, those around you may taste the sweetness of the Lord's life, may see that He is good, and learn to love and trust Him for themselves.

"The bird that soars on highest wing
Builds on the ground her lowly nest,
And she who doth most sweetly sing
Sings in the night when all things rest
In lark and nightingale we see
What honour hath humility."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

-The militia in the island of Guernsey are in a state of revolution. Their arms and amunition have been taken away from them.

-Reports are at hand of the recent death of two hundred persons on the road to Klondyke. Scurvy, drowning, freezing and suicide were the causes.

-The motor-car industry is being developed in France. One car was driven from Paris to Bordeaux, a distance of 375 miles, in a little over eleven hours.

-The Khalifa is strengthening his position in Kordofan. He is attacking and defeating tribes which refuse to join him, and is now provisioned for several months.

-On the 9th inst., there was a cloud-burst at Austin, Texas. Seventy-five people are reported drowned, and thousands of acres of crops submerged, which will be a total loss.

-A Commission of nine members has been appointed by the President of the United States to determine the most feasible and practical route for a canal across the Isthmus of Panama.

-In Uganda, Africa, there is a population of over 10,000,000. Twenty years ago there was no missionary among this people; now there are 500 churches, 600 teachers, and over 60,000 under instruction.

-The steamer *Paris* remains stranded, in spite of every attempt to remove her from the rocks, and she has been abandoned by the owners to the underwriters. The vessel is insured for \$200,000 in forty companies.

-A tunnel to connect Scotland and Ireland, at a cost of \$10,000,000, has been enthusiastically advocated at a meeting at the House of Commons of a large number of influential persons. The Government will be asked to receive a deputation on the subject.

-At the unveiling of a monument erected at Canterbury to the memory of Protestant martyrs, Canon Farrar said he hoped the memorial would long remain

a testimony to the fact that men had abandoned the attempt to put down honest belief by persecution, and to force on people things which they believed to be superstitious and anti-Christian. These words were received with applause, but it was made evident immediately that the old spirit of intolerance was still in the people who applauded with their mouths, for when some organisation presented a protest against the anti-Christian and superstitious act of putting a pagan cross on the memorial, the protest was read to an accompaniment of jeering.

-The Italian Government has just placed a contract for the construction of six new armoured cruisers.

-A fire at the Elswick Ordnance Works did damage to the extent of ?200,000, and two thousand workmen were thrown out of employment.

-A disastrous explosion took place on 18 inst. in a mine at Kimberley. Twenty-five people were killed outright and many were badly injured.

-The Irish-Americans of New York are proposing to raise ?30,000 by popular subscription in order to purchase the Lakes of Killarney and the surrounding property for preservation as a public park.

-Baron Christiani, for violently assaulting the President of the French Republic, has been sentenced to four years' imprisonment. Colonel Picquart has been set at liberty as there was no case against him.

-The warnings which were lately issued against oysters, as a frequent cause of typhoid fever, caused for a while an enormous diminution in the oyster trade, but as last season was the best for several years, the oyster-eating public seem to have got over its scare.

-An important decision was given in the Court of Chancery last week, when an injunction was granted to restrain a publisher from using extracts from the Revised Version, on the ground that the revision was copyright, being the property of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

-The business houses of Paris are very anxious that no political or other excitement shall be allowed to interfere with the prospects of the Exhibition next year. At the last exhibition 32,000,000 visitors came to Paris and spent there over ?50,000,000. It is expected that these enormous figures will be doubled next year.

-Desperate fighting still takes place in the Philippines, where the American troops lost thirty men in an ambush. The men are suffering severely from heat, and the sick list increases every day. The situation is viewed with considerable anxiety at Washington. A Filipino general has been assassinated by Aguinaldo's bodyguard, it is thought because he favoured peace.

-On the 12th inst., a terrific storm swept the region of the Upper Mississippi. At New Richmond, Wisconsin, the tornado practically annihilated the town of 2,000 inhabitants, one hundred and sixty persons were killed outright, and over a thousand are reported more or less injured. Fire broke out in the ruins and cremated many who were imprisoned in cellars and wrecked buildings.

-Within the past few months trusts and corporation to the number of 270 have been organised within the United States, with an aggregate capital of nearly ? 1,250,000,000. Almost all the necessities of life are included, and all the luxuries. The object seems to be to drive out the small dealers, limit the supply,

and then rake the price of the output. This is one of the significant signs of the times, which thoughtful people are everywhere viewing with alarm.

-Daniel R. Bower, M.D., LL.D., in a recent lecture on Criminal Anthropology, gave the following facts concerning the increase of crime in America from 1850 to 1890; 1850, 1 to 3,442 1860, 1 in 1,647; 1870, 1 in 1,771; 1880, 1 in 155; 1890, 1 in 757. Perhaps some of this alarming increase may be accounted for on the ground of more thorough work in collecting statistics, but nevertheless, if the rate continues for another forty years, the criminals will be largely in the majority. This is one of the signs of the last days for the Scriptures declare that "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse."

"The Great Peace Conference" *The Present Truth* 15, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

Representatives from all the principal nations of the earth are now in consultation at the Hague, over the question of universal peace, and many people are expecting much from the Conference. If they would but give close heed to the Bible, they might know what to expect, and not be disappointed at the result.

The result of a "Peace Conference," if favourable, must be peace. But it must be remembered that the result will not be known when the Conference adjourns. All that we can know then will be what the delegates have talked about, and what conclusions they have arrived at; the lapse of time alone will make it plain whether there has been any practical result or not.

What then are we entitled to expect from this Conference?-Nothing whatever. Listen to the infallible Word: "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit." Isa. xxx. 1. The men in conference at the Hague are not taking counsel of the Lord, nor are they seeking the covering of the Holy Spirit of God.

In the case referred to in the text just quoted, the counsel was between two nations; but the principle is the same. The Israelites were seeking to "strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh" just as each nation now is seeking to strengthen itself in the combined strength of all the rest, so that one nation will not wish or dare to attack another.

Why was the woe pronounced in the case of the Israelites?-Because, as the Lord said, "the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not Spirit." Isa. xxxi. 3. Now the same thing is true of every people; they are men, and not God, and both their horses and themselves are flesh, and not Spirit. Therefore the same woe rests upon the people of these days, that rested upon the ancient people of Israel.

Bear in mind that the woe pronounced is not an arbitrary thing. It is not as though God should pettishly say, like a man, "Well, if you will not accept My terms, I will make you suffer for it." God is not a man. Just because He is God, He alone has power, to help, and therefore those who seek help from men, and not from God, bring disaster upon themselves. The woe follows as a natural consequence, and God, who sees the end from the beginning, foretells it.

Look again at the reason given for the woe that shall come upon those who take counsel of men, instead of God, and who seek the protection of man, instead of the covering of God's Spirit. "The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh, and not spirit." Flesh and blood cannot deliver. "The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. x. 23. How utterly foolish to seek help and guidance from those who are not able to support and guide themselves! It is like blind leading the blind, and the maimed trying to help the lame to walk. Only the Spirit of God can direct man in the right way, and only God has power to support and preserve.

There is a council of peace continually in session, and it is the only council that can accomplish definite results. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the Man whose name is THE BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory; and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech. vi. 12, 13. The true counsel of peace is between God and Christ on the throne of God in heaven. The God of peace has sent Jesus, "the Prince of peace," who is "our peace," preaching peace, "peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near." Isa. lvii. 19.

Christ has left His peace with men, but not as the world gives it. Whoever will let the peace of God rule in his heart (Col. iii. 15), by receiving and trusting absolutely in the Word of God, will be kept by "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." Phil. iv. 6, 7. This is the peace of righteousness, which comes from hearkening to the commandments of God. Isa. xlviii. 18; Rom. v. 1. Only God can impart this peace, and it is the only peace that is peace indeed. It is perfect peace, and it is as lasting as eternity.

Now it is not this peace that the delegates of the nations have met to confer about at The Hague, and consequently they are imagining a vain thing. If it were the true peace that they were conferring about they would be having a religious meeting pure and simple seeking the blessing of the fulness of the Holy Spirit. "What a strange thing that would be for a congress composed of delegates from all the nations," all will exclaim. Indeed it would be a strange thing, and an impossible thing; for if they were assembled for that purpose, their action could not be representative. Each one could secure peace for himself only, as an individual. Their action would bind nobody else. It would be a grand thing, however, if they would seek peace in that way, for then something would be accomplished; a few men, at least, would secure peace.

"There is no peace, saith my Lord, to the wicked." Isa. lvii. 21. It is only by personal faith in Christ that righteousness comes; therefore it is evident that to nations on this earth there can never be peace. Only by submitting to the mild sway of Him that sitteth on the throne in the heavens, and acknowledging and keeping His laws, can there be peace. That would result in there being only one King over all, which will be the case in the world to come, when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." Rev. xi. 15.

It is not necessary, therefore, not even profitable, to call a conference of all the nations, in order to have peace. Each person may have a successful peace conference by himself, wherever he is God has spoken peace, and Christ has been sent with the message. We have only to listen and accept. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak things unto His people, and to His saints; but let them not turn again to folly. Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before Him, and shall set us in the very steps." Ps. lxxxv. 8-13.

June 29, 1899

"The Way of Holiness" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

"The winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come. . . . The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell." Song of Solomon ii. 11-13.

"As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." Isa. lxi. 11.

"For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work: I will triumph in the works of Thy hands. The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright: He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him." Ps. xcii. 4, 12-15.

"Ye are God's husbandry." 1 Cor. iii. 9. "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Matt. xv. 13. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." John xv. 4.

It will be seen from these scriptures that God is the source of righteousness and not man. This is according to God's plan. He never designed that man should be righteous by his own works, but by receiving, in faith, the righteousness of His Creator, allowing God to work in Him to will and to do of His own good pleasure.

Therefore the question is not whether man shall be found righteous in the judgment, but whether the Lord shall be proved to be righteous in all His works. No man can make himself righteous, but He can let the Lord demonstrate in his life that all His works are righteous. But to do this a man must cease from his own works, so

that only the works of God are manifest in him. When the Lord has full control of a man's life, because he abides in Him as the branch abides in the vine, then it will always appear "that the Lord is upright, . . . and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

This means that the Lord will be justified in the judgment. But what of the man? He can "have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." 1 John iv. 17. Such a man is not afraid that the Lord will be condemned in the judgment, and for himself all he needs to know is that he is abiding in the vine. So he is sure of an abundant entrance into "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

**"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Daniel in
Babylon. Dan. i. 8-21" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.**

E. J. Waggoner

FAITHFULNESS TO GOD, AND ITS RESULT

In order to enter fully into this lesson, we must understand the circumstances. The situation is this: Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had besieged Jerusalem, and had taken it. "The Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God." Dan. i. 2. "Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of His sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; and also for the innocent blood that he shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood." 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4. After naming over various nations, including Judah, God said: "Now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field have I given unto him also to serve him." Jer. xxvii. 6. Nebuchadnezzar therefore had the same right to rule that any of the kings of Judah ever had. Because of their sins, the people of Israel had been given over to the king of Babylon. Their captivity was only the outward manifestation of the bondage of sin, into which they had voluntarily gone. Read 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14-21.

Nebuchadnezzar was a broad-minded man, and one who was zealous for the welfare of his kingdom. He could recognise merit wherever he saw it, and had a disposition to make use of it. Accordingly he gave orders that the most promising of the captives of Judah should be trained in the royal schools, to be fitted for responsible places in the kingdom. The chosen ones were "of the seed royal, and of the nobles; youths in whom was no blemish, but well-favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability to stand in the king's palace." These were to be taught "the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily portion of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank, and that they should be nourished three years; that at the end thereof they might stand before the king." Dan. i. 3-5. Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. These four seemed to be special friends and companions, with Daniel as the leader among them.

From the record it is plain that the captives were obliged to pass an examination before they could have the benefit of this training; for otherwise it could not be known whether or not they had an understanding in science. At the time when this lesson begins, they had passed their examination and were ready to enter upon their three years' course of training.

But Daniel was not yet ready to go on with the work. Everything was not as it should be, and although he was a captive in Babylon, he was God's free man. All was not to his liking, and therefore it was wrong, because his liking was God's will. He liked only that which God liked. What was the trouble?—He was not satisfied with the food. That is not so uncommon a thing. There are many young men who find fault with the food that is furnished them both at home and at school. But it is a rare thing to find a student making the complaint that Daniel made. He did not complain that he did not have enough to eat, or that he was used to much better fare at home, and could not live on such a diet; nothing of the kind. His complaint was that the food was, too fine. Verse 8 literally translated is: "But Daniel set (it) upon his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's delicacies." He wanted plain food. Surely Daniel was a remarkable character. This incident at the beginning of his career stamps him as such.

There was nothing captious about Daniel. Although he had a fixed purpose in his heart as to what he would do, he did not make a scene. He did not parade his scruples, and protest that he would not violate them even for the king. People who have a fixed purpose, and one that is based upon a good foundation, do not need to bluster. People who do that, do it to make up for their lack of stability, and usually they give way when pressure is brought to bear upon them. Moreover, by their very course they make it sure that severe pressure will be brought to bear upon them. But Daniel's purpose was too deep for bluster. He did not intend to eat the food that the king had appointed for him, yet he courteously asked the steward who had charge of their food to give them something else.

"When a man's way, please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7. Daniel's ways and purposes pleased the Lord, and therefore He had "made Daniel to find favour and compassion in the sight of the prince of the eunuchs," who was disposed to grant any request that Daniel might make, but who feared to do anything contrary to the king's commandment. He could not conceive how anyone could keep in health and strength if deprived of the rich variety provided by the king; and so radical a change as Daniel proposed would, he feared, make the young men so thin and weak that they could not carry out the work assigned them, and so the king's anger would be aroused.

But Daniel combined the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. He did not argue the matter with the officer, but proposed a practical test. He said: "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before and the countenance of the youths that eat of the king's meat; and as thou seest deal with thy servants." No objection could be made to so reasonable a request as that. All the king desired was that the youths should have such attention as would keep them in the best condition for study and

work. Ten days could not make a great deal of difference, and if at the end of that time the experiment proved a failure, then the young men could soon pick up again under the king's generous provision. Still, the fact that the experiment was made, shows the hold that Daniel had on the king's officers.

What was the result?-"At the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh, than all the children which did eat of the king's meat. So the steward took away their meat (delicate food), and the wine that they should drink, and gave them pulse." Now the question arises, Why was this written? The answer is that it was "written for our learning." And what can we learn from it?- This, that a very simple diet is the best for man. That this is the chief reason why this incident is recorded, is very evident. Some may say that the lesson we should learn is that God honours those who are moved by principle. That lesson is very prominent, but it only enforces the other, for the principle for which Daniel was standing was that of plainness in diet. Daniel was not making a sacrifice in abstaining from the king's delicate food; he did not desire it, because he knew that it was not good for him, and he had been trained to prefer that which was best for him. The result showed that the simplest fare is the best for practical purposes.

Some may think that God wrought a miracle in behalf of the four Hebrews who chose the simple food. It may be that He did, but if so that only makes more emphatic the fact that a simple diet, with little variety, is the best for hard work, especially for mental labour. God would not work a miracle to enforce a wrong idea, therefore we have the testimony of the Lord in favour of simple food. The dealing of God with the children of Israel in the wilderness, when He fed them on manna, is a standing testimony. Daniel had read that history to profit.

The test of the value of food is what it will do for man. Food is for the purpose of renewing strength. "Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!" Eccl. x. 17. People cannot always determine the goodness of any food by its taste, because almost everybody has a perverted taste. God, however, designs that food shall please the taste, and has given us the sense of taste, so that we may derive pleasure from eating. But the very best food will taste insipid to a perverted palate, and therefore we need to educate our taste. Whatever will keep the body in the best health, and give muscular strength, and mental vigour, and will also enable one to endure privation, is the best food, and we should accustom ourselves to enjoy it. When the palate has been trained for a while in the right way, rich and fancy dishes and flesh meats will be distasteful, and simple but wholesome food will, be eaten with a hearty relish. The poor man, with simple fare, is not to be pitied. The rich, or any others, for that matter, who are slaves to an appetite that demands rich food, and who do not know the pleasure of perfect health and of abstinence, are the ones to be pitied.

But there was a further result of Daniel's choice. "As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning find wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. And at the end of the days which the king had appointed for bringing them in, the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them

all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore stood they before the king. And in every matter of wisdom and understanding, concerning which the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." Dan. i. 17-20. Surely that was a result worth even making a sacrifice for; but as we have seen, Daniel had not made a sacrifice; he had been eating and enjoying that which was good. It is not a sacrifice to be in a state of constant enjoyment.

Was this a miracle?-Most certainly, but only such a miracle as may be wrought at anytime and for anybody. The attainment of wisdom is a miracle; "for the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Prov. ii. 6. Daniel and his companions had given themselves fully into the hands of the Lord, and He in turn gave them Himself. God is willing and anxious to give every man wisdom and understanding. God's desire for men is expressed in the inspired words of the Apostle Paul, when he prayed "that your love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge and in all judgment." Phil. i. 9. And also, "that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Col. i. 9, 10. The trouble with the most of us is that we throw obstacles in the way of this result. We clog our systems with unwholesome food, and with too great a quantity, thus reversing the proper order of things; for whereas food ought to be only a support to the body, we impose on the body the task of trying to dispose of food that is utterly useless to it. Thus instead of eating to live, we actually live to eat. It is very evident that while we are in that state, the Holy Spirit of God cannot control us, and enlighten us. How can we expect God to give us clear perception, and strength of intellect, when we deliberately do that which benumbs the sensibilities? It is like putting our hands into the fire, and expecting that God will keep our fingers from being burned.

Whence did Daniel and his fellows get their wisdom? Read the record, and see. God gave it to them. The amount of wisdom that God can give a man of what is called "ordinary ability" is not dreamed of, because He is so seldom given the opportunity to demonstrate it. Those Hebrew youths were at school in Babylon, with the wisest men of the kingdom for instructors; but they did not derive their knowledge from those wise men. How do we know?-From this fact, that at the end of three years they knew ten times more than all the wise men in the king's realm, and that of course included the man who wore over the school which Daniel attended. They placed themselves in harmony with God's law, and He filled them. Thus they experienced what the psalmist said: "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation." Ps. cxix. 99. "I understand more than the ancients; because I keep Thy precepts." Verse 100.

Here is something that ought to claim the earnest attention of everybody. In these days the idea that men can learn more from God and His Word than from man is almost unheard of. This is no disparagement upon anything that anybody knows. Whatever wisdom any man has, whatever he really *knows*, is good,

because it comes from God, from whom every good and perfect gift comes. And men may help their fellow-men in the way of knowledge.

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Nevertheless the fact remains that no one is a teacher like unto God. Job xxxvi. 22. In obedience to all the commandments of God, and perfect submission to the perfect life of God, there are unlimited possibilities of wisdom. "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." Job xxviii. 28. And this is not fanciful, visionary, intangible, wisdom. It is such wisdom as can be recognised as wisdom even by those who do not know the secret of it. "Behold I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and shall say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." Deut. iv. 5, 6. See this verified in the case of Solomon. 1 Chron. i. 7-12; ix. 1-6. But this wisdom does not come from God without any effort on the part of the man. In Prov. ii. 1-9 we may read the experience of Solomon, and find the royal road to learning.

This chapter was not written for no purpose. We have no right to read it as an idle tale, as merely a curious item of history. It stands there to teach us the way of knowledge, yet how few of us think of it! It is a constant witness against our foolishness. If we do not have knowledge, how can we excuse ourselves with that record before us? The God who is no respecter of persons will give us understanding, as well as He did to those youths, if we but place ourselves unreservedly in His hands, to do His will. If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know. This story ought to be committed to memory, and meditated upon daily. Shall we not give ourselves to the acquirement of true wisdom?

Two or three other lessons ought to be noted while we have the chapter before us. Daniel was a captive in Babylon, with the rest of the Jews, yet he was a pious youth. The Jews were sent into captivity because of their sins, yet Daniel is one of the few men without a shadow of wrong-doing charged against them in the Bible. Thus we see that good people may be brought into trouble in this life through the evil-doing of others.

But the fact that good men are brought into difficulties through the sins of others is no ground for complaint. A righteous man cannot be made a captive, even though he be bound with chains. Daniel in Babylon was a free man. When God allows His servants to suffer hardships through the evil-doing of others, it is always for a good purpose. God had work for Daniel in Babylon, as He always has for His servants, wherever they are. Compare the case of Joseph in Egypt. Daniel was free from the Babylonian spirit, which was pride and the exaltation of self above God, and therefore he was free in Babylon. Jesus said, "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John viii. 31, 32, 36.

There is never any need for one to compromise his principles. Surely Daniel was in as close a place as anyone ever can be. Many think that if they are guests of some great man, courtesy demands that they should drink his wine, and

partake of his dainty meats. So they will lay aside their principles for fear of giving offence. Perhaps they will go so far as to state that they do not believe in eating and drinking such things, but that they will do so "just on this occasion," thereby making the case worse than if they said nothing. But Daniel was not merely a guest, free to go away if he chose; he was a captive, subject to the orders of an absolute monarch, whose word was law, and who could with an inclination of the head send one who displeased him to execution. If ever a youth had cause for compromising his principles, Daniel had; but he did not. He knew what was right, and what would please God: and that was what he purposed to do, no matter what the consequences might be. Because of this loyalty to truth and right, God made the way clear for him. When God sends or allows one of His servants to get into a difficult place, where the truth is not regarded, it is in order that He may have a witness for the truth in that place.

Firmness of character, and loyalty to principle are esteemed even by the world. Daniel's course was such that he could not fail to be noted, and his prominence was only the advancement of truth. The fact that he made the request that he did, would call attention to him, and when it was seen that there was sound wisdom in his choice, the truth was exalted. The man who is recreant to the trust that God has placed in him in a critical time, is of no use. He is passed by as one of the common herd. And the man who feebly makes known what he calls his principles, but puts them aside "on this occasion," brings contempt on himself, and causes his associates to think that there is no power in truth. May the God of Daniel make us all as faithful as he was! This He will do if we are willing that He should, and have enough confidence in Him.

"Resisting the Devil" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

How thankful every Christian should be for this scripture; for it gives hope where otherwise there would be utter discouragement.

Strong as Satan is, the weakest Christian who steadfastly resists him need not be overcome; for it is beyond his power to force the human will.

Satan came to Christ with flattering and tempting offers at a time when the flesh was weak; but the Saviour's command, "Get thee hence," drove him

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from His presence. Immediately the record says, "Angels came and ministered unto Him."

Now when we are confronted with temptations, it lies with *us*, whether we or the devil shall overcome. When, in the strength of Christ, we resist the first enticing whisperings of the evil one, the first inclination to yield to his seductive arts, we are where we can say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

But a half-hearted resistance—simply a desire to do right, will not conquer Satan. The devil is persistent, and more so now than ever, "because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." He did not give up the warfare after just one defeat when he tempted the Saviour, neither will he be content with one failure to entrap

us. He is an untiring, vigilant, personal foe; and everybody ought to realise it, and then, having realised it, lay hold of that strength that is able to save to the uttermost.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Dwelling with Consuming Fire. Isa. xxxiii. 2-16"
The Present Truth 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXIII. 2-16, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

2. O Jehovah, have mercy on us; we have
trusted in Thee;

Be Thou our strength every morning;
Even our salvation in the time of distress.

3. From Thy terrible voice the peoples fled;
When Thou didst raise Thyself up, the na-
tions were dispersed.

4. But your spoil shall be gathered as the locust
gathereth;
As the caterpillar runneth to and fro, so shall
they run and seize it.

5. Jehovah is exalted; yea, He dwelleth on
high;
He hath filled Sion with judgment and
justice.

6. And wisdom and knowledge shall be the
stability of thy times,
The possession of continued salvation;
The fear of Jehovah, this shall be thy
treasure.

7. Behold, the mighty men raise a grievous cry;
The messengers of peace weep bitterly.

8. The highways are desolate; the traveler
ceaseth;
He hath broken the covenant; he hath re-
jected the offered cities;
Of men he maketh no account.

9. The land mourneth, it languisheth;
Libanus is put to shame, it withereth;
Sharon is become like the desert;
And Bashan and Carmel are stripped of
their beauty.

10. Now will I arise, saith Jehovah;
Now will I lift up Myself on high; now will
I be exalted.

11. Ye shall conceive chaff; ye shall bring forth
stubble;
And My Spirit, like fire, shall consume you.

12. And peoples shall be burned, as the lime is
burned;
As the thorns are cut up, and consumed in
the fire.

13. Hear, O ye that are afar off, My doings;
And acknowledge, O ye that are near, My
power.

14. The sinners are struck with dread;
Terror hath seized the hypocrites;
Who among us can abide this consuming
fire?
Who among us can abide these continued
burnings?

15. He who walketh in perfect righteousness, and
speaketh right things;
Who detesteth the lucre of oppression;
Who shaketh his hands from bribery;
Who stoppeth his ears to the proposal of
blood;
Who shutteth his eyes against the appearance
of evil.

16. His dwelling shall be in the high places;
The strongholds of the rocks shall be his
lofty fortress;
His bread shall be duly furnished; his waters
shall not fail.

MERCY TO THE TRUSTING

The prayer with which this lesson opens is not a vain one, for we are assured, "He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." Even in sinful man, the very fact of being trusted makes one kindly disposed; we cannot help being drawn to one who manifests confidence in us; it put us, as it were, on our honour. What then shall be said of God, whose nature is love, and who delights in mercy! He also cannot do otherwise than do kindness to them that trust Him.

EVERY MORNING NEW

This mercy endureth for ever, and is unlimited. We may draw on it at will. We are continually recipients of it, for "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed;" "they are new every morning." Lam. iii. 22, 23. Yet we ourselves determine to a great extent how much of it we will enjoy. We often claim but little, although the amount that we may enjoy is limited only by our willingness to

receive. Here is a prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit. "Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in Thee." Ps. xxxiii. 22. "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy." Verse 18. Whatever the Spirit of the Lord tells us to ask for, we may be sure will be granted, for when "we know not what we should pray for as we ought," the Spirit comes to our aid. Rom. viii. 26. Do you want unbounded mercy? then trust in the Lord without reservation.

THE MERCY OF THE DAYSPRING

"Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Yea, for the mercy of the Lord is strength. "As the heaven is high above the earth, so powerful is His mercy toward them that fear Him." Ps. ciii. 11. So as the Lord's mercies are new every morning, He is our strength every morning. Now "through the tender mercy of our God,

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whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us." He gives the knowledge of salvation unto His people "by the remission of their sins." Luke i. 77, 78. Therefore every morning's dawn is an assurance to us that God is merciful to our unrighteousness. As the light springs forth from the east, it should be a reminder to us of "the dayspring from on high." The beams of the morning sun are to remind us of "the Sun of righteousness," who arises with healing in His wings. Mal. iv. 2. So every morning God in His endless mercy gives us the assurance of forgiveness of sin, and of overcoming grace. "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Eccl. xi. 7.

THE LORD OUR ARM

The word rendered "strength," in verse 2, is literally "arm." So the inspired prayer is, "Be Thou our arm every morning." What a wonderful promise! for every inspired prayer is a promise of God. God's mercies are new every morning, and His mercy is strength; but He does more than merely to strengthen our arm: He Himself promises to become our arm. Truly, "they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13. God has "a mighty arm;" His hand is strong (Ps. lxxxix. 13); but think of the courage with which one could go forth to his work in the morning, who knew that God was not only at his right hand, but was indeed his arm. Well, this is only saying in another way what we learned in Isa. xii. 2: "The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation."

It will not be difficult for us to see how literally true this is, if we but stop to consider the conditions of our life. God is our life, and the length of our days. Deut. xxx. 20. We have no life in ourselves; everything comes from above. We eat the Word of God, even the very life of Christ, in the grains and fruits. Thus all the strength that anybody has is the strength of God; for He alone has power. He is the Almighty. All power in heaven and earth is Christ's. Our lack of strength,

therefore, is due to our failure to live by faith in God-to eat and drink the flesh and blood of Christ by faith. The prayer, "Be Thou our arm every morning," should be prayed every morning, and that would mean that we propose to live only by the Word of God, as, like the manna, it comes to us fresh every morning. Thus our every-day life becomes to us the pledge of eternal salvation. "While there's life there's hope," because life itself is hope.

"WISDOM IS A DEFENCE"

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times." Knowledge is indeed power, provided it is right knowledge. Wisdom is certainly power, for Christ, the wisdom of God, is the power of God. 1 Cor. i. 24. "Wisdom is a defense, and money is a defense; but the excellency [the advantage] of knowledge is that wisdom giveth life to them that have it." Eccl. vii. 12. How much stability does wisdom give?-Consider the heavens and the earth, the works of God, and you will see; for "He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion." Jer. x. 12. The last message, the last proclamation of the Gospel, calls upon men with a loud voice to give glory to God, "and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. xiv. 7. We are to recognise God in His works, to trust the power and the wisdom that are manifested in the tiniest flower or the smallest insect, as well as in the shining orbs of the sky. The knowledge of God is wisdom and strength and riches. Jer. ix. 23, 24. That wisdom which made and upholds them will also sustain us, if we trust it.

"That hand which bears creation up,
Shall guard His children well."

A VITAL QUESTION

"Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" One would naturally say that such a thing is impossible; but the Lord says that some can and will do it. Who are they? It is the one who walks in righteousness, even "the righteousness which is of God, by faith" (Phil. iii. 9), who speaks right things, who will have nothing to do with anything gained by fraud, who cannot be bribed, and who will not hear of bloody deeds, or look upon evil. Such an one can live in eternal fire, and be at ease amid the devouring flame.

NO FUTURE FOR THE WICKED

Take particular notice that only the righteous can dwell with everlasting, devouring fire. The wicked will suffer the vengeance of eternal fire,-they will be cast into the fire that never shall be quenched,-but they cannot abide there; the fire will consume them as chaff. "As thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire." There is therefore no eternity for the wicked. "The transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end [literally, "the future time"] of the wicked shall be cut

off." Ps. xxxvii. 38. So to the oft-repeated question, "Where will you spend eternity?" there can be but one answer. Those who spend it anywhere will spend it in the presence of God, dwelling in Him and His light; those who do not live in His righteousness, dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, will spend eternity nowhere. "They shall be as though they had not been." Obadiah 16. "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." Ps. xxxviii. 10. "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. iv. 1. Yet the righteous will dwell in that same fire in safety, and will bask in its grateful warmth throughout eternity.

THE FIRE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

By comparing Isa. xxxiii. 14-16 with Ps. xv. 1-5 and xxiv. 1-5, it will be seen that the people who dwell with the devouring fire and the everlasting burnings, are the same people that "ascend into the hill of the Lord," and abide in His tabernacle. Thus it must be that the everlasting, devouring fire is in the tabernacle, the secret place, of God. That is exactly the case. Let us collect a few texts of Scripture that show this.

Verse 11 of this chapter, according to Lowth's reading, says, "My Spirit, like fire, shall consume you." This agrees with Isa. xi. 4: "He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked," and 2 Thess. ii. 8, which says that the Lord shall consume "that wicked" "with the Spirit of His mouth."

"Our God is a consuming fire." Heb. xii. 29. He descended on Mount Sinai in fire (Ex. xix. 18), and spoke to the people "out of the midst of the fire." Deut. iv. 12; Verse 22. "From His right hand went a fiery law for them." Deut. xxxiii. 2.

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The Lord "sitteth between [or upon] the cherubim." Ps. xcix. 1. When He drove Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden, "He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Gen. iii. 24. This was the indication of His own presence; to this place Adam and his family came to worship, and from here Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.

The Lord reigns in righteousness, and "a fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about," and the hills melt like wax at the presence of the Lord. Ps. xcvii. 1-5. So when Christ comes, it is "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. i. 8. So at the last, when the wicked are all gathered together to do battle against God and His people, fire comes down from God out of heaven, and devours them. Rev. xx. 8, 9. In Isa. xxx. 33 we have read that "the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone" kindles Tophet.

God covers Himself with light as with a garment (Ps. civ. 2), and dwells in light that no man can approach unto. 1 Tim. vi. 16. When Isaiah saw the Lord, sitting on His throne, "the house was filled with smoke" (Isa. vi. 4.), indicating the

presence of fire; and this is still further indicated by the fact that the beings that stand above His throne are the "Seraphim," that is, "the burning ones." Remember also that God went before Israel, to guide them, in a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day.

In this Presence, amid this fire, the saints of God will dwell throughout eternity, but in order that they may do this, they must here become accustomed to the glory of God, of which the whole earth is full. By beholding it they become changed into the same image "from glory to glory," even by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor. iii. 18. The presence of the Lord consumes everything that is evil, and so their dwelling with God in this time fits them for His unveiled glory. The sunlight, which destroys disease germs, is a daily proof to us of the fact that the glory of God consumes evil. But those who refuse to recognise God as He is now revealed, will not be able to abide the day of His coming, and will be consumed.

So it is indeed eternal fire that consumes the wicked, but it is not fire specially created for that purpose, nor does the fact that it is eternal prove that those who suffer from it will live eternally, but just the opposite. All, both saints and sinners, will be in the midst of it, so that all will be treated alike, and God cannot be accused of injustice; but the nature of the individual will determine how the fire will affect him. Only those who have become transformed into the likeness of God, who have His life as their life, so that they are partakers of the Divine nature, sharers of the glory, will be able to come through the fire unscathed, and, in fact, to continue dwelling in it. They are of the same nature as the devouring flame, and hence can dwell in it and not be consumed. All others will perish. The mercy of God endures for ever, and that which perpetuates the existence of those who become assimilated to it, ends the existence of the rebellious. How pertinent, therefore, the message, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come."

"One-Sided Education" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Daily Chronicle* raises an interesting question as to what becomes of Senior Wranglers, and others who attain to high collegiate distinction in their early days.

There remains always the question what becomes of the Senior Wranglers who year after year are turned out of the University mill. Not many achieve the eminence of a Justice Romer or a Fletcher Moulton in after life, and more and more seem to shun active work in the world, and settle down to University tutorships and professorships. It is a curious thing; this comparative failure in life of the Senior Wrangler. Is it that in the tremendous struggle for this academic prize he tires his brain, and that, his training parlance, he has become "stale" for the race of life? Or is it that his perceptive and reflective powers have been brought to such a pitch of critical efficiency that he finds himself a thing apart, above and beyond the rest of mere ordinary humanity? Certain it is that relatively few succeed in the storm and stress of everyday life, and that many drift into the

leisurely existence of an academic career, and are rarely heard of outside University circles.

While it does not follow by any means that a quiet and obscure career is a useless one, it is well to observe that the intellectual development which produces a Senior Wrangler is supposed by the world to unfit a man for active life. This is another respect in which we need to learn from the Lord what true education is. Christ had such training of the mind as none other ever had, but it did not alienate His sympathies from men, or unfit Him for a life of active benevolence. When the world confesses that its best results are one-sided, those who want to be well-educated will do well to distrust worldly methods, and confide their training to One who, in the days of His flesh, proved Himself perfect in wisdom and knowledge.

"Temptation" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

We are commanded, "Watch and pray, that ye *enter* not into temptation." Christians would often be saved the ignominy of defeat in their battle with the devil, if their strength were only employed to *keep out* of temptation, instead of being employed in trying to resist when they have voluntarily placed themselves with its grasp.

"Little Folks. Lessons from the Trees" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

GOOD AND BAD FRUIT

All of you, dear children, are little trees that God has planted in His garden. You know that all trees are not alike, but we can tell the nature of the tree by the kind of fruit that it bears. "The tree is known by its *fruit*."

Jesus says, "He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." This fruit is shown in the life; if we abide in Jesus, His life will be in us and we shall live as He did when He was upon the earth Himself. So "he that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked."

If there is a tree in the orchard that you do not know the name of you will watch to see what kind of fruit grows on it, and then you will know. If it is an apple tree, it ought to have apples on it, and at the right time of year it will, if it is a good tree.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits, Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

If we are rooted in Jesus by faith, believing in and loving Him, we shall draw His sweet life into us continually, and give it out in good fruit. But God's Word tells us of another root, the root from which those bad trees spring that bring forth evil

fruit. Satan is this deadly root, the one from whom comes all the bad fruit that is found in the lives of the people in this world.

Very early in the history of the world we find these two kinds of fruits growing here. Look at the first two brothers who ever lived in this earth, and see what kind of fruit they bore.

Almost the first thing that we learn of Cain, the first-born son of Adam, is that he was jealous of his brother Abel. And this feeling of jealousy that he let Satan put into his heart, was the bad seed that brought forth the hatred that led him to kill Abel.

Envy, hatred, murder,-you will find these all mentioned in the list of bad fruits given in the fifth chapter of Galatians, contrasted with the good sweet fruits of the Spirit of Jesus of which we learned last week. Then what sort of a tree was Cain? From what root did he come? You will find the answer in the third chapter of the first epistle of John:

"In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil, Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning; that ye should love one another. Not as Cain, *who was of that wicked one*, and slew his brother."

Of all such tress which are of the wicked one, and so can bring forth only the bad fruit that comes from this root, we are told what the end will be:

"For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither *root* nor *branch*." Satan, the root, and his followers the branches, will be destroyed, and only those who abide in Jesus and bear good fruit will remain.

But of Abel, the brother of Cain, we are

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told that "by *faith*" he offered unto God an acceptable sacrifice. Faith, you will remember is one of the good fruits of the Spirit, and the one which brings to us all the other fruits, love, joy, peace, gentleness, and goodness. For it is faith which brings Christ Jesus to dwell in our hearts, so that His life may flow out in all these good fruits.

These two, Cain and Abel, were brothers, living in the same home, having the same teaching from their father, and the same blessings from God. Yet one became a bad tree bearing evil fruit, while the other was a good tree bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

Have you noticed how the life-giving sunlight shines on every part of the land, and how the gentle, refreshing rain falls all over the earth on all the trees and bushes and plants. Yet some will bring forth only thorns and thistles, briars and poison berries, while others will bear beautiful, fragrant blossoms and good useful fruit.

And it is just so in the Lord's garden where His human trees are planted. His gentle, loving, tender Spirit comes to each one, pleading with all, seeking an entrance into their hearts and drawing them to God. Those who yield to His movings, and open their hearts to His movings, and open their hearts to His

sweet influence, He will fill with good fruits, just as the rain and the sunshine load the trees with fruitfulness.

But those to whom He comes in vain, who harden their hearts by refusing to let Him in, will bring forth only thorns and briers and bad fruits, "whose end is to be burned."

Dear children, which will you be? You may choose now if, you will let the Spirit of Jesus fill you with His life and make you a good tree that brings forth only good fruit, or if you will grieve Him away, and quench the sweet sunshine of His presence, and so bear no fruit to His glory.

"I would not be a fruitless tree
With foliage o'er and o'er,
On which the Master's eye might find
But leaves and nothing more.
On which the Master's curse might fall
And wither root and branch and all.

"I would not be a fruitless branch
Of Christ, who is the Vine,
And cast abroad my deadly shade
Where sunlight ought to shine,-
The which the Husbandman must spurn
And cast into the fire to burn.

"I would not be a barren ground,
Refusing aught to yield
But choking thistles, thorns and tares,
A bad and worthless field,
From which the Lord would turn away
And leave it ever waste to lay."

"Example and Precept" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The religion of Jesus Christ is one of love. To be drawn to Him, one must first become acquainted with Him, and the only way many have of knowing Him is what they see of Him in His representatives. "I if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Many homes where only one member professes to know Jesus, would be far different if in that one the Saviour was really lifted up in his daily life. Example is better than precept.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

-Owing to a collision between two steamers on the river Oder, fifty persons were drowned.

-It is reported that the British Government has decided upon reinforcing the troops at the Cape to a total increase of 40,000.

-A submarine boat of a new type, to displace divers, has been successfully tested at Cherbourg. It sank to a depth of 100 feet, manned by three men.

-A new fuel has been invented by a German workmen, which is said to have three times the heating power of the best coal, while its cost is only one half.

-The Khalifa, with a force of 3,000 hunting men, has been raiding villages on the White River. Owing to the state of the river, the gun-boats can not get at him.

-The bodies of three men who lost the trail or their way to Klondyke have been discovered. One of them had been partly eaten. The pockets of all three men were full of gold.

-The voting on the Federation question in New South Wales has resulted in a decisive majority in its favour. This being so, the Federation will shortly be an accomplished fact.

-According to the report of the American Tract Society, that organization has distributed during the past year 1,380,892 copies of the Bible more than half of which were distributed to foreign lands.

-The United States is suffering from severe drought and excessively hot weather. Insect pests are destroying the wheat and small fruit crop in some parts to such an extent that the farmers will suffer heavily.

-Advices from East Africa show that the famine existing along the coast between Mombasa and Zanzibar is worse than any previous visitation, in some places the mortality being so great that many of the dead remained unburied.

-At the Caledonia Coal Mine, Cape Breten, Nova Scotia, there occurred on the 16th inst. a sad disaster. By an explosion 160 miners were entombed, eleven of whom were killed. A hundred horses that were in the mine perished.

-The King of Samoa has issued the following order; "No spirituous, vinous, or fermented liquors or intoxicating drinks whatever shall be sold, given, or offered to be bought or bargained by any Samoan or other islander resident in Samoa."

-No less than 5,000,000, people in eastern Russia are in a condition bordering on starvation. The chairman of a relief committee now at work among the distressed people writes that ?2,000,000 is needed to keep the people alive until the next harvest.

-Before 1873 it was death to a Japanese to receive Christian baptism, and a penal offence to sell an English Bible. Now there are forty thousand Protestant church members in Japan, and the Bible translated into Japanese is freely circulated.

-The difficulty in Samoa has been arranged for the present Malietoa, the English and American nominee for the throne, was declared to be king, but immediately abdicated in favour of the Commissioners, who have appointed a Provisional Government composed of the Consuls of England, Germany, and the United States. The arrangement seems to satisfy everybody.

-The Minister of Agriculture at the Cape has been visiting the native Kaffir districts, and says that one of the native agricultural shows he saw was much superior to a show by Europeans in the same district. Moreover, he found the natives expert at keeping their flocks clean and healthy. Altogether the Minister has come back greatly impressed with the possibilities of native farming, where, as in the Transkel, the native can be kept to himself.

-Another "patent medicine" exposure has been made in a Coroner's Court. The evidence showed that deceased had suffered from epileptic fits and was in

the habit of taking a mixture, the price of which was eleven shillings a bottle. The mixture was found to consist of chloroform water, with burnt sugar, and a few grains of bromide of potassium. The doctor who analysed it said that while the stuff might not be absolutely harmful, it could not do any good. It was worth about threepence a bottle.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

In the Peace Conference the Russians have brought forward the proposal, the Emperor's of course, that military war budgets and the effective strength of land forces shall remain as they are for a period of five years. This scheme is not to apply to colonial forces.

A recent number of the *Daily Mail* contained an article on the war strength of the Boers, showing the superiority of the Transvaal over British South Africa, in the matter of artillery. After giving the details, the writer continued: "No cause is more responsible for the insane war spirit that has lately come to a head among the young Boers than the knowledge that they possess this powerful artillery force."

Most naturally, yet people insist that the great war preparations by the Powers of Europe is the best guarantee of peace. But it does not work that way. Put a pistol into the hands of a boy, and he cannot be content without firing it off. Train a man as a pugilist, and he cannot rest without challenging somebody to a test of skill and strength. So when weapons of war are accumulated, and men are trained in their use, and the army is exalted as affording the most honourable career for a young man, a desire for war is inevitable.

One sin prepares the way for another, not only by the one who has committed it, but by somebody else as well. Nothing is more common than to hear a person seek to excuse some sin of his own by pointing out a similar, or what he considers a worse one, in some other person. For instance in the last number of the *Catholic Times* and *Catholic Opinion*, a writer, in defending betting on races, says:-

If it is wrong for a man to take part in a sweepstake or to make a wager on a horse race, what are we to think when, on entering a church bazaar, we are invited to the roulette table? And yet we find people who condemn the one and tolerate the other!

Well, what are we to think?-Why, that gambling in a church is just as sinful as gambling on a race course. The fallacy of the supposed argument lies in the supposition that the thing done in the church must be right.

Sin is sin, no matter where or by whom committed. "The church" cannot license or sanctify evil. It is no excuse for sin, to say, "Well, you do the same thing," even though it be the reprover who is doing it. John Bunyan was convicted of the sin of swearing by a reproof administered by one of his profane associates. The fact that somebody else does worse than we do, does not excuse us for doing wrong.

We hear much about the value of the theatre and the novel, in which the worst side of human nature and society is set forth, the claim being that they in some way educate people away from evil, the idea seeming to be that they are an exception to the rule that people are moulded into the fashion of that which they associate with and study. The real facts in the case are unconsciously set forth by the *Chronicle* in a review of a new novel, whose author, now dead, has succeeded in "making financial intrigue interesting." The reviewer says:-

It is not only in the hero, the daring and unscrupulous adventurer, that Mr. Frederic has interested us, but the very progress of the enterprise itself holds us breathless. We know well enough that it is all wrong-we realise fully that it is a piece of arrogant knavery, skillfully organised expedition of plunder-and yet we enthusiastically desire its success.

When such is the effect upon an educated man, with habits fully fired, what must be its effect on immature and untrained minds, who are not quick to discern right from wrong? A crop of rascals can be the only result of sowing such seed.

"Pagan Festivals in the Church" *The Present Truth* 15, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Church Family Newspaper* of the 16th June contains the following bit of information appropriate to the season:-

The near approach of Midsummer Day calls to mind the fact that that day and the preceding eve, now dedicated to St. John the Baptist, have been regarded as a holy season even from remote pagan times. There seems to be little doubt that one custom which was observed in our own time, and may be still in remote parts of Ireland and Scotland-that of lighting fires on the hills on Mid-summer Eve-has come down to us from the time when the sun-god Bel, or Baal, was worshipped in these islands. Such fires were common over the greater part of Europe-from the cold borders of Lapland to the Levant.

The same custom is continued till the present time in Norway and Sweden, where Midsummer Day is quite a holiday. In connection with the foregoing, the following from the same paper, with regard to Stonehenge in Salisbury Plain, fits very well:-

There is now no doubt of the character of this mighty ruin. Baal worship was at one time almost the universal religion, and this was one of the great temples. It was oriented so that the rays of the rising sun at midsummer should fall upon its sacred altar. It would be rash to guess its age for it may be older than the time of Elijah. Very little is known of the religious teaching of the Druids, but they were believed to have been Baal, that is, sun worshippers. . . . Sixty years ago I heard boys sing in the streets a song which is a portion of a Druidical hymn to the rising sun. In English it sounds like nonsense, and they had no idea what they were saying; it was a wonderful survival of pagan Britain, and Elijah may have heard this chorus, sung by the priests of Baal, three thousand years ago. In one or two remote parts of Britain, the custom of commemorating the triumph of the sun on June 21st still continues, with dancing and bonfires. The peasants are probably innocent of the origin of this custom.

Many people are observing pagan customs, wholly ignorant of their origin, thinking indeed that they are Christian because "the Church" has adopted them and sanctions them. How many realise the connection between Christmas and Midsummer Day? The observance of the latter is admitted to be solely of pagan origin. Sun worshippers celebrated it as the day of the greatest triumph of their god, the day on which the sun was longest and highest above the horizon. Just six months later, after a period of progressive daily decrease of sunshine, when the sun seemed to be going away, they celebrated the time of the beginning of its return, its birth, as they called it.

Now when the bishops of the early church, more anxious to secure a large following than to win men from the superstitions of paganism, saw how firmly the heathen were wedded to these sun-festivals, they resolved to adopt them, so that the heathen could profess Christianity without making any violent change in their habits and customs. But of course it would not do to continue them as emblems of the worship of the ruler of the day. So, remembering that Jesus was just six months younger than John the Baptist, they hit on the plan of calling Midsummer Day the birthday of John the Baptist, and the winter celebration the birthday of Jesus, quieting their consciences, if they had any conscience in the matter, by the fact that Jesus is "the Sun of righteousness." So we have Christmas, a purely heathen festival, firmly fixed in the Church. When so much of sun worship had been adopted, it was but a short step to the adoption of Sunday, "the venerable day of the sun."

July 6, 1899

"A Mystery Revealed" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Lord Kelvin, who is a recognised authority on Mathematics and Physical Science, has lately been tracing the probable history of the earth (according to geology) from its origin up to the time of the creation of living things. Of this latter he says:-

Mathematics and dynamics fall short when we contemplate the earth, fitted for life but lifeless, and try to imagine the commencement of life upon it. This did not take place by any action of chemistry, or electricity, or crystalline grouping of molecules, under the influences of force, or by any possible kind of fortuitous concourse of atoms. We must pause face to face with the mystery and miracle of the creation of living creatures.

When men leave the plain, simple statements of the Bible regarding creation, their reasonings and speculations soon get them into a labyrinth of mystery that mathematics or dynamics cannot solve. But there need be no guess-work as to how the earth came into existence, or of the "creation of living creatures." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast." Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9. It was God's word that

did it all-not only the heavens and the earth, but the creation of living creatures as well. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast after his kind; *and it was so.*" There it is, so plain, that a child can understand it, and the greatest worldly-wise man living knows no more of fact. Guessing is not fact, nor speculation truth.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'The King in His Beauty.' Isa. xxxiii. 17-24" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXX. 17-24, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

17. Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty;
They shall see thine own land far extended.

18. Thine heart shall reflect on the past terror:
Where is now the accomptant? where the
weigher of tribute?

Where is he that numbered the towers?

19. Thou shalt see no more that barbarous
people;

The people of the deep speech, which thou
couldst not hear;

And of a stammering tongue, which thou
couldst not understand.

20. Thou shalt see Sion, the city of our solemn
feasts;

Thine eyes shall behold Jerusalem,

The quiet habitation, the tabernacle un-
shaken;

Whose stakes shall not be plucked up for
ever,

And whose chords none shall be broken.

21. But the glorious name of Jehovah shall be
unto us

A place of confluent streams, of broad rivers;

Which no oared ship shall pass,

Neither shall any mighty vessel go through.

22. For Jehovah is our Judge; Jehovah is our
Lawgiver;

Jehovah is our King; He shall save us.

23. Thy sails are loose; they cannot make them
fast;

Thy mast is not firm; they cannot spread the
ensign.

Then shall a copious spoil be divided;

Even the lame shall seize the prey.

24. Neither shall the inhabitant say, I am disabled with sickness;
The people that dwell therein is freed from the punishment of their iniquity.

Before studying this lesson, do not fail to read again the first portion of the chapter, and recall the lesson we there learned. The people here addressed are those who are able to dwell with the devouring fire, and amid everlasting burnings. Only those who have been tried as by fire, and have stood the test, so that they can dwell in the fire, can behold Him who is Light itself, and who has His fire in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem. (See Isa. xxxi. 9.)

The picture here presented is beyond question that of the new earth, after the fire from the Lord has consumed sin and sinners; when only those are left, who can dwell with the consuming fire. It is the time when in all the earth "there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face." Rev. xxii. 3, 4. They shall see the King in His beauty, and they shall also see the land stretching far to northward and eastward and southward and westward, as God promised to Abraham. Gen. xiii. 14-17.

"And they shall see His face." "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." What is the beauty of the King, that to look upon it should fill up the measure of all happiness and bliss? Let us give it a little study, for when we know it, and can recognise it, we shall find the joy of life, even in this sin-cursed earth, marvellously increased.

That the Lord is beautiful, the verse before us states. The prophet Zechariah, seeing in vision the Lord saving His people like a flock, was moved to exclaim, "How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!" Zech. ix. 16, 17. His goodness and His beauty are linked together, for His beauty is the beauty of holiness. Now the goodness of God is infinite; it is the only goodness that there is in the universe; therefore the beauty of the Lord must be infinite. No tongue can possibly describe it; it must be seen to be appreciated, and seen not for a moment merely, but throughout eternity.

"Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary." Ps. xcvi. 6. Zion itself, His dwelling place, is "the perfection of beauty." Ps. i. 2. Even one of His creatures, the covering cherub that fell, is declared to have been "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." Eze. xxviii. 12-14. What then must the Creator be?

David "the sweet psalmist of Israel," the one by whom the Spirit of the Lord spake (2 Sam. xxiii. i. 2), spoke of the things touching the King, and he said, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into Thy lips." Ps. xlv. 1, 2. To the psalmist wonderful revelations of Divine things had been vouchsafed, and so great was his appreciation of the beauty of the Lord that he said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." Ps. xxvii. 5. To see the beauty of the Lord was his sole desire, and that is to be the reward of the righteous.

"The heavens declare the glory of God." Ps. xix. 1. They tell of His glory by revealing it in their shining; for He has set His glory "upon the heavens." Ps. viii.

1, R.V. Remember that everything exists only by the power of the life of God. All things were created by the Word of God, and the Word is life. "In Him

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all things consist." Col. i. 17. "We are His offspring" (Acts xvii. 28), but we are not the only products of His Being. The mountains and hills were "brought forth" by Him who from everlasting to everlasting is God. Ps. xc. 1, 2. All are familiar with the term, "brought forth," so that it is scarcely necessary to say that in the Hebrew the word is plainly "born," and several translations have the text, "before the mountains were born."

The everlasting power and Divinity of God are clearly seen in the things that are made. Rom. i. 20. The Father impresses His image on His offspring. So "He hath made everything beautiful in its time." Eccl. iii. 11. "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not He correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not He know?" Ps. xciv. 9, 10. In like manner we may continue, "He that hath clothed the heavens and the earth with beauty, and hath made all things beautiful, shall not He be beautiful?"

All these things show us that the beauty that we see in created things is but the reflection or the reproduction of the beauty of the Creator. Just as there is no goodness but from the Lord, so there is no beauty except that which comes from Him. Take all the varied tints of all the beautiful flowers on earth (remember that, beautiful as they are, they are under the curse, and are but the shadow of what they were in the beginning, and of what they will be in the restoration), and add to these the richness of the meadows and the forest, and to this still the glory of the rainbow, and the dazzling splendour of the clouds kissed by the setting sun; let the telescope reveal to your admiring gaze a few of the star-clusters that shine with light of every colour, and remember that when the most powerful telescope and the art of the photographer have revealed to us the presence of countless millions of suns that are invisible to the naked eye, awing us with glimpses of measureless space, "these are but the outskirts of His ways," and a very small whisper of His power. Job xxvi. 14. Therefore all these things reveal to us only a very small portion of the beauty of the face of the Lord. Think of all the beauty in earth and sea and the heavens, even the heaven of heavens, concentrated into one single Presence, and you have the measureless measure of the beauty of the Lord. And all this wondrous beauty the saints of God will be privileged to gaze upon, and they will be made able to endure the sight! Truly, the face of God will be enough to satisfy anyone. No wonder the psalmist exclaimed, "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." Ps. xvii. 15.

What is the practical benefit of this study? Is it merely to inspire in us a desire to see that glorious sight, and thus stir us up to righteousness? Partly, but that is not by any means all. The chief thing is to let us know the possibilities set before us even in this life, as expressed in the inspired prayer, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Ps. xc. 17. If we but allow our hearts to be the sanctuary of the living God, then He that dwells between the cherubim will "shine forth." Ps. lxxx. 1. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is

risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Isa. ix. 1, 2. The beauty of the Lord is the beauty of holiness, and just as He has laid up great goodness for them that trust in Him before the sons of men (Ps. xxxi. 19), so does He impart to them His beauty. The world will not recognise it, for they did not desire the beauty of the Lord when they saw Him; their standard of beauty is not the Lord's standard; nevertheless the beauty is present whenever righteousness is present; and it is beauty that will never fade. That is the true test of beauty. By beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, we become changed into the same image, even in this life, and are thus prepared for the full revelation of the beauty of the world to come, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun.

Even now may we behold the beauty of the Lord, if our eyes are but anointed by the Spirit. In all His works, we may see the shining of His face. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance." Ps. lxxxix. 15. So we may ever dwell in the house of the Lord; and ever behold the shining of His glorious face. "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be still praising Thee." Likewise in eternity, the saints, although privileged to roam throughout the entire universe, will always know themselves to be in the Presence of the King, everywhere beholding the beauty of His face. With this truth ever in our minds, we may realise to the full all that is contained in the expression "living near to the Lord."

Verses 18-20 make still more plain the fact that the time of which we are now studying is that after the wicked who have surrounded the camp of the saints, and the Beloved City, have been devoured by the fire from heaven. Rev. xx. 9. "Thine heart shall reflect on the past terror," but only to magnify the wondrous power and mercy of the Lord. Where now are those who counted the towers, and who in the madness of wickedness had devoted the holy city to destruction? No more shall they be seen, for they are as though they had not been. Jerusalem, instead of falling a prey to them, as they had planned, will be seen as "the quiet habitation, the tabernacle unshaken, whose stakes shall not be plucked up for ever, and of whose chords none shall be broken."

"But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." Is this literally true?—Most certainly; for God is the Fountain of living waters." Jer. ii. 13. From Himself flows the river of water of life—His own life flowing forth for the everlasting refreshment of His people. But this is true now for those who have eyes to see spiritual things, and who know the reality of them. It is from the river of God that this earth is watered. Ps. lxxv. 9. It is full of water, even to overflowing, and never runs dry. The rain that falls from heaven to enrich the earth, is from that river. Consequently the streams of water on this earth are but branches of the same river. In the flowing streams and the waves of the sea we may see the life of God; then will it be no more a mere figure of speech that our peace shall be as a river, and our righteousness as the waves of the sea. Dwelling in the house of the Lord, we shall constantly see His face, and drink of the river of His pleasure.

Jehovah is our Judge, our King, and our Lawgiver, and He is this by right, because He will save us. Only He who can save has the right to give laws, and only to Him should we hearken. Our daily prayer

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is, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." That means that we should now regard the Lord as our King just the same as though we were now in heaven. He is the only rightful King; our part is to recognise His right to rule over us.

"And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick," or, as Lowth has it, "I am disabled with sickness." That will be a glorious change from this present state. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Rev. xxi. 4.

Why will there be no more sickness in that land?—The reason is given in the text: "The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." God, who forgives all iniquities also heals all diseases, and the healing is because of the forgiveness—a consequence of it. Few people realise the fulness of the blessing of forgiveness, and that is the reason so many Christians say that there is a much higher state in the Christian life than that of justification. They think that to live in the consciousness of sins forgiven is but a trifle compared with the blessings that God has for those who fully trust Him. But to live in the constant knowledge of sins forgiven is the highest possible for any creature. It is to live in fellowship with God. 1 John i. 7. Our sins are forgiven by the substitution of the righteousness of Christ, which means that it is by God's giving us His life instead of ours. That means a complete transformation.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The life of Christ, the stream from the throne of God, constantly flowing through us, and being our sole source of life, takes sin away. But when the Lord gives us His life, He gives us the whole of it. He gives us Himself, and He is not divided. Therefore He gives us His health as well as His righteousness. It is just as easy for the Lord to make a man perfectly whole as to forgive his sins, for it is all done by the same life. Indeed, if we but knew the extent of the gift of the righteousness which takes away sin, we should always take with it the healing of our bodies; it is ours, if we will but receive it.

Why is it that so many people who know the Lord as the One who forgives all their iniquities do not experience the blessings of health?—Simply because they do not understand and comply with the conditions. They know that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," and so they confess their sins, and do not expect to continue them. They would not expect to be forgiven if they were not willing to cease from sinning. Well now, why not be as reasonable with regard to health? There are conditions of life and health. No one would expect the Lord to keep him from being burned, if he persisted in going into the fire. Even so we need not expect the Lord to keep us in health if we continually disregard the laws of health, any more than we should expect forgiveness if we ignored the ten commandments. God has given us food, drink, air, rest, and clothing, to keep us in health. If we

eat and drink only the things that He has indicated as good for us, and in proper measure, allow our lungs the utmost quantity of the purest air, and do not contaminate it with vile tobacco poison, and if we have the right relation between labour and rest, then, trusting in the Lord, we may expect strength sufficient for all our duties, so that even in this life we need not say, "I am disabled with sickness." This is practical godliness, which is profitable for this life as well as for that which is to come.

"Warlike Tendencies" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Every military country in Europe has its "war party," and it is from this party that most of the perils which threaten peace are supposed to come. If there is a war party in England, it is comparatively inactive, but the continually increasing proportion of the national revenue which is being applied in military and naval directions, must have the effect of strengthening warlike tendencies. It is now no unusual thing to have prominent military chiefs referring to the necessity for some means of forcibly recruiting our army. Colonel Mathias of the Gordon Highlanders, said it few days ago,-

As the commander of a regiment he knew there was great difficulty in getting man. They had to compete with the Labour market, and noises sufficient wages were offered, the army could not compete with Labour. In consequence of this state of things the country was within measurable distance of conscription. If men would not serve their country willingly, they would have to do it under compulsion. Every year England was painting the map redder and redder, and men must be found to defend her possessions.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. In the Fiery Furnace. Dan. iii. 14-28" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

(Dan. iii. 14-28.)

It seemed like a great thing for four young men, captives, to presume to know more about what was best for them than all the king's wise men, and a very bold thing for them to mark out a course for themselves, entirely different from the one that had been planned for them; but in the chapter before us we have a test of faith and loyalty that was much stronger. It was, however, only the natural sequence of the first test. If these young men had not been true to principle in the first instance, they would not have stood in this trying time. The germ of all their faithfulness was in that question of eating and drinking. If any man will but eat and drink just as he ought to, and in the fear of God, he will not fail in anything else.

Nebuchadnezzar the king had made an image of gold, exceeding great and high, and set it up in the plain of Dura, where he assembled all the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, and the treasurers, the counsellors, and the sheriffs,

and all the rulers of the provinces, in fact, all the great men in his kingdom, which meant all the great men of the whole world, for that was the extent of his kingdom. See Dan. ii. 37, 38. Daniel's three companions were there, for the king had set them over the affairs of the province of Babylon. Chap. ii. 49. Where Daniel himself was, we are not told, as he does not appear at all in this affair; but we may be sure that he was not present, for if he had been there he would have stood for the truth as sturdily as did his companions. This we know from his record.

When all were assembled, the herald cried aloud, "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up. And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning, fiery furnace." Dan. iii. 4-6. You may be sure that the people in general needed no second bidding, after that decree was announced. "At that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up." It was a gorgeous spectacle, and one calculated to dazzle the senses. Then the music must have been most ravishing and enchanting; people would almost involuntarily be bewitched by its charm into falling down and worshipping. It was so easy and natural to follow the crowd of great men, even if there had not been hanging over their heads that fearful threat to the disobedient.

But there were three men in that vast company who dared be peculiar, and who were not afraid to do differently from all the rest of the world. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, for so had Daniel's three companions been named by the king, stood upright while all the rest fell prostrate. You may be sure that they did not like to be peculiar, that they did not stand up merely for the sake of attracting attention to themselves. It was very dangerous at that time for one to attract attention to himself. Brave men are never foolhardy. These men were not acting from a spirit of bravado, but from principle. They were not obstinate, but they could differ, because they knew the commandment of the God of heaven, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," and, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them." Ex. xx. 3-5. This command is from the King of kings, and takes precedence of any command made by any king on earth. Disregard of Nebuchadnezzar's decree was therefore not disobedience, but the most perfect obedience. Both the king and his Hebrew captives were subjects of the King of the universe, and the fact that the king was disloyal did not absolve them from their duty.

The king, however, had forgotten his obligation to his Maker, and assumed that he was absolute ruler over the souls as well as over the bodies of men. Accordingly he was in a great rage and fury when the word was brought to him that three men, and captive Jews at that, had dared ignore his commandment.

Yet there were noble traits in Nebuchadnezzar character, and even in his idolatrous pride and the rage of offended dignity, he would not act hastily. So he generously offered the Hebrews another trial. He might, according to the decree, have sent them at once to execution; but he did not. He would overlook this act of defiance to his authority if at the second sounding of the musical instruments they would fall down and worship the image. It is quite likely that the king also thought that there must have been some misunderstanding; for he could scarcely conceive that any one would deliberately disregard his decree, when such awful consequences of disobedience were staring them in the face.

But there was no misunderstanding. The three men had not acted without full knowledge of what they were doing, and they told the king that they did not need another trial. They could answer him now as well as later, that they would not worship his image. Listen to their bold language: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Dan. iii. 16-18. There was no doubt nor hesitancy in their answer. They were very prompt and bold, but calm and deliberate. They had confidence in God's power to deliver them; but even if He should not see fit to save them from the furnace of fire, that would make no difference. They were not serving the Lord for personal gain. They did not have the notion that God was under obligation to give them an easy time if they served Him, as so many have. There are very many who would be willing to serve the Lord, if He would insure them against hardships; and there are very many professed ministers of the Gospel, and religious teachers, who are inculcating this notion, and teaching the people that they cannot be expected to do what they think is right unless the way is made so easy that there will be no possibility of their suffering. We see this in the demand for Sunday laws, in order that men may be free to keep the day which they hold to be the Sabbath. They profess to believe that God's law demands Sunday observance; yet by making pleas for human laws restraining employers from requiring labour on that day, they virtually say that men do not need to serve the Lord unless everybody also does, or if men in high positions are against it.

There was no mistaking the answer of the Hebrews. Such a seeming defiance of his authority the king was not accustomed to, and he could not endure it. So he commanded that the rebellious men should forthwith be carried to execution. Such a flagrant disregard of authority must receive signal punishment, so that all others might take warning, and orders were given that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than usual. Then the three men were bound in their mantles, their turbans, their hose, and all their other garments, just as they stood, and were cast into the superheated furnace. So hot was the furnace that the men who were appointed to cast the captives in were killed in the act. What must have been the terrible fate of the men who were cast into it bound in all their inflammable clothing?

A wonder took place. The executioners were slain, and the condemned men were set at liberty, and that by the agent of death. Such a thing was never known before.

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Nebuchadnezzar himself was the first to notice it. He rose up in haste and amazement, and said unto his counsellors, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" He can hardly trust his own senses, and seeks confirmation of what he sees with his own eyes. "They answered and said, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Only their bonds were loosed. Thus would God demonstrate to all the world that His servants are free men.

In the face of this record, how weak and foolish sound the excuses sometimes made by men, for not serving the Lord. "I could not live, if I should keep the commandments." Well, the three Hebrews lived, and no one will ever be placed in a more desperate situation than they were. Men sometimes shrink from going as missionaries to some heathen land, because it is so hot there, but no one can ever get into a hotter place on this earth than those men were in; yet they lived. Their experience demonstrates that there is no place where men cannot live and prosper if God is with them. They were better off after they went into the furnace than they were before.

In their case we see the fulfilment of Christ's words, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. xxviii. 20. His name is I AM, therefore He says, "When thou passest through the waters, I am with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isa. xliii. 2. There was not so much as the smell of fire on their garments. A fiery furnace can become a pleasure garden, where men can walk to and fro at their ease, if the Lord be with them. They who walk righteously, and speak uprightly, can dwell with the devouring fire, and even with "everlasting burnings." Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15.

Although these three men were nominally captives, they were the most powerful men in the entire kingdom, not excepting the king himself; and the king was the first to acknowledge the fact. "Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, *and have changed the king's word*, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God." Then compare that with the words of the Apostle Paul: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Rom. vi. 12, 13. There was not defiance of man, but yielding to God. In yielding was their strength, for they trusted in the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength.

It would have been an easy matter for those men to compromise with their consciences, by saying, "We can fall on our faces, so as not to attract attention to ourselves, and thus incur the penalty, but we need not worship the image. We

can be calling on God in our hearts." No, it would not have been an easy matter for *those* men to reason in that way, but it comes very natural to a great many. What a failure their whole lives would have been if they had. What a glorious opportunity they would have missed. "Oh, yes; we could stand out for the truth as well as they did, if we were sure that God would interfere to save us." Exactly; we could serve the Lord if we had confidence in Him, and could trust Him. The difficulty is that everything is so commonplace when we are called upon to witness for the Lord. The way looks so shut up, that we just dare not go ahead. But those men had no assurance that they would not be burned alive. To all appearances that was the last of them. But that made no difference; they would serve the Lord whatever happened, and God honoured them in their honouring Him. The same God lives to-day, and He has the same power to deliver. His law also is just as holy as it was then. Not one jot of its requirements has been relaxed. Men have set it at naught, and kings and rulers have enacted laws contrary to it, and even requiring its transgression, as, for instance, the laws requiring observance of Sunday instead of the Sabbath, and also laws requiring men to kill their fellow-men; and thousands of professed Christians think that these human laws absolve them from their duty to the law of God. But since God has not changed, things are in exactly the same condition that they were when Nebuchadnezzar set up his image in the plain of Dura, and commanded all men to fall down before it. Where are the men who will be faithful even unto death?

"Whited Sepulchres" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

When Christ was here on earth, He had a good deal to say about people who "say and do not." These He likened to a whited sepulchre, filled with dead men's bones. This at first thought seems like an extreme comparison, but it is not altogether a figure of speech. How often it is that people make a profession of religion, unite with the church, and to outward appearance pass as God's children, while at the same time sin reigns within the heart. Then when God looks upon such an individual, professing to be what he is not, He sees beyond the exterior, and takes cognizance of the thoughts and intents of the heart. There He sees sin; but sin is death. So instead of the body of that person being the temple of the Holy Ghost, it is really a sepulchre, filled with dead men's bones.

God does not desire that we should be sepulchres filled with death, but living temples filled with His Spirit. So instead of drawing over our iniquity a covering that will make us appear outwardly to be righteous, God would have us to be covered with the covering of His Spirit, that will cleanse from all iniquity and sin.

"Choosing" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Men were created free moral agents, with the power and privilege of choice; and God calls upon them to choose between right and wrong, life and death. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Josh. xxiv. 15. "Choose life that both thou and thy seed may live." Deut. xxx. 19. There is nothing arbitrary about it-

every one is left free to choose as he sees fit, but it makes a great difference what that choice is, for on it hang eternal consequences.

When Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, he made a choice that he afterwards regretted; and even though he sought it with tears, there was no place found for repentance.

When the strife between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot became so great that a separation was necessary, Lot was given the first choice; and because the plain of Jordan was "well watered," he chose that, and "pitched his tent toward Sodom." His choice was a selfish one, to satisfy present desires; and for a time it appeared outwardly that it was a wise one, so far as worldly success was concerned, but in the end it proved to be the very worst he could have made, as he lost all of his worldly possessions, and escaped from the doomed city only with his life.

Not so with Moses. Although heir to the throne of Egypt, with every possible worldly prospect before him, he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Ah, there is the secret. It is to look beyond the present. The wise man said, "Walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Eccl. xi. 9.

So many to-day are choosing this world, the pleasures and benefits that it can give, but the choice is a poor one, for all the world can give is only transitory and unsatisfactory. But he who chooses the world to come, like Mary "hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away.

"Little Folks. Summer Morning" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Some time ago we had a little talk together about the equinox, at the time of the Vernal or Spring Equinox. This, you may remember, is the time, about the end of March, when the days and nights are of equal length all over the world.

Since then the days on our part of the globe have been growing longer and warmer, because we have been turning nearer and nearer to the sun. And now we have passed "midsummer day," or what is called the "summer solstice." This time, about June 21, is called the "solstice" from two Latin words meaning "the sun," and "to stand," because at this time the sun seems to stand still for a little while, to make a pause, and remain for a short time at the same point in the heavens, before we pass further away from it again to the time of short days and nights.

It is at the time of the summer solstice that we get the longest and warmest days in all the year. Perhaps you do not know how long you have long before the daylight has faded.

Only two or three hours of darkness, and then the soft dawn of the sweet summer morning-the smiles of God breaking again over the earth in the returning

sunlight, causes all nature to rejoice and smile back at Him in return. For you know that the light of the sun is all the reflection of the glorious light shining from the beautiful face of Jesus, who is "the Light of the world."

See how *joyfully* everything greets Him. The clouds blush beautiful colour. The flowers open their petals and pour forth their sweetest fragrance, as the sunlight kisses the dew from their leaves and it is carried away again in the form of vapours to refresh other thirsty plants perhaps thousands of miles away.

The sweet birds one by one awake; and begin the day with a glad song of praise to the Light of the world who has brought them again from their slumbers. First there is a faint, drowsy chirp or twitter here and there, which swells as others add their notes to a full chorus of joyful praise.

All this is going on while you, little children, are peacefully sleeping in your beds in the early morning hours of these glad summer days. But at last you too awake, and how do *you* greet Him? God loves the flowers, the birds, and all His other works that praise Him. But, oh, there is something which He loves much more, for which He listens much more eagerly, and that to hear His children praise Him, to see their hearts turning to Him in love and thankfulness for all His loving care for them.

Then, dear children, as you awake each morning and see "His smile in the glad sunshine," will not you too give Him smiles of love and songs of praise, and offer to Him the sweet incense of worship, giving yourselves to Him who "giveth you richly all things to enjoy."

Think how much it has cost Him to do this—to give to you life and all them blessings. He gave up His own life, poured it out upon the cross, so that He might be able to give life to you. He wants to give you life and all the blessings of His love, not for a few years only, but "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have *everlasting* life."

As you think of the great love of God and all His goodness to you, as you learn to take all these gifts of His love as coming to you direct from your loving Father in Heaven, you will long to see His face, and to live for ever in the light of His countenance, and sing His praises.

Think how it pleased the dear Saviour when the little children of Jerusalem owned Him so their King and shouted His praises. To those who rebuked them for their He said, "Have you never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected praise?"

And He is "the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Just as much now as then He listens for and loves the praises of His little ones.

An old philosopher once said that the learned manners from the mannerly, by doing exactly opposite to what he saw others do that was disagreeable to him.

"Tea-Drinking" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

The poisonous effects of tea were lately illustrated in a case which was reported in all the papers.

By drinking thirty cups of tea daily a New York man reduced himself to such weakness that he had to undergo treatment in a hospital. The over-indulgence, it was found, had destroyed six out of every seven of the corpuscles of the blood, rendering the life-fluid thin and powerless.

The fact that a man could drink so many cups of tea daily shows that there is nothing nutritious in tea. If there were, a sense of satisfaction would take away the desire for more. Now that it is proved what is the effect of tea-drinking in a large scale, tea-drinkers may know how the stimulant is affecting them, in proportion to the amount they consume.

Very few people will admit that they are slaves to the craving for tea. A simple way of ascertaining whether this is so, is to leave off using it. If no inconvenience is caused, they should be thankful to have escaped the influence of the stimulant, and adopt a healthier beverage. If they suffer any inconvenience from its disuse, they may certainly know that it is high time to leave it alone.

While it is sometimes true, because of disordered digestions and other personal considerations, in the case even of wholesome articles of diet, that "what is one man's food is another's poison," it is always true of nervous stimulants like tea and coffee, which are harmful in themselves, that if they poison one man they will have the same effect upon another.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

-About a million students leave school in India every year, 926,000 of whom are utterly ignorant of Christian truth.

-There is great discontent in Spain over the proposed taxes for increased fortifications. Riots have taken place, attended by bloodshed.

-The United States Government is reported to be making preparations for the enlistment of nine regiments of volunteers for service in the Philippines.

-All convicts under sentence of penal servitude who have not passed the third standard will be kept from labour for one hour daily until they are sufficiently educated to pass.

-Schemes for the arrest of armaments and the disuse of Dum-dum bullets, and similar implements of warfare, have been laid before the Peace Conference, but do not meet with general support.

-A National Animals' Hospital is to be established in London. It will be mainly intended for the benefit of animals maimed in the streets. Ambulances will be provided for the conveyance of such animals.

-A new Government has been formed in Paris, and has succeeded in obtaining a vote of confidence by a majority of twenty-six. The reform of military abuses is the ambition, and will probably prove the downfall, of the new Ministry.

-Bishop Tugwell, who was arrested on a criminal charge of libel for saying that most of the deaths among white men on the West Coast of Africa, were due to excessive use of alcohol, has been released. The prosecution was abandoned.

-Organ-grinders in Verviers, Belgium, are by law compelled to appear every morning before the police superintendent and play their instruments. The organs

which chance to be out of tune must be set in order before a licence to play on the street will be granted.

-The largest room in the world, under one roof and unbroken by pillars, is at St. Petersburg. It is 620 ft. long by 160 in breadth. By daylight it is used for military displays, and a whole battalion can completely manoeuvre in it. By night 20,000 wax tapers give it a beautiful appearance. The roof is a single arch of iron.

-A labour war is raging in Denmark. It began in an insignificant dispute over joiners' wages, but there are now 40,000 men locked out, and the federated employers threaten to shut out another 40,000 unless their terms are accepted. There are only 100,000 industrial workers in the whole country, so that the light will involve the whole population unless it is quickly brought to a termination.

-The United States Navy Department is making experiments with a shell which bursts into flame when it touches the water. Such an article has been known to pyrotechnists from the days of Troy, but this is a new thing nevertheless. It is loaded with carbide, and on contact with water an electric wire ignites the gas at a burner. The object is to cast a brilliant light over the sea so as to expose the whereabouts of an enemy's ships or batteries. The inventor claims that the flame cannot be extinguished by wind, even though it should blow a gale.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

The Peace Conference having rejected the Czar's disarmament scheme, the *Daily Mail* says:-

The Peace Conference has proved a failure. It was foreseen from the first that there would be immense difficulty in arriving at any basis of reduction in armaments. It would be practically impossible to prevent one Power secretly spending more than its neighbours, or drilling larger forces, where the motive to snatch an advantage was so strong. No Power believes in its neighbours, and that is why Europe is an armed camp to-day.

That is the exact truth. What is the remedy?-There is only one thing that can cast out fear and distrust, and that is perfect love-the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. In Christ alone is there peace, in the world is strife and war. The only preparation for peace is the Gospel of Christ.

One of the charges against ancient Israel was that they said to their seers, "See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things."

Many to-day, rather than receive an unwelcome truth, deliberately blind their eyes and close their ears to dangers and warnings, and so walk into the trap the devil has set for their destruction. Their hearts rebel against the words of truth, preferring rather to hear "smooth" words-slippery things-something that will not lodge in the heart and prick the conscience. Such are in "slippery places."

God would deal faithfully with people. His word is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. So the

word that comes to every soul means either life or death. The truth divides between those who really know God and those who do not. It is because truth and error are so mixed together that the message must be a cutting one, that it is given in love. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Let us welcome His instruction, and follow the truth to have its sanctifying effect on our hearts, and fit us for His kingdom.

Many professed Christians rally round the creed of their church rather than the Word of God. New truth may come to them, and they see it, but rather than devise their creed, they reject it. But this is not as it should be. No man can know all the truth of God. The path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Truth is progressive. Like a tree it grows and expands, and when a new truth appears, he whose heart is open to receive truth, will recognise it as another branch of the tree, and thank God for it.

In a notice of Archbishop Ireland's visit to this country, the *Catholic Times* takes occasion to speak of the progress which the Roman Catholic church had made in the United States of America, under the leadership of such prelates as Archbishop Ireland, who are "foremost in serving the interests of the State." As showing the popularity of "the church" in that country the *Times* says: "To-day the voice of the Catholics is recognised as a potent factor in the affairs of the nation, and there is no public man whose words command more general attention than those of the Archbishop of St. Paul." This is undoubtedly the truth. The President of the United States is a Presbyterian, but Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop Ireland, who hold no office, have more influence with him than any other man in the country. It will doubtless not be long before the affairs of that country will be largely directed from the Vatican.

"Investigating Spiritualism" *The Present Truth* 15, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

The New York *Independent*, which is one of the oldest and most influential religious journals in the United States, has announced its sympathy with Spiritualism. In an editorial entitled, "May Spiritualism be Investigated?" it boldly takes the position that it should be, and commends the labours of the Harvard professors, who have through their investigations become quite converted to Spiritualism. The editor, after stating the almost universal belief in "the continued existence after death of the spirits of human beings," says: "It no longer seems as absurd to imagine that we may possibly communicate with the spirits of the dead as it did twenty years ago." The *Independent*, therefore, pronounces the investigation of Spiritualism not only legitimate, but necessary.

"Well isn't it so? Isn't it lawful and necessary to investigate all things?"

"Certainly not?"

"But doesn't the Bible tell us to prove all things?"

Yes, it does; but that does not justify every man in drinking all the whiskey he caught hold of, to see if it is really intoxicating. It doesn't warrant a man in putting his hand in a viper's nest, to see if its bite is fatal. There are different ways of investigating things. A man may most thoroughly investigate Spiritualism without

ever coming in contact with a medium; and that is the only safe way of investing it.

God's word is light. It supplies the test by which everything is to be tried. It tells us to "try the spirits," but does not tell us to go and experiment with them. "To the law, and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is cause there is no light in them." The man who has never attended a Spiritualist meeting, nor conversed with a medium, but who knows God's Word, has a far better understanding of it than the wisest professor in the world can have, who into the midst of it to investigate it, without the Bible. The man who stands at the mouth of a cave and flashes a search light in, will learn far more of its interior than the man will who goes into its murky recesses without a light.

One thing is sufficient to condemn Spiritualism utterly, and that is that it denies the very foundation of the Gospel life only in the cross of Christ. It not only denies that, but is itself a denial of the very foundation of Spiritualism is the teaching that every man has life in himself, regardless of Christ. In fact, Spiritualism is a repudiation of the atoning blood of Christ. So Christianity and Spiritualism are fundamentally opposed. They are as opposite as light and darkness. We can well understand how men of the world, who know not Christ, can talk about investigating Spiritualism; but for those who profess His name, and who have known something of His saving power; to recommend an investigation of it, indicates a terrible departure from the faith. They would be shocked at the proposal to investigate Paganism with a possible acceptance of it, and yet a knowledge of the first principles of the Gospel is sufficient to teach anybody that Spiritualism is only Paganism.

"Enter not into the path of the wicked; and walk not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it; turn from it, and pass on."

July 13, 1899

"The Handwriting on the Wall. Dan. v. 17-31" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

The portion of Scripture covered by this lesson is but the closing part of a most interesting and instructive history, and therefore we must first give some attention to what precedes. Nebuchadnezzar, who had brought Babylon to the highest pitch of grandeur and greatness, was dead, and his son Nabonadius, who had associated with himself Belshazzar his son, was ruling in his stead. The third chapter of Daniel, which we have already studied, and also the second, show us something of how God had dealt with Babylon, and how He had revealed Himself to the king. The fourth chapter, which is passed by in these lessons, recounts Nebuchadnezzar's pride and its abasement, and gives his humble acknowledgment of his sin and of the goodness and greatness of God. The time of the fifth chapter is nearly seventy years later than that of the first.

A BLASPHEMOUS ORGY

At the time when the events of this chapter occurred, Babylon had been besieged by Cyrus, king of Persia, commanding the combined forces of Media and Persia, for about a year. As yet nothing decisive had been accomplished. The walls of Babylon were very thick and high, and a deep and wide moat surrounded the city. The soldiers of Cyrus had been engaged in cutting a canal round one side of the city, extending from a point on the Euphrates River above the city to a point below, as it passed through the city; but the Babylonians, feeling secure in their stronghold, with provisions laid up for many years, laughed at this sort of warfare, and gave themselves no concern. As if to emphasise their unconcern, the people were this night celebrating with unusual hilarity a heathen festival. The king made a special feast to a thousand of his lords, drinking himself drunk in their presence, while they all "praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." The vessels of the house of God were brought out, and the king's courtiers and courtesans drank wine out of them, thus wantonly insulting the God of heaven. It was a wild scene of licentious carousing, in which the king, who felt himself superior to the Majesty of the universe, allowed himself to be no true king, but a mere thing lower than the brutes.

COWARDICE OF BLASPHEMERS

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." Dan. v. 5, 6.

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The king's conscience made a coward of him. He could boldly blaspheme the God of heaven as long as He kept silence, but when God began to manifest Himself in a special manner, he trembled like a leaf in the wind. He had fancied himself a king, and could boast of his power, believing all the flatteries of his princes; but now he was revealed before them as a miserable, shrinking, trembling thing. Where was now his confidence in the gods which he had been praising?

VAIN CONFIDENCE

"The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then came in all the king's wise men; but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished." Dan. v. 7-9. But the king's wise men were not familiar with the handwriting of God. They had not studied in His school. They had so long worshipped the work of their own hands (Isa. ii. 8), that the hand of

God was to them a hidden mystery. God "frustrateth the tokens of liars, and maketh diviners made;" He "turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish." Isa. xlv. 25. When He speaks, His words are so deep that all human wisdom sinks into insignificance. It was with reference to this very time that these words were written more than a hundred years before. See the remainder of Isa. xlv., and chap. xlv. 1-4.

It was now the time of punishment for the wickedness of Babylon. Long before, God had sent its people warning, and had wrought wonderfully among them; but because judgment upon their evil works was not executed speedily, their hearts were fully set to do evil. This very time, and this very circumstance had been accurately foretold through the prophet, before any of the actors in the scene were born. God had said to Babylon and its rulers:-

"I was wroth with My people, I have polluted Mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke. And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: but these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble." Isa. xlvii. 6-14.

A FAITHFUL WITNESS

The astrologers and necromancers could not prevail, and Daniel, the servant of the despised and blasphemed God of Israel, was called in to make known the mystery. To him the same rewards were offered that had tempted the astrologers to try their skill; but they were no inducement to him; yet he unhesitatingly promised to make known the writing and its interpretation. Daniel had long been a student in the Lord's school, and he knew His handwriting, and had no trouble in deciphering it. It was a terrible message that he had to deliver, but he had no fear. He had so long been accustomed to stand before the God of heaven and earth, that he could not be abashed by the tinsel and gaudy splendour of a profligate court, nor elated by the promises of rewards offered by the ruler of a

kingdom of a day. Very plainly and forcibly he recounted to the king the history of God's dealings with his ancestors, and how the lesson had not been laid to heart. God had abased the haughty pride of Nebuchadnezzar, and the king, in a writing sent to all the world, had humbly acknowledged the God of heaven as supreme; "and thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." Dan. v. 22, 23. What a striking arraignment this was! How insignificant Belshazzar's gods must have seemed to him at that moment! Talk about wise men, when they did not know any more than to praise senseless pieces of metal, and in the same breath belittle the name of Him who gave them breath!

EMPTINESS

Then was the writing again placed on the wall, and these words appeared: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. The words themselves were not difficult. Anybody present could have pronounced them. Literally translated, they are, "Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, Divided." But what could they signify? "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." Twice was this repeated, for emphasis. A most accurate account had been kept, and there was no mistake in the books. The end of the kingdom had come; it was about to fall to pieces by its own weakness. "Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting." God weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance (Isa. xl. 12), yet "by Him actions are weighed." 1 Sam. ii. 3. His scales are wonderfully accurate, and are adapted to the greatest things as well as the least. Belshazzar had been placed in them, and had been found lighter than air. He weighed absolutely nothing. "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity." Ps. lxxii. 9. That which men call "gravitation" is but the power of the presence of God, to whom alone power belongs; outside of Him there is no weight whatever; Belshazzar had rejected the Lord, and therefore when laid in the balances he went up like the fine dust.

SUDDEN DESTRUCTION

Only one thing remained to be said: "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." Even then the soldiers of Cyrus were marching into the city through the river bed, the waters of which had been drained off. Sudden retribution was about to fall upon the head of the blasphemous king of Babylon. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom." The judgment came as a thunderbolt, yet it was not sudden; for the warning had long been given. The destruction of Babylon was not

only a representation of the judgment of the last day, but was in reality the beginning of it, for the punishment then will be finished when the Lord shall appear. Even as it was in Belshazzar's day, "when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. v. 2, 3. And thus the story ends.

FOR OUR LEARNING

Yet it is not ended for us. It is written for our learning, and if we have not learned it, then we are as guilty as Belshazzar was. The pride and self-confidence of the Babylonians was the cause of their fall. The very feast in which they were congratulating themselves on their safety was used by Cyrus for their complete overthrow. Trusting in their strength, they relaxed their watchfulness, and there was nothing to hinder the conqueror from marching into the very heart of the city; and even if he had been seen, the drunken lords and rulers were in no condition to repel him. Now the same destruction that was prophesied upon Babylon is to come upon all the earth. See Isa. xiv. 24-27. Nations and kings may say, that they are well fortified against all invasion: but that is just what Belshazzar said. When God brings judgments, so that no one can know whence they come, who can he prepared against them? Only those who make the preparation of putting on Christ.

VANITY OF EARTHLY HONOURS

In the very hour of his death king Belshazzar commanded that the promised rewards should be conferred on Daniel. He was clothed in purple, the royal colour, a chain of gold was placed about his neck, and a proclamation was issued that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom, next to Belshazzar himself. Daniel knew the value, or rather, the worthlessness, of these honours. The kingdom was defunct, and with it all its honours would perish. He would not have cared for them, even if it had been in the beginning of the kingdom, instead of at the close, for he served a King who could give more real and lasting rewards. But let it not be forgotten that the rewards and honours which Belshazzar conferred that night were just as valuable as any that are ever conferred by any earthly monarch. All the kingdoms of this earth, like that of Belshazzar, are but for a day. In the sight of the Lord, all nations are "less than nothing, and vanity." Isa. xl. 17. Why then should anybody be elated at the thought of what kings can bestow? or seek worldly honour and preferment? The thing offered cannot be as great as the power offering it, and that is less than nothing! With what trifles men who are called wise amuse themselves? "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." Ps. cxviii. 8, 9.

"The Covering of the Lord" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

When the children of Israel would seek help in emoting off the yoke of bondage they were under to the king of Assyria, instead of going to the Lord, they took counsel of the king of Egypt, and sought to make him their strength. For this they were called "rebellious children," who "take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit," "therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion."

Just as it was then, so is it to-day. The strength of the church is not found in seeking alliances with the world. The Lord is the strength of His people, and to seek help from any other source is to trust in a broken reed.

But it is so easy when a people have let go their hold on God to reach out after something they can see, to form unholy alliances to carry on their cherished plans. Indeed, it is these very ones who are always so greatly concerned about the future of themselves and the work in which they are engaged. They are the ones who are always ready to appeal to the civil law to help forward the cause of Christ on the earth. But this is not as God would have it; and their end will be as that of Israel,-that which they thought to be their strength, will be their shame and confusion.

It would be well for the people to see this-not merely as churches and denominations, but as individuals. All need to know this truth, that without the covering of God's Spirit, they are not safe for a moment. By faith it must be accepted as a protection from the fiery darts of the enemy, and when it is thus accepted, it will be a protection from every evil that can come to them. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

"Hope" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

Hope is the desire for something with the expectation of receiving it. Now sin and sorrow, blasted hopes, sickness and death, cruel wrongs and base injustice are the common lot of man. The "blessed hope" is that when Jesus comes all this will come to an end; for God shall wipe away a tears; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." And more: Jesus said to His sorrowing disciples, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, *I will come again and receive you unto Myself.*" What those mansions are like, "eye hath not seen, ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man." What a blessed hope! "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."
1 John iii. 3.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Earth Desolated. Isa. xxxiv. 1-17" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXIV. 1-17, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. Draw near, O ye nations, and hearken;
And attend unto Me, O ye peoples!
Let the earth hear, and all the fullness
thereof;
The world, and all that spring from it.

2. For the wrath of Jehovah is kindled against
all the nations;
And His anger against all the orders
thereof:
He hath devoted them; He hath given them
up to the slaughter.

3. And their slain shall be cast out;
And from their carcasses their stink shall
ascend;
And the mountains shall melt down with
their blood.

4. And all the host of heaven shall waste
away;
And the heavens shall be rolled up like a
scroll;
And all their host shall wither;
As the withered leaf falleth from the vine,
And as the blighted leaf from the fig tree.

5. For My sword is made bare in the heavens;
Behold, on Edom it shall descend;
And on the people justly by Me devoted to
destruction.

6. The sword of Jehovah is glutted with blood;
It is pampered with fat;
With the blood of lambs, and of goats;
With the fat of reins of rams;
For Jehovah celebrates a sacrifice in Bozrah,
And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

7. And the wild goats shall fall down with
them;
And the bullocks, together with the bulls;
And their own land shall be drunken with
their blood,
And their dust shall be enriched with fat.

8. For it is the day of vengeance to Jehovah;
The year of recompense to the defender of the
cause of Zion.

9. And her torrents shall be turned into pitch,
And her dust into sulphur;
And her whole land shall become burning
pitch,

10. By night or by day it shall not be extinguished;
For ever shall her smoke ascend;
From generation to generation she shall lie
desert;
To everlasting ages no man shall pass through
her;

11. But the pelican and the porcupine shall inherit her;
And the owl and the raven shall inhabit
there;
And He shall stretch over her the line of
devastation,
And the plummet of emptiness over her
scorched plains.

12. No more shall they boast the renown of the
kingdom;
And all her princes shall utterly fail.

13. And in her palaces shall spring up thorns;
The nettle and the bramble in her fort-
resses;
And she shall become an habitation for
dragons,
A court for the daughters of the ostrich.

14. And the jackals and the mountain-cats shall
meet one another;
And the satyr shall call to his fellow;
There also the screech-owl shall pitch;
And shall find for herself a place of rest.

15. There shall the night-raven make her nest,
and lay her eggs;
And she shall hatch them, and gather her
young under her shadow;
There also shall the vultures be gathered to-
gether;
Every one of them shall join her mate.

16. Consult ye the book of Jehovah, and read:
Not one of these shall be missed;
Not a female shall lack her mate;
For the mouth of Jehovah hath given the
command!
And His Spirit itself hath gathered them.

17. And He hath cast the lot for them;
And His hand meted out the portion by
line;
They shall possess the land for a perpetual

inheritance;
From generation to generation shall they
well therein.

The subject of this chapter is very easy to discern, and is manifestly that indicated in the title. The whole chapter is devoted to the one subject, so that it is easy of comprehension.

Here is a proclamation of something that concerns the whole earth. All the earth, and all the nations on it are called to hear what the Lord has to say. It is nothing less than the proclamation of the wrath of God against all the nations. The most cursory reading of the chapter must convince anybody that the things here set forth are not limited to any one section of the earth, nor to any one people.

There is a strange idea very prevalent among readers of the Bible, and in religious circles, namely, that in ancient times God confined His attentions specially to one people-the Jews; that He was shut up to them, and cared little or nothing for any other people. How anybody who reads the Bible could get such an idea is most strange. This chapter alone is enough to show the contrary; it is addressed to all the nations of the earth. The prophet is commissioned to preach to all mankind, and so understands his mission.

Think how much of the book of Isaiah is directly addressed to other people than the Jews. Chapters fifteen to twenty-three are entirely devoted to other nations, who are directly appealed to by name. Moab, Tyre, Egypt, Assyria, and all the great nations are addressed one by one. And then other chapters mention the whole earth, showing that the events with which the prophet had to deal were not local. Indeed, the book begins with an appeal to the whole earth, and to heaven as well.

From the earliest times God has showed Himself the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. There were no Jews at all until more than two centuries of the world's history had passed, yet in all that time God had had faithful men, a proof

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that He was revealing Himself to whomsoever would accept Him. The Jews themselves originated from a man taken from the midst of heathendom. People in these days seem to think that they must perpetuate the blindness of people of other days. Because the Jews in their national conceit imagined that the Lord did not care for any other people than themselves, most Bible readers have thought that it must have been so. But the fact was very evident from the beginning, to any person who would use his eyes and reason, that God is no respecter of persons, but that "in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." The book of Isaiah, as indeed the books of all the other prophets, was addressed to the nations at large as well as to the Jews. And it concerns all the nations on earth today.

If one follows the book of Revelation in connection with Isaiah, it will be very apparent that the prophet John had no new message given him for the people. The Apostle Peter testifies that the message given to the ancient prophets was the same that the apostles had to give. 1 Peter i. 10-12. Compare for instance

verse 4 of this chapter with Rev. vi. 12-14. In many cases the words in Revelation are but a repetition of those used by the earlier prophet. That does not show that he was a mere borrower of other mens' message, but that the Holy Spirit had the same message to give by the two men. Both had a message for the last days.

A few facts gleaned from various parts of the Bible will help us to read this chapter more understandingly. First, we must remember that when the Lord comes the second time it is for the consummation of the salvation of His people, and this is effected by the destruction of the wicked, who will be on the point of exterminating them. For "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." 2 Tim. iii. 13. This statement immediately following the one that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," shows that at the last day the people of God will be in more bitter persecution than at any other time in the world's history. Before the flood the earth was filled with violence, and at the coming of the Lord it is to be in the same condition as then. Gen. vi. 11, 12; Matt. xxiv. 37.

Remember also that both righteous and wicked live together on this earth until the end of the world (Matt. xiii. 24-30, 36-43), and that there is no secret coming of the Lord, but that when He comes it will be openly, so that all can see Him, and the pomp and awful majesty will be such that none can help giving heed. See Rev. i. 7; Acts i. 11; Matt. xxiv. 23-27; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. At that time the wicked who still remain alive after the plagues that have come on the earth, will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming, and the righteous, both dead and living, will be caught up, immortal, to be ever with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 16-18; 2 Thess. ii. 8. This is the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Rev. xx. 6.

But the rest of the dead, that is, the wicked, will not live again until the thousand years are finished. At the end of that time they will be raised, and will be deceived by Satan into thinking that they can capture the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which has come down from God out of heaven, and while surrounding it will be destroyed. Rev. xx. 5-9. This is in brief the outline of events in connection with the coming of the Lord, as set forth in the Scriptures.

During this thousand years, in which the saints are reigning with Christ in heaven, sitting in judgment on the earth and on fallen angels, the earth will be a desolate waste, as set forth in the chapter before us. In the twentieth chapter of Revelation we read of "the bottomless pit." Now the word there used in the Greek corresponds exactly with the Hebrew word in the first chapter of Genesis, where we are told that in the beginning the earth was without form, and void. It was chaos. The Septuagint has exactly the same word: the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the abyss. In the eleventh verse of this chapter of Isaiah, we have, in "the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness," the exact words that occur in Gen. i. 2. So we find that during the thousand years the earth will be desolate, uninhabited by man, and unfit for human habitation. This is the time described in this chapter. In the thirteenth chapter the condition is set forth, in the account of the judgment upon Babylon.

This condition of things is said to last for ever and ever; yet the very next chapter describes a condition of Eden beauty on this earth. In 2 Peter ii. 10-13 we read of the destruction of the earth in the day of the Lord, yet we are assured that there shall be, "according to His promise," "new heavens and a new earth." So we learn that the duration of that which is spoken of as being for ever and ever, depends on the nature of the thing spoken of. When God is the subject, or the saints whom He has made immortal, then we know that there is never any end; but when it is something that is contaminated by sin, then we know that there will be a limit to its continuance. "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities round about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7), yet the places where they once stood are now a desolate plain.

One special lesson must be indicated before we leave the chapter. Notice how the vilest and most loathsome creatures are described as inhabiting the desolate earth. They hold sway over it while it is destitute of men. This is the natural end of the first sin, and of all that have succeeded. In the beginning man was given complete dominion over the earth, and over everything on it. That dominion was the rule of righteousness. But man sinned, and the dominion and the glory departed from him. More and more has he been losing his control over the earth and its creatures. Instead of governing the lower orders of animals, he is exterminating them as fast as possible. Wherever man goes, destruction marks his course. Finally, when sin has come to the full, and has ripened to the harvest, the condition that existed at the first will be utterly reversed, and only vile and hateful creatures-scavengers-will rule where once man had sway. All this terrible fall is involved in every sin. This is what the rule of man brings the earth to. Then will be seen in its fulness, or rather, in its emptiness, the result of man's having his own way. Shall we not be warned in time, and submit ourselves to the rule of the One who has power to govern with stability?

"The Love of the Truth" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

One of the reasons why there is no more power seen in the preaching of the Gospel to-day is because so many who proclaim it have not really received "the love of the *truth*." Their words in the pulpit and their writings are like the drippings of honey, and one would naturally think from their professions that their hearts were open to the reception of any truth from any source. As instance will illustrate: A member of the congregation of a popular church went to his pastor with a new-found Bible truth in which he was rejoicing, thinking that all he would have to do would be to present it, and his pastor would gladly accept it. But to his disappointment the truth was rejected, with the reply: "That is unpopular; if I should accept it and preach it, I would lose my place and position and my usefulness would be ended." A further conversation with him showed conclusively that much of the preaching he did, and the truths he enunciated, were merely for effect, and not that he believed and practised what he taught.

Jesus met this class of people in His day, and this is what He said to their followers: "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not."

"Evil Counsel" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

An increase in the crop of gamblers and a corresponding increase in all the crimes that accompany gambling, may be expected as the result of the Duke of Westminster's recent utterance concerning betting on horse races, which has been widely published. He said that there was nothing wrong in betting, provided people could afford to lose. People who could not afford to lose ought not to bet, but wealthy people, to whom the loss of the amount staked would be no hardship, might bet with impunity.

That is from the same piece as the statement that drinking alcoholic liquor is all right, provided only those drink who can do so without injury to themselves. The fallacy of the Duke's advice to people not to bet unless they can afford to lose, lies in the fact that nobody bets to lose. Even the rich man bets to win, and if he thought that he should lose in any given case, he would not risk anything on it. It may be that he doesn't care for the money, but only for the excitement; but the fact remains that whenever any man bets he does so on what seems to him almost a certainty of winning.

The poor man who bets expects to better his condition. There is more to entice him to gamble than there is the rich man; because he needs more money, and expects to better his financial condition; it is a business venture with him, and the fact that, because of his poverty, so much depends on the result, makes the excitement with him more intense than with the rich man. Therefore the Duke's utterance as to the harmlessness of betting in itself, which, coming from the source it does will be quoted as authority, will only result in an increase of the evil among those who are most injured by it.

For betting is an evil, and only an evil. In the first place the unnatural excitement is injurious. A thing that has not in itself enough interest to attract one, without the added stimulus of betting, is not worth enough to engage the attention of men. In all legitimate employment, in honest labour, the successful accomplishment of the task is sufficient incitement. Moreover it is dishonest for any man, whether rich or poor, to attempt to get something for nothing. Betting, no matter by whom indulged in, is akin to theft.

This is itself sufficient to condemn all betting. The fact that no one can afford to lose is of minor consequence compared with the fact that all gambling is sinful. It is a species of intoxication, and the fact that *some* can keep within a certain limit both in gambling and drinking, does not destroy the fact that with most the excitement draws them on until they cannot resist. How many penniless men there are to-day who once "could afford to bet;" they had so much money that the loss even of a few thousands on a wager did not inconvenience them. Now they cannot afford to bet; but they can in reality afford it as well as they ever could. It is sad when men whose rank and position give them great influence use

that influence in a way that can tend only to the ruin and degradation of their fellow-men.

As we look upon the trees of a field to see whether they are bearing good fruit or not, so God looks upon us. He desires that we be "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," bringing forth the fruits of righteousness. And this is not merely an illustration, for the very principles put into operation to make a field fruitful, are the ones which if applied to the Christian life will cause it to yield an abundant harvest. When the Lord said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow," he meant that by doing so, we could learn how to grow spiritually. What is needed is more of the simplicity of the Gospel, for in its simplicity lies its greatest power.

The world is so full of deceit-so much of appearance when the reality is absent. The thing people seek to know is what others think they are, not what God knows them to be. The Christian is not to care what people think he is, but to care what God says and what God thinks of him. It is a rare thing to find men of this character, for it is directly contrary to worldly policy.

"Little Folks. Heat" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

Now, while these long sunny days are here, and you can watch and see so plainly the effects of the sun's heat upon the earth, it will be a good time for us to have a few talks together about Heat and Moisture.

The earth would soon be destroyed by the burning rays of the sun when it shines full upon us, were it not for the moisture that God sends in the rain to keep it from getting parched and burned up.

Through these two things, heat or fire, and moisture or water, God is working out His great purposes in the earth.

These good gifts come down to us from above. Light and heat God gives us through the sun, and water through the clouds. But the sun and the clouds are only the channels, the means through which God is giving Himself to us.

Last week we learned that Jesus is "the Light of the world," and "our God is a consuming fire," we are told in His Word. But this tells us also that He is "the fountain of living waters."

Perhaps you have read in the Book of Revelation about "the sea of glass mingled with fire," that is before the throne of God,-water flowing forth from His throne so pure and clear and transparent that it looks like glass, and mingled with it the fire of God's glory that lights and warms the universe.

Fire and water, then, though seem to us so opposite, are really but different forms of the life of God, coming forth from Him to warm and bless and refresh us and all the earth.

All the heat that we get anywhere in this world comes to us through the sun. You may be wondering if this can be true of the fires that are lighted to warm yet in the winter when the sun's rays are so feeble.

Yes, even the cheerful, blazing fires in our grates are really the summer sunbeams that have been stored up in the trees and are now let out to help us in

our need. Some of the trees were buried in the earth, and after many, many years hardened and changed to coal. To look at the black lumps you would not think there was much sunshine there, would you? But when they are put where they can get to the right heat, the light will burst forth and the heat will come out from the sunshine that was stored up there ages ago.

How lovingly our Heavenly Father has provided for our needs in preparing for us this wonderful supply of stored up sunshine, to keep us warm in the cold weather, to cook our food, warm the water for our baths, and help us in so many ways.

All fire is the same, the stored-up rays of the sun, which is the glory of the Lord. When the sun has set in the evening and no longer lights us with its direct rays, we use what we call "artificial light." We light up our candles, lamps, or gas. But in these as in the wood and coal we are only using up the sunlight stored in these things, and it is still really the glory of God that is giving us light, for "the whole earth is *full* of His glory."

Now during these long summer days the earth is storing up a supply of heat which will "radiate," or pass slowly from it in the winter, and keep us warm when we cannot feel the heat of the sun.

You will perhaps be reminded by this of our talks in the winter about the garment that God spreads over the earth to keep in this heat in the cold weather, - snow for the ground and ice for the water.

If you do feel during these bright sunny days a little too warm, or even uncomfortably hot, think of the wonderful work of the sunshine, and how everything in the earth is storing it up for our future use, - the trees for our comfort and warmth, the fruits and vegetables and grains for our food, and even the ground itself to keep us warm in the winter.

Then I am sure you will not want to complain of the heat, but will thank God, the giver of all good, that He causes the light of His face to shine upon us and bless us.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

-A proposal has been laid before Parliament for the acquisition of the Royal Niger Company's territory, at the price of ?866,000.

-An epidemic of attempts at train-wrecking is reported from all directions. In Kent alone there have been eight attempts within a year.

-Owing to a disagreement between tea importers and dealers, the sale-rooms were boycotted last week. Out of 19,000 lots put up for auction, scarcely 1,000 were bid for.

-Part of the troops proceeding to Natal have been inoculated against malaria. If the treatment proves an effectual safeguard it will be extended to all troops sent to malaria regions.

-At Thurso, a school of 105 whales, mostly small, was driven ashore by the fishermen, and sold at ?36. A traction engine and steamer had to be employed to remove the putrid carcasses.

-The United States Post Office has begun to use automobiles in the place of horse waggons. It was found that the mails from forty letter boxes, over a distance of six miles, were collected in less than half the usual time.

-A new torpedo-destroyer, which has been built on the Tyne, is expected to reach a speed of forty-three miles an hour by means of the turbine system. Experiments are being made with a view to adapting this system to the trans-Atlantic steamers.

-An old and long-forgotten law has been dragged to light in New York. A boy aged fifteen was charged under the statute with having attended a theatre alone, it being enacted that no one under sixteen years of age shall go to a theatrical entertainment without a guardian. The judge sentenced the boy to six month's imprisonment, but suspended the sentence. He said he desired to warn all children and theatre managers in New York of the existence of the law in order that they might be careful in the future.

-The riots in Belgium continue and a geeral strike is threatened if the government do not withdraw an unpopular Electoral Bill.

-A New York clergyman has subsisted entirely on water for forty-eight days. The fast was undertaken for the purpose of relieving chronic stomach trouble. He is now rapidly improving and the ailment has apparently disappeared.

-At Crewe a goods train was derailed and then run into by a goods express. A passenger excursion train, which could not be stopped in time, crashed into the wreckage. No lives were lost, but the goods trains and all the engines were ruined.

-A disastrous storm is reported from Calvert, Texas. Rivers have everywhere overflowed their banks, a great quantity of property has been destroyed, and many persons have been drowned. Every bridge within a radius of ten miles has been swept away.

-Fast boats built for fruit and passenger service are to start running between Jamaica and England next summer. The government is subsidising the line. Each boat is to have storage for at least 20,000 bunches of bananas. This measure is expected to bring about a more prosperous condition in Jamaica.

-In Germany the kinematograph is being used to illustrate surgical lectures to students. A celebrated surgeon has been enabled to take a perfect series of pictures of various kinds of operations from the first cut of the knife to the laying on of bandages. Every phase of the operations was thrown on the screen with marvellous accuracy.

-Any man is at liberty to practise medicine in China, and many a man who cannot succeed in any other line will buy a book of prescriptions and start as a "doctor." There are ninety medical missionaries from Great Britain in China, and as many or more from America; but what are two hundred medical missionaries among three or four hundred millions of people?

-Denmark is said to be uneasy over the possibility of her neutrality being infringed in the event of a naval war in the Baltic, and is hopeful of obtaining assistance, if necessary, from the United States, to secure that her neutral position shall be respected by the combatants. The smaller nations do not seem to have taken much stock in the Peace Conference organised by the great Powers.

-Dr Ostegren, who has made exhaustive experiments with liquid air has invented an apparatus which can turn out liquid air at the rate of 1,500 gallons daily. The product registered 400 degrees below zero. It can be made at a cost of five cents per gallon. With a better engine he could produce liquid air at two cents per gallon. Coincidentally with Dr. Ostegren's discovery, Mr. Brady, of Chicago, announces that he has patented a cask in which liquid air may be safely carried.

-New York Socialists had an excellent opportunity last week of demonstrating the value of their principles, but failed to rise to the occasion. At their annual picnic, through some blunder in the steamboat arrangements, over 4,000 men, women and children, could not get home, and had to spend the night on an island, cold and hungry. The neighbouring farmers sold them bread and water at extortionate prices. Free fights and rioting took place all night. Some of the rowdies built a fire, captured two committeemen supposed to be responsible for the mismanagement, and attempted to burn them alive. A Labour leader, who stopped the performance, was severely handled, and several people were badly injured in the mêlée. One child was shot dead. Reforms that do not begin at home will never make them better.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

Did you ever close a prayer with the words, "in the name of Jesus?"

"What a strange question"! you exclaim; "I never pray any other way." Good! but did you ever, after praying, wonder if your prayer would be answered, and, if appearances were contrary, doubt it entirely?

You are obliged to confess that you often have; that sometimes even while you were praying, there was in your mind a question whether it was of any use to make the request, or not. Your prayer was something of an experiment, was it not? You did not think of it in that way, but now that the case is stated, you see that it is so.

Now do you know what it means to use those words when praying, whether at the beginning or at the close? You ought to; yet if you did; you would never doubt when you pray. They mean that we are certain of receiving the blessings we ask for. It is the expression of positive assurance that the matter is settled, and that the things desired are coming in good time.

What is our warrant for saying, "In the name of Jesus"? What right have we to use His name when we pray? We have His authority for it. He says: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it." John xiv. 13, 14. If it were not for that assurance, we should never think of using His name in prayer. Then when we do use it, why should we not use it for the purpose for which He gives it to us? Any other use is to take it in vain.

But you say, "Perhaps I ought not to have the things that I have asked for; how can I then be sure that I shall have them?"

If you are not sure, find out. Instead of asking positively for a thing that you are not sure you ought to have, and thus paving the way for doubt, ask the Lord if

you ought to have it, and thus leave the matter with Him, confident that if it is good for you it will come, and be perfectly content if it does not come.

There are many, many things which we may be sure it is God's will to give us. If we study His Word, the revelation of His will, we shall know them. If we ask anything according to His will, we know that He hears us; and when we know, that He hears us, we know that we have the things we desired of Him. 1 John v. 14, 25. Then we can give thanks when we pray, which we cannot do if we are in doubt. We are told to let our requests be made known to God with thanksgiving. Phil. iv. 6. If there is doubt, there can be no thanksgiving; and if there is no thanksgiving, there is no true prayer. Then do not doubt, but "pray without ceasing."

Last week Lord Lansdowne presented a Bill in Parliament, looking toward conscription, although it was expressly stated that it is only to provide for a remote contingency, and not to be put in force at once. It is a fact that it is difficult to get the number of volunteers necessary to keep the Army up to the required state of efficiency, and as was stated in presenting the Bill, the military system of the country rests on compulsion as a last resort, and the people must be reminded of their obligation, in case of necessity, to some form of compulsory service. Consequently it is thought best to have the necessary machinery ready to hand.

The Bill, which was read the first time, does not allow any person liable to military duty to escape by the payment of a penalty, or fine, or by procuring a substitute. If anyone refuses to serve, he is to be fined, and made to serve for five years. And thus the "preparation for peace goes merrily on."

"The Mark of Christianity" *The Present Truth* 15, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

Only a few days ago I was reading a statement concerning the origin of the creeds of the church. It was stated, and truthfully, too that the church felt the necessity of some sort of password, something by which the believers would be known. So the formulas beginning, "I believe," followed at first by a few simple statements, and later by many complex ones, were invented. Whoever could repeat these was regarded as a Christian, just as at the present time the child is considered ready for confirmation when he knows the catechism and the creed.

Strangely enough the people of old did not see, any more than people who make creed synonymous with Christianity do to-day, that anybody can learn creed, and that an unrepentent sinner can repeat it as glibly or as solemnly as a pious man. Indeed, the hypocrite will repeat it with even more unction than a sincere Christian. Such a password may very easily be stolen, so that it cannot mark any distinction between the followers of Christ and the followers of Satan.

There is just one sure mark by which to distinguish the Christian, and that is the life. The presence of the life of God in the soul, keeps it separate from the world. Moses said: "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and Thy

people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." Ex. xxxiii. 15, 16. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii. 35. The love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, is a mark that cannot be successfully counterfeited.

The fact that the church felt the necessity of adopting a creed in order to distinguish Christians from the world, shows that the life and Spirit of Christ was no longer characteristic of the mass of professed Christians. The formation of creeds was therefore a confession that the church had lost its distinguishing features, and was at the same time the means of enabling the world to carry on its worldliness under the guise of Christianity, and by that means the name has been brought into disrepute, so that many conscientious people have supposed themselves to be despisers of Christianity, when they really despised only the sham appearance of it. Thus "the church" has often been a stumbling-block.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James i. 27. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." 1 John ii. 18.

July 20, 1899

"Daniel in the Den of Lions. Dan. vi. 10-23" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

In the third chapter of Daniel we have the record of a trial that came to the three companions of Daniel: in this chapter we have the account of a test to which Daniel himself was put. As in that one we read nothing of Daniel, so in this one we hear nothing of his three companions; but we may be sure that they were as loyal to the truth of God as was Daniel, and as they had previously showed themselves to be. We need not take it for granted that Daniel was the only one in the whole kingdom who was faithful to God, but as the whole affair was worked up simply to entrap Daniel, any others would not be noticed.

Daniel's character and talents made a place for him. There is always work for those who are fitted for it. Daniel had held the position of greatest responsibility in the kingdom of Babylon, and when the kingdom passed into the hands of the Medes and Persians he was really indispensable, so he was first under Darius as he had been under Nebuchadnezzar. There were three presidents over the one hundred and twenty provinces of the empire, and of these three Daniel was one, and was preferred above the others. All the accounts of the realm had to pass through the hands of these three presidents, and we may be sure that there was no cheating as long as Daniel was one of the three. The princes who had to render account regularly to the presidents, could not bribe them, for Daniel would not suffer such a thing; and his two companions in the presidency were prevented by his sturdy integrity from filching from the public treasury. Such honesty in public affairs was an unprecedented thing, and was appreciated by the king, who thought to place Daniel over the whole realm.

The favour in which Daniel was held, together with his strictness in business, made the other presidents and the princes envious.

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Small minds are always envious at the success of others; but they were incensed against Daniel by the additional fact that he was a check upon their evil purposes. There was no opportunity for them to enrich themselves while he was at the head of affairs. So they sought to find some occasion against him in his conduct of the affairs of the kingdom, but could not find anything whereof to accuse him, "forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." His adversaries were forced to acknowledge his integrity, saying, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." What a grand thing it is when that can be said of a man, and by those who are most anxious to find a fault in him!

The good do not always have an easy time in this world. Jesus said to His disciples: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." John xv. 18. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. iii. 12. The reason for this is given in this exhortation: "This is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." 1 John iii. 11-13. From this text we are assured of the reason why the princes of Medo-Persia wished to have Daniel out of the way. It was because his works were righteous, while theirs were evil. With him removed, they could manipulate the funds as they pleased, and they would not be under the condemnation of his presence.

Accordingly a conspiracy was formed, and the king was made a party to it, without his knowledge. Indeed, nothing could be accomplished unless they had the king's consent, and they could not expect that the king would remove his most faithful officer. So they had to manufacture a new crime. Very subtly was their plan laid. It was a very common thing for Eastern monarchs to receive divine honours, as though they were gods, and such homage was quite acceptable to them, since it was easy for them to persuade themselves that they really were what their flatterers called them. Therefore it was not at all surprising to Darius when a great company of the chief men in his kingdom came to him, and said, "King Darius, live for ever! All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask any petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into a den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not."

"Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree." He readily fell into the trap, never thinking of his favourite, Daniel. If they had not lied, in saying that *all* the presidents had been in consultation over this matter, his suspicions might possibly have been aroused; nevertheless when integrity and loyalty to principle are so rare as they are, it is not natural for kings to consider the few in whom

such virtues are found, especially when they are persuaded that any measure will be "for the public good." It does not take long to persuade most officials or seekers after office that whatever contributes to their advancement and exaltation is for the good of the public.

The plot was fairly hatched, and the decree was published. How did it affect Daniel? It did not affect him in the least. When he knew that the writing was signed, "he went to his house; and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as aforetime." Think how much is conveyed in that statement. Daniel prayed to his God just as he had done before. Note that as he prayed he *gave thanks*. Not a word about the decree; no frantic request for protection; he acted as though there were no such thing. He saw no cause for fear, but only for thanksgiving, "as aforetime." In this he fulfilled the Divine injunction, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. iv. 6. Without thanksgiving there is no prayer. The peace of God which passeth all understanding kept Daniel. He was the least perturbed man in the whole kingdom.

How easy it would have been for most professed Christians to find "a way out of the difficulty;" only Daniel did not find himself in any difficulty. Some would say, "There is no harm in complying with the law, since it does not demand the worship of any false god, or of any man; it merely says that we must not ask anything of any god or man except the king; and for the next thirty days we will not ask anything of anybody." Very plausible, isn't it? Or they would say, "If you will pray, then do it so that no one will know it. You are not obliged to let anybody know when you pray." Ah, what a movement in favour of *secret* prayer there would have been about that time, if any prayer at all. Daniel, however, was not seeking plausible excuses for not praying to his God. He was too well acquainted with the Lord, and loved Him too well for that. He served the Lord, and that continually.

Suppose that Daniel had acted according to any of these or similar excuses; what would he have virtually been saying? Simply this, that he could not trust the Lord to take care of him when everything seemed to be against him. It would have been admitting all the claims to the heathen, that their gods were greater than the God of Israel. It would have been exalting the king and his decree above God and His law. It would have shown that all his previous prayers had been a mere form, a pretence, without heart or feeling. It would have shown that Daniel had no faith in God. But he had *faith*, and therefore he could not act in any such way. His service of God was from the heart, and he had prayed because he believed in God; and just because he believed in God, he could not act as though he did not believe in Him. It is such times as that, that determine whether or not a man really loves and serves the Lord. Daniel would not bear false witness against God. When men were banded together against God, in the person of His servant, then was the time for faithfulness.

Yet Daniel was not the man to flaunt his religion in the faces of men; no vain boaster; his religion was a part of his life; the same every day, and therefore he

did just as he had been in the habit of doing. When he went to his room his windows were open, and he did not take the trouble to shut them. Why should he? He had not done so before, and there was no more reason now than there ever was, since his God had not changed.

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He went about his devotions as quietly and regularly as in former days. That he was not in the habit of making noisy demonstrations when he prayed is evident from the fact that his enemies had to assemble to *find* him praying. But it is worth noting that they were quite sure of finding him at prayer. In that heathen kingdom Daniel was not ashamed to have it known that he worshipped Jehovah. And why should he be? is not Jehovah King over all? He is not One to be ashamed of.

Only one step now remained to fasten Daniel in the trap that was set for him. The grave counselors of State, whose minds were supposed to be absorbed in considerations of public interest, had plotted against an innocent, upright man, had acted the part of sneaking spies, and now they had only to be informers. But it would not do to go at once and denounce Daniel to the king, for they knew that he was Daniel's friend. So they took the precaution to get the king committed to the enforcement of the law. They said to him: "Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any god or man within thirty days, save of thee, O King, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." That was just what they wanted. The king could not escape now. Having admitted that the law could not be changed, he could not possibly make an exception in favour of Daniel. "Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day." How artfully they sought to prejudice the king against Daniel.

"Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him." But all was in vain. The princes were inexorable. They had framed the law for the express purpose of catching Daniel, and they did not propose to allow him to escape; so they held the king to the decree, reminding him that the honour of the kingdom was at stake, since a law once passed could not be revoked or changed. "Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee." What a wonderful influence there is in a steadfast Christian life! The king well knew that there was a power with Daniel that was with none of his other officers, and not even with himself, king though he was. He knew that Daniel had more than human power with him, and therefore he believed that the power that had made Daniel what he was, and that had kept him amid all temptations, would still keep him, even in the den of lions. And he was right; for there was no greater miracle wrought for Daniel when he was in the lions' den than when he was in the king's court. The same power that will keep a man upright in the midst of temptation will keep him from the jaws of wild beasts. Our adversary the devil goes about as a

roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and when a man is kept safe from his attacks, it is but a light thing to keep him from the beasts of the forest.

After passing a sorrowful night, the king went to the den very early in the morning. Although he had expressed the belief that Daniel would be delivered, he was not absolutely sure of it. The king evidently had a far worse night than Daniel had. A man may be far happier and more at ease in a den of lions than others are in a palace. The king's grief showed itself in his voice; as he came to the den and called, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee?" Dan. 6:20. We can see that the king was quite convinced that his gods were nothing in comparison to the God of Daniel; but here was a test question: "Is thy God able to deliver thee?" Yes, He was. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Ps. xxxiv. 7. This had been fulfilled in the case of Daniel, who replied, not forgetting the respect due the king; "O king, live for ever. My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." The penalty had been executed, and therefore Daniel could be taken out of the den without any violence to the majesty of the law. "So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God." His faith saved him. Faith has wondrous power; by it men have "wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, cut of weakness were made strong." Heb. xi. 33, 34.

"Perhaps the lions were not hungry." You may be sure that some of the enemies suggested that thought, and contended that Daniel should be left in the den until they recovered their appetite. Well, if they were not hungry, then there certainly could be no objection to putting these informers in for a little holiday from the cares of business; and whether they were hungry or not the king was disposed to deal very summarily with the malignant crowd. "The king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives, and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den." That settled the question. Those men who had been under the control of the great roaring lion who walks about seeking to devour, had no protection against these lions. The result of the whole affair was that Daniel was prospered more than ever, and the knowledge of the true God was published by the king to all people, and in all languages on earth. Thus even the wrath of man is made to praise God.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Earth Restored. Isa. xxxv. 1-10" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXV. 1-10, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. The desert and the waste shall be glad;
And the wilderness shall rejoice, and flourish;

2. Like the rose shall it beautifully flourish;
And the well-watered plain of Jordan shall
also rejoice;
The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it,
The beauty of Carmel and Sharon:
These shall behold the glory of Jehovah,
The majesty of our God.

3. Strengthen ye the feeble hands,
Confirm ye the tottering knees.

4. Say to the faint-hearted: Be ye strong;
Fear ye not, behold your God!
Vengeance will come; the retribution of God;
He Himself will come, and will deliver you.

5. Then shall be unclosed the eyes of the blind;
And the ears of the deaf shall be opened:

6. Then shall the lame bound like the hart,
And the tongue of the dumb shall sing:
For in the wilderness shall burst forth waters,
And torrents in the desert:

7. And the glowing sand shall become a pool,
And the thirsty soil bubbling springs:
And in the haunt of dragons shall spring
forth
The grass, with the reed, and the bulrush.

8. And a highway shall be there;
And it shall be called the way of holiness;
No unclean person shall pass through it;
But He Himself shall be with them, walking
in the way,
And the foolish shall not err therein.

9. No lion shall be there;
Nor shall the tyrant of the beasts come up
thither:
Neither shall he be found there;
But the redeemed shall walk in it.

10. Yea, the ransomed of Jehovah shall return:
They shall come to Sion with triumph;
And perpetual gladness shall crown their
heads.

Joy and gladness shall they obtain;
And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be." Eccl. i. 9. This is most emphatically true of the things that God has made. For "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." Eccl. iii. 15. When God made the world, and all things beautiful, "He created it not in vain." The fact that God made the earth perfect, is proof that it will be

perfect. Not one of God's plans can ever fail. To man's short sight it may seem as though everything had failed; but God has eternity for His own, and can afford to be misunderstood and yet to wait. A few years, or a few thousand years are not a finger's breadth compared with eternity. So although sin brings complete desolation upon the earth, the end of sin, which is destruction, will be self-destruction; and death, the last enemy, having been swallowed up in victory, the earth will be renewed, and "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

"It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." The places once most fertile are now most desolate. The earth is waxing old like a garment; but like an old garment, it is soon to be changed, and then it will reflect to perfection the excellency and beauty of Jehovah. We have learned something of the beauty of the Lord; that wondrous beauty will yet be seen even in the most desolate and barren portions of this earth. Is it not a glorious prospect? What assurance have we of this? Is not the assurance of God's Word sufficient? But we have ample demonstration of it in the fact that man, who was made to rule over a perfect earth, and was therefore himself made perfect, but who fell, and thereby caused the desolation of the earth, is himself by the Word of God made a new creature even now in this present time. When the king is restored to his kingly state, is that not proof that he will have back his dominion?

In view of this, what is said?-"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, Fear not." When does this apply? Is it in the time spoken of in the first two verses?-Most certainly not; for in the earth renewed there will be no occasion to say to anybody, "Fear not!" The people shall then "dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." No; now is the time when the assurance of what God will certainly do for even this sin-cursed earth must be set before the faint-hearted, to encourage them. The "blessed hope" is "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus ii. 13. "He will come and save you."

What else should be said to them that are of a fearful heart?-This: "Behold your God!" Where?-Everywhere. "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." Jer. xxiii. 24. When Christ appears in the clouds of heaven there will be no fearful ones among His people. That will be the moment of the joy of deliverance. No one will then need to say, "Behold your God!" for "every eye shall see Him." "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. xxv. 9. Therefore this exclamation, "Behold your God!" is to be uttered now in the ears of all the fainting ones of earth.

"That which may be known of God is manifested in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity." Rom. i. 19, 20. He

upholds all things by the Word of His power. Heb. i. 3. To be able to see God in all the things that exist, to know that He has not forsaken the earth, is enough to put courage into any man. What means it that He is here?—Nothing less than that He claims all things as His own, and is determined to stay by them. Though they be marred, and the Divine image may be almost effaced, yet He does not become disheartened or disgusted with them, but will by His presence restore them as at the first. If He did not claim them as His own, and did not intend to make them again worthy of Himself, He would not remain in them; the fact that He tarries even amid the curse, is sufficient proof that He means salvation; and what He purposes He will surely perform. Therefore behold your God in the lowest and meanest created thing, that you may know that He has not forsaken man, His crowning work. Be of good courage; He will come and save you.

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." When shall all this be? Well, it will certainly be when the Lord comes to save His people, for then the dead themselves will be raised incorruptible, and the living will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to immortality. 1 Cor. xv. 51-53; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. At that time there will surely not be a saint of God with any blemish either of soul or body. Christ will have "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Eph. v. 27. But we are warranted in believing that a restoration will take place even before the appearing of the Lord, not indeed to immortality, but to soundness of mortal bodies. When Jesus comes "every eye shall see Him." But there is even stronger evidence than this. Christ's presence here on earth brought healing to all that were diseased in any way. The proof of the Divinity of His ministry was this, that "the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them." Matt xi. 3-5. Now there was never a time in the world when there was more need of convincing proof of the genuineness of the Gospel than now. When Satan works with "all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness" (2 Thess. ii. 9, 10), as he sees the end near, God will not leave Himself without witness among men, but will also work with many miracles and wonders and signs. The Christ who once walked among men, revealing the Father, will be reproduced in all His people, so that no particle of evidence will be lacking. So as He then healed all who were sick and blind and lame, wherever He went, we may be sure the same thing will be done again, when all His people learn to behold Him still among them and in them.

"In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." That will be fulfilled when the wilderness and the solitary place are made new, and the desert blossoms as the rose; but we may expect to see it fulfilled even before the coming of the Lord. When Israel went out from Egypt, water was brought from the flinty rock for them in the desert. God "turned the rock into standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters." Ps. cxiv. 8. When God sets His hand again the second time to deliver His people, "there shall be an highway for the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." Isa. xi. 16. Therefore we may expect to see

the same wonders, and even greater ones, repeated. "Behold, the days come, saith The Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." Jer. xxiii. 7, 8. The wonders of the last days will entirely eclipse the miracles of the exodus from Egypt.

"An highway shall be there." Where? Without doubt in the new earth, in the holy city; but we should miss the joy of the Scripture if we put it all off till the future. Christ is the way, the way of holiness, and the way is plain. "The way ye know." Anyone can find it; it is revealed unto babes; and the most simple cannot make any mistake in it. "The redeemed shall walk there."

Even now "God hath visited and redeemed His people." Therefore now the redeemed must have a place in which to walk. And they shall walk in the way, and they "shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." Mark that it is with singing that they come into Zion. They do not wait until they get there to sing; they sing now. It is because they sing that they get there. Read 2 Chron. xx. 1-30, and note verses 21 and 22. It was when Israel began to sing and to praise the Lord, that they gained the victory. Then let the desert resound and be made glad with singing.

"Let those refuse to sing
Who never knew our God;
But children of the heavenly King
Must speak their joys abroad."

This they must do, because they "are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel," and

"The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets,
Before we reach the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets."

"The Jewish Sabbath" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

It seems more than likely that before long the reproach which men have sought to fasten on the Sabbath of the Lord by calling it the "Jewish Sabbath" will be without even apparent foundation. In America business interests have led many Jews to feel that they cannot lose a day every week, and there are many indications that the same sentiment is growing here.

The *Daily Mail* said last week,

Metropolitan Jewry is at present deeply interested in, and not a little disturbed by, a proposal which has been made to hold services on Sunday for those who cannot attend synagogue on the Sabbath.

The proposal emanates from West Hampstead, the abode of a large section of Jews of the middle and upper-middle classes. Competition and the consequent necessity of constant attention to business, to say nothing of the Jewish interest in the Stock Exchange, it is argued, prevent the majority of the wealthier Israelites from attending the usual Sabbath morning service.

The organisers of the movement argue that any service is better than none; but that the matter is regarded with some apprehension by the ecclesiastical authorities may be evidenced from the fact that the Chief Rabbi recently devoted the whole of his sermon at a London synagogue to strenuously opposing the innovation, which he feared might lead, as it had done in some cases in America and Germany, to the substitution of Sunday for the Jewish Sabbath.

God's true Sabbath stands in no need of unconverted supporters or human legislation.

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It is a part of His will, and will exist and be honoured when all its detractors have passed away. Isa. lxvi. 22, 23; 1 John ii. 17.

The Lord desires to see His Sabbath receive its right place in the lives and hearts of men, as the sign of His sanctifying power (Eze. xx. 12), but He does not want any to profess its observance for the sake of outward appearance. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee." Ps. l. 16, 17.

These words are also a strong rebuke to the many religious teachers and workers who excuse themselves from obeying the fourth commandment by saying that it would injure their influence over those whom they desire to help. When a man does not obey the Word of God himself, the Lord shows here that He does not want him to think to teach others the right way. The foundation of all real work for others is to be right one's self.

"Little Folks. Heat" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

When we were talking last week about heat, we said that the earth is now, during these long sunny days, storing up a supply of heat for the winter season, when it will give it out gradually.

Although, as we told you, all the heat in the world comes really from the sun, yet its rays are not hot in themselves, neither do they warm the air as they pass through it.

If this were so we should find that the higher we rise from the earth, and the nearer we get to the sun, the warmer it would be. But just the opposite to this is really the case.

Some gentlemen who went up in a balloon five miles above the earth suffered terribly from the cold, and their beards were all crusted over with frost. The temperature was twenty-nine degrees below zero.

You know, too, that the tops of high mountains are covered with snow all the year round, for at such heights there is never enough heat to melt it.

You are perhaps wondering how this can be, and it is well for us to reek for the reasons and the meaning of all the works of God; for in them all He is showing us His eternal power and love, and teaching us wisdom, so that we may learn to be as by watching Him at work and learn the ways of our Heavenly Father.

In order to make heat, the sun's rays must strike against something. As they touch the earth they produce heat which is reflected or "radiated" from the earth into the air to warm it. Therefore the air that is nearest to the earth is the warmest, and it gets gradually colder the farther we get from the earth's surface.

In the summer the sun shines for so many hours in the day that large quantities of heat are produced and given off in this way, and the air gets very warm, as at present. During the night when the sun is not shining the earth gives out some of the heat that it has received during the day.

The amount of heat that the sun's rays produce depends upon the position in which they reach the earth. When the sun is right overhead, so that its rays come straight down, they strike the earth with more force than when they come slanting direction. And besides this a larger number of rays strike in the same place.

This is why it is so much hotter at noon when the sun is just over our heads than at sunrise or sunset, or any other time in the day when its rays come to us in a slanting direction.

Now can you think, dear children, of any benefits that come to the earth through this wonderful arrangement? What would happen if the air were warmed directly by the sun's rays passing through it instead of by the gradual radiation of heat from the earth? The days would be unbearably hot, and at night when the sun was withdrawn everything would freeze; and nothing could live at all in the winter months. So we see how in all this God is working for the good and comfort of all His creatures, and to preserve the earth that He has created.

Then there is another which those find who live countries like India and Africa. Since the higher up you go the cooler it becomes, those in these hot climates who live near the mountains find it easy to escape from the intolerable heat in the summer into the refreshing coolness of the upper air.

At the bottom of Chimborazo, a mountain in South America nearly 30,000 feet high, you would find a very hot, marshy region, with rich forests inhabited by tigers, monkeys and other creatures belonging to hot climates.

Higher up the mountain there is a cool, temperate region of continual spring, with trees and animals suited to the mild climate.

If you should climb the mountain higher, you would at last find yourself surrounded with ice and snow, and suffering from the most intense cold.

Of this place it has been said: "Summer, winter, and spring are here distinct thrones, which they never quit."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

-The brother of the Czar and heir-apparent to the throne of Russia, has died of consumption. The Czar has three daughters but no son.

-The Fen country is beginning to rival Kent as a fruit-growing district. Thousands of acres are devoted to the cultivation of small fruits and flowers.

-Considerable speculation has been aroused in political circles by the exchange of complimentary telegrams between the German Emperor and the French President.

-The Peace Conference is expected to close at the end of July. An Act will be drawn up embodying the scheme of arbitration which has been decided upon by the delegates.

-The Chinese Government has just given out contracts for eight warships at an estimated cost of a million and a half sterling. Part of the work is coming to England.

-The commercial travellers of America are organising against the trusts, in the belief that such combinations will ultimately involve a loss of £10,000,000 per annum to the travelling salesmen.

-America has refused the proposal of Austria to submit to arbitration the question of an indemnity for the relatives of the Hungarian miners shot at the Hazelton Mine Riot in Pennsylvania two years ago.

-Captain Watkins, the commander of the *Paris*, acknowledges that the stranding of his vessel was wholly due to an "unaccountable error" on his part. His certificate has been suspended for two years. The *Paris* has been got off the rocks and towed into Falmouth harbour.

-Over 2,000 saloons have been opened in Cuba since the Spaniards were driven out.

-Protestant missions in India and China claim that 4,000,000 converts and 9,000 missionaries are now reported in these countries.

-According to a reliable authority, for every missionary landed in Africa, there are landed 70,000 casks of rum, 10,000 casks of gin, and fifteen tons of gunpowder.

-The town of Dover is suffering from a plague of green flies such as was never known in their history before.

-Plague similar to the bubonic has broken out at Grand Balsam, on the Gold Coast. Three hundred people, including three European physicians, are stated to have died from it.

-An American Colonel has discovered that by using spectacles, field-glasses, or a telescope fitted with violet glasses, the flash of the rifle and the atmospheric effects of smokeless powder can be detected from long distances. The soldiers in the Philippines are to be supplied with spectacles of this colour.

-The 1,300 buses of the General Omnibus Company carry 190,000,000 passengers a year and run 29,000,000 miles. The yearly receipts are £1,200,000. The 18,931 horses consume 250,000 quarters of provender every year at a cost of £828,000. The number of men operating this traffic is 5,000. The ticket system saves the company £100,000 a year.

-A large number of German colonists in the southern provinces of Russia are preparing to leave for the United States and other countries in order to escape

military service and certain special taxes which have lately been imposed upon them, and which they were promised immunity from when they emigrated to Russia from Germany. Prominent among these are the Mennonites.

-It is believed that London is about to experience another water famine, which will be even more serious than the one of last summer. The flow in the Thames has been lower during May and June than it has ever been before. Even though rain should fall in abundance it will not now suffice to prevent the water famine. It is getting very evident that the present sources of supply are insufficient.

-A pest has appeared in a number of American cities on the Atlantic Coast, in the form of a species of flying beetle, which has been dubbed the "kissing bug." It seems to sting people for the most part on the lips, causing the parts to swell to an enormous size, and one case of death has been reported from the effects of its bite. So serious is the pest regarded, that the National Government has granted public funds for research concerning it.

-There has lately been started in New York City a new organisation whose principal work is the establishing of "tea saloons" to offset the saloons that dispense wines, beers and liquors. Philanthropic as this appears on the surface, it will indirectly support the publicans, for the excessive use of tea creates an appetite for something stronger, which can only be satisfied by what is dispensed at the saloon. True temperance goes deeper than most people think.

-The fiercest hail and thunder storm within living recollection has visited Canterbury. It would appear that a waterspout broke in that vicinity. Thousands of gallons of water, mud, and shingle washed down into the city, and the basements of all the houses and tenements in the suburb were soon filled with the turbid liquid. The rush of water was preceded by a hailstorm of such fierceness that it was dangerous for anyone to be out. In many cases the lumps of ice measured over an inch and a half in diameter, one nursery man having over 1,000 panes of glass broken.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

"How much ought I to give?"

This question, frequently asked, means very often, "How little can I give?" "How much is necessary in order to have it, look well in comparison to the gifts of others?"

There is just one standard of liberality, just as there is but one standard of everything good and that is the Lord Himself. He "giveth to all liberally." Whoever gives less than God gives, does not give enough, and cannot be called liberal. This is not a rash assertion, but a Bible truth.

What does God give? He gives Himself. He purchased the church with His own blood. Acts xx. 28. God was in Christ, who loved us, and "gave Himself for us." This gift includes everything; for "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. It could not be otherwise; for "in Him all things consist."

God gives us all things in giving us Himself, yet if He should withhold Himself, He would give us nothing; for we cannot get anything at all outside of Him, and He is not divided, He cannot give us a part of Himself without giving us the whole. With Him it is everything or nothing, and so it is always everything.

The grace of God is manifested in giving. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." 2 Cor. viii. 9. He impoverished Himself to enrich us; He gave everything He had; He "emptied Himself." Phil. ii. 7, R.V.

The spirit of Satan is directly opposed to the Spirit of God. Christ would not hold on to what was His by right; Satan, on the other hand, was determined to get everything for himself, even when he had no right to it. Christ said, "I will give;" Satan said, "I will get."

There are only these two minds in the world. When the spirit of Satan controls, there is selfishness, so that even though large donations be made, an evil motive takes away all their value. When the Spirit of Christ prevails, there is unselfish liberality, It is always the Spirit of Christ in a man, that leads him to make a real gift; therefore since it is only Christ who gives, the truly liberal man gives everything.

Whoever gives everything, gives himself. He gives everything, in that he gives himself. A man may give all his goods to the poor, and yet really give nothing. If love be lacking, -the love that purifies the heart, -there is no liberality. The offering that God accepts is the "offering in righteousness." It is with the "sacrifices of righteousness," that God is well pleased.

Christ saw the rich men cast of their abundance into the treasury, and He saw a poor widow drop in "two mites; which make a farthing," and He declared that she had given more than they all. Why? -Because she gave all she had. Her gift showed that her soul was in the work of God; she had given herself. The brethren in Macedonia gave liberally out of their deep poverty, because they "first gave their own selves." 2 Cor. viii. 5.

Men are often deceived by appearances. See some one make a donation of thousands of pounds, they say, "What a liberal man!" It may be, and it may not be. Money is the easiest thing in the world to give. The man who has not a penny may be more liberal, and may actually give more than the one who bestows thousands. The man with the money may withhold that which is most needed, namely, *himself*, his love and sympathy. Christ had no money, the apostles had no money, but they imparted the gift of life, and that includes everything. Their lives flowed out to others. He who gives this, gives as much as God does, by God's own system of reckoning.

The poor person need not, therefore, waste time in regrets, saying, "How I wish I were able to give something!" Why you are able to give everything; you can give yourself. That is the most that God Himself can give, and yet it is the least that you can give and give anything at all. God is not deceived, although men are, and by Him the vile person is not called liberal, nor the churl -or the deceitful person -bountiful. Isa. xxxii. 5.

This settles the whole question of giving. A heart given to God, that He may purify it, and then the life of God, which has cleansed it, flowing out to others, is

the whole of the matter. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. xii. 1.

The man who attempts to compel respect for himself generally succeeds only in making himself an object of ridicule. People respect, without compulsion, those who are worthy of it. The numerous prosecutions in Germany of authors and editors for commenting on the Kaiser's speeches, simply serve to sharpen the wits of unfriendly journalists, and provide additional matter for scathing comment. One paper in Berlin discourses on the "inflexible will," which the Kaiser attributes to himself, and while careful to keep within the bounds of the law, writes in this wise:-

The Tsar Nicholas I., had his will broken at Alma, Balaclava and Inkerman, and died of a broken heart. Napoleon's inflexible will led him to Moscow, Elba, Waterloo and St. Helena. Charles XII., of Sweden, had his will broken at Pultava and Bender. Charles I., of England, was a man of inflexible will. It led him to Naceby and Marston Moor. Philip II.'s will resulted in the downfall of the Spanish world dominion

The journal concludes by saying, "The great Elector, Frederick the and William I. never glorified their inflexible wills. This wise reserve was part of the historical greatness of these rulers."

It is not well to glory in the possession of an inflexible will. If one were right in every respect, it would be different, for then there would be no need to change, but in view of the corruption harboured by every human heart, it becomes men to walk humbly. Too often men, whose wills cannot be bent, are not above stooping to fraud and meanness in the execution of their purposes. All flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flower of the field, which soon passes away! God does not change, but men must, or they will never become like Him. The curse of militarism which turns whole nations into machines for war, exerts even a worse influence on the head of the nation than his unfortunate subjects, and the more he partakes of the nature of a machine, the more "inflexible" he gets. It is a pitiable state.

July 27, 1899

**"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The New Heart.
Eze. xxxvi. 25-36" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

In order that we may get the most possible benefit from this study, we will quote the portion of Scripture that it covers, beginning one verse back. It reads thus:-

"I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart

of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God: In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that which was desolate. I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it."

There are some gracious promises in this lesson that can be appreciated by everybody; but the full benefit of it cannot be obtained without some knowledge of what has gone before. It is always a difficult matter to take a text out of its connection and to treat it as it deserves. A very brief outline of the conditions under which this scripture was written, and of God's purpose concerning Israel, will be of value both in this lesson and in the two that follow.

God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt in fulfilment of the promise made in the covenant with Abraham. See Ex. vi. 2-8. That covenant was confirmed in Christ (Gal. iii. 16, 17) and could be fulfilled only through His death and resurrection. In the inspired thanksgiving of Zacharias, the father of John the forerunner of Christ, we learn that Israel's being saved from their enemies, and from the hand of all that hated them was in performance of the promise of God to the fathers, and His covenant with Abraham, and their deliverance from their enemies was in order that they might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. Luke i. 71-75. Their life, moreover, was to be everlasting, because the covenant made with Abraham was an everlasting covenant, and the promise

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was that he and his seed should have the land for an everlasting possession, which would involve their living for ever. Gen. xvii. 6-8.

When the promise was made to Abraham, he was distinctly told that he should die before the land could be possessed (Gen. xv. 1-16), and Stephen tells us that he had not so much of the land as to sat his foot on, although God had promised it to him. Now since no word of God can fail, it necessarily follows that the inheritance which God promised to Abraham and his seed was only such an inheritance as can be obtained through the resurrection from the dead. This appears in the words of Paul when he stood before Agrippa: "Now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers unto which

promise our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts xvi. 6-8. Every promise, therefore, to place Israel in their own land, involves the resurrection of the dead.

The nature of the true Israel must also be borne in mind. "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Rom. ix. 6-8. The children of promise are counted for the seed, because the word was "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Isaac was the child of promise, and he was born after the Spirit (Gal. iv. 22-29); therefore as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Rom. viii. 14-17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii. 29. Only Christians indeed, therefore, those who are born of the Spirit, and who walk after the Spirit, are children of Abraham, and Israelites indeed. They are those in whom there is no guile. John i. 47. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. ii. 28, 29.

The children of Israel might have received the fulness of the promise soon after they left Egypt, for God was leading them to the Mountain of His inheritance, the place which He had made for them to dwell in, even the Sanctuary which His hands have established (Ex. xv. 17); and this is in the heavens, in the New Jerusalem which is above, "the mother of us all." Heb. viii. 1, 2; Gal. iv. 26. But they did not believe, and therefore they could not enter in. Heb. iii. 18, 19. Ever since their failure, the promise has been left to us. Heb. iv. 1. David was king over all Israel in the land of promise, yet when he sat in his house, "and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies" (2 Sam. vii. 1), God said to him, "I will appoint a place for My people Israel, And will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more as beforetime." Verse 10. And when David was delivering the kingdom over to Solomon, at the time when it was greatest, he said, in the presence and on behalf of all the princes and rulers of Israel: "We are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers." 1 Chron. xxix. 15. It is only by taking out from among the Gentiles a people for His name, through the Gospel, that God builds up the house of David. Acts xv. 14-18. Christ is the One by whom the kingdom is to be restored to Israel, for "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. 32, 33.

Ezekiel prophesied at the time of the captivity of Israel. Long before the time when the scripture that we are studying was written, he had said to Zedekiah, whose name was a reminder of his rebellion against God, "Thou profane, wicked

prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, Thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high, I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." Eze. xxi. 25-27. When the kingdom passed from Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, three overturnings or revolutions were foretold, which should give the dominion successively to Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome: then there should be no more world revolutions until the coming of Christ, who will destroy all the kingdoms of the earth, and scatter them like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, so that no place will be found for them, and will then reign for ever over an earth made new. See Dan. ii. 44, 45; 2 Peter iii. 10-13. We know, therefore, that the promises in this vision pertain to the work and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Certain it is that since the days of Ezekiel the Jewish people have never had a place of their own, so that the promise has not yet been fulfilled. It was not fulfilled by the return of Israel from the Babylonian captivity, and can be fulfilled only in Christ and His coming.

With this explanation, there need not much be said on the text before us, since it is straightforward reading. God promises to take His people from among the heathen, and bring them into their own land. The land which belongs to the people of God is no part of "this present evil world," from which they are delivered by the death of Christ (Gal. i. 4), but the country for which faithful Abraham looked, "that is, an heavenly." Heb. xi. 14-16.

In gathering them from among the heathen, to bring them into their own land, God sprinkles clean water, even the pure water of life, upon His people, to cleanse them from all their iniquities. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses, us from all sin" (1 John i. 7), and the Spirit and the water and the blood agree in one. 1 John v. 8. The clean water with which God sprinkles His people as He gathers them is the blood of Christ.

This cleansing is a thorough one, and since the filthiness which we have contracted among the heathen permeates us completely our cleansing involves an entirely new creation. God has to give us a new heart, which means a new life, for out of the heart are the issues of life. "If any man be in Christ there is a new creation." He promises to put His Spirit in us, so that we shall walk in His statutes, and keep His commandments; for the law is spiritual. Then, says God, "ye shall be My people, and I will be your God."

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Compare this with the promise of the new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34), and the promise to Abraham. Ex. vi. 6-8.

The heathen will see the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham and his Seed, for they will all come up and surround the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, after it comes down from God out of heaven. Rev. xx. 7-9. The people of God, redeemed from all their enemies, even from the last and greatest enemy, death, will go forth from the New Jerusalem over the renewed earth, and build cities and inhabit them, and plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. Isa. lxxv. 17-23. It is true that before they go forth the wicked will be destroyed in the fire that renews the earth; but the heathen will nevertheless know that the Lord builds the waste

and desolate and ruined cities, for they will see the proof of it in the New Jerusalem, which will stand upon the site of the old city, only greatly enlarged. Zech. xiv. 1-9; Isa. xlix. 18-22.

"Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God." This is humiliating, and may well cause us to be ashamed and confounded, but is wonderfully encouraging. The reason why so many people become discouraged, and doubt the possibility of their salvation, is that they think that it is their own worthiness that must be taken into account. "I am too unworthy for the Lord to take notice of me;" "I am so sinful that the Lord surely will not receive me," are common expressions. Now comes the most comforting assurance that our unworthiness has nothing to do with the case. It is not for our sakes, but for His own sake, that the Lord forgives our sins. "I even I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isa. liii. 25. So we can say with all boldness and assurance:-

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee;
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. A Prayer for Healing Answered. Isa. xxxviii. 1-8, 21, 22" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXVIII. 1-8, 21-22, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

1. At that time Hezekiah was seized with a mortal sickness; and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, came unto him, and said unto him: Thus saith Jehovah: Give orders concerning thy affairs to thy family; for thou

2. must die; thou shalt no longer live. Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and

3. made his supplication to Jehovah. And he said: I beseech Thee, O Jehovah, remember now how I have endeavoured to walk before Thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in Thine eyes. And Hezekiah wept, and lamented grievously.

4. Now [before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court] the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying: Go [back], and say unto Hezekiah,

5. Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thy father: I have heard thy supplication; I have seen thy tears. Behold [I will heal thee; and thou shalt go up into the house of

6. Jehovah. And] I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee, and this city, from the hand of the king of Assyria;

22. and I will protect this city. And [Hezekiah said: By what sign shall I know that I shall go up into the house of Jehovah?

7. And Isaiah said:] This shall be the sign from Jehovah, that Jehovah will bring to effect this word which He hath spoken.

8. Behold I will bring back the shadow of the degrees, by which the sun is gone down on the degrees of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. And the sun returned backward ten degrees, on the degrees by which it had gone down.

21. And Isaiah said: Let them take a lump of figs; and they bruised them, and applied them to the boil; and he recovered.

In studying this lesson, reference should be made to the record in 2 Kings xx. 1-11. It will be noticed that the Lowth's Translation, which we have reprinted here, two sections are inserted in brackets in the fourth and fifth verses, from the corresponding verses of the account in 2 Kings. Also, in order that the record of the event may be complete in one lesson, verses 21 and 22 are brought into the narrative in the regular course, instead of being left, as in our common version, at the close of Hezekiah's song of thanksgiving. Let the student diligently compare this reading with that in his Bible. There is no alteration, but only a bringing of the different parts of the narrative into one.

"At that time." At what time? For an answer read chapter xxxvi. and xxxvii. The lesson itself (verse 6) indicates that it was at the time that the king of Assyria was besieging Jerusalem. Read also the accounts in 2 Kings xviii. and xix. and 2 Chron. xxxii.

The first thing that claims our attention in this study is the kindness of God in giving Hezekiah timely warning of his approaching death. For what reason Hezekiah was to die at that time, is not stated, and we have no business to conjecture. It would do no good if we should. Of one thing we may be sure, and that is that it was not because Hezekiah was a bad man. The record concerning his reign is that "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done." 2 Chron. xxix. 2. He "wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered." 2 Chron. xxxi. 20-21.

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No king has ever had a better testimony given him than that.

One of the most common things when a kind, benevolent, and good person dies, is to hear people say, "What had he done, that he should be taken away? if it had only been such and such an one, I could understand it, for he would never have been missed; but to take away so useful a member of society,-it is inexplicable." Or sometimes a parent says, when a devoted and pious child is taken, "What have we done, that she should be taken from us?" Just as though God never thought of anything but devising some means of punishing people, and trying to make them miserable! Just as though it would be a mark of greater mercy on the part of God if He should allow all the unprepared ones to die, leaving behind only those who are ready either for life or death! God has "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Eze. xviii. 32. "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." Isa. lvii. 1. The death of a good man, indispensable as he may seem to be, is often the greatest mercy that could befall both him and those who are left behind. Indeed,

we may be sure that whatever takes place, the mercy of God endures for ever. "Though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Lam. iii. 32, 33.

DEATH A COSTLY THING

Let no one, however, think that it is a light matter to the Lord that any person, whether good or bad, dies. Death is not in God's plan for men. He is the living God, and the God of life. He is the Father of all, and from Him all parental love comes. There is no fatherly love on earth that is not simply a little fragment of the love of God for all men. Then let any father think of his own sorrow at the death of a loved child, and he will have an exceedingly faint idea of the sorrow that moves the heart of God when one of His children dies. See Jesus shedding tears at the grave of Lazarus, even when He knew that in a few minutes He would call His friend back to life. Read the one hundred and sixteenth Psalm. Note especially the fifteenth verse: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." That word "precious" is from the same word that is often rendered "costly," and it always has that meaning, as anyone will know, who considers its origin. So we should read the verse as it appears in several versions, "Costly in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." It costs the Lord more than the human mind can compute, for Him to allow one of His saints to die, even though it be necessary. Death is an expensive thing to the Lord. It costs Him many a heartache. It is a personal loss to Him; He feels it, because every creature is a part of Himself. "We are His offspring," and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28. But more, it is a loss to Him in the great work that He has to do in the earth. It is a common thing for men to say that God could get along without any of us, as though He were so self-contained and so self-satisfied and so far above all human feelings that nothing can move Him; when the fact is that everything moves Him. God has given the earth to man, and has never recalled the gift. Through man He has purposed to rule the world, and although we in our selfishness may not be able to understand it, it is a fact that God cannot get along without man. He showed this in that He gave His life for us. He could not live without man. He desires man to be His constant companion. It is for that purpose that He created man. Therefore we may be sure that it was not with a light heart that God said to Hezekiah, "Thou shalt die, and not live."

DEATH AN ENEMY

Hezekiah did not wish to die; the thought of it was most painful to him. "Hezekiah wept sore." Was it because he felt that he had been a bad man, and therefore dreaded to meet His God?-No; for he had so little consciousness of guilt that he could recount to the Lord the integrity in which he had walked before Him. If dying means, as the theologians tell us, to be with the Lord, why should Hezekiah have felt so sorrowful at the thought of dying?-Ah, he knew better. There is no man in his senses that would not rather live than die. The tears that

people shed over the dead, even while they try to make themselves believe that death is a friend, show that it is impossible for anybody to believe that lie. Every funeral train and every tear are testimonies to the effect that death is an enemy, and not a friend. Death speaks of the devil, the adversary of mankind. The righteous hath hope in his death, simply because he has the assurance through Christ that death shall be destroyed, and he be delivered from its grasp. Death is always and everywhere a thing for tears, and not for joy.

"NO" AS AN ANSWER TO PRAYER

The Lord heard Hezekiah's prayer, and allowed him to live a little longer. Yes, "He heard his prayer." How natural it is for us to say that, when we have prayed for something, and have got it. But suppose we do not get it, what then?—Then we shake our heads mournfully, and say, "The Lord didn't see fit to hear us." Just as if there were ever anything that God did not hear. People in their selfishness generally have the idea that the universe is run for their own individual benefit, regardless of anybody else, and each one thinks that his own wishes should be attended to in every detail, and at once, no matter how many others may be distressed by it. So if God does not say "Yes" to every request of theirs, they feel that they have been greatly abused, and even insulted, because, say they, "I prayed to the Lord, and He did not answer me." Haven't they ever heard that "No" is as much an answer as "Yes" is? And has not God as good a right to say "No" once in a while as any earthly parent has, who knows several things that his child does not know? Many a child has lived long enough to find out that the answer "No," to a request for some much-longed-for thing, which seemed to him almost like a death blow, was the greatest blessing that could have been given him. It is always so when God says it, for He gives everything that is good, and He gives nothing that is not good.

HEZEKIAH GAINED NOTHING

But Hezekiah received "Yes" as an answer to His prayer. We will not say that he received "a favourable answer." He got what he asked for, although it was directly contrary to what God had said he should have. Did he really get it, though? "Certainly he did," you say. Let us see. What did he ask for?—He asked for a reversal of the decree that had gone forth, that he should die, and not live. "And he did live," you say. How long?—Fifteen years. That is not very long, and when that time had elapsed, what then?—Why, then he died. Yes, that was what God had said concerning him. He had to die just the same as if it had happened fifteen years before; death is just the same one

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time as another. But how much better off was Hezekiah after the close of that fifteen years than he was at the beginning? What had he gained by trying to overthrow the word of God? Ah, God works all things after the counsel of His own will; His word will be fulfilled sooner or later, and it is well for mankind that it is so.

HEZEKIAH'S HEALING A PUBLIC CALAMITY

Whatever Hezekiah may have gained personally in his own feelings by the result of his prayer, it is certain that the people lost by it. We do not hear very much of Hezekiah after that incident. He appears only once, and then in a circumstance that is not greatly to his credit. But we know that in that fifteen years Manasseh was born, for Manasseh was only twelve years old when he succeeded him at his death. Read a little about him: "Manasseh was twelve years old when he began his reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem; and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, -and he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom; also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards; he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel." 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1-9. "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." 2 Kings xxi. 16. Surely the people of Israel had no reason to be very jubilant over the result of Hezekiah's prayer.

RIGHT AND WRONG PRAYING

When we look at what followed, it seems quite evident that it would have been better if Hezekiah had kept still and allowed things to take the course pointed out by the Lord. "What! Isn't it always right to pray to the Lord for what we want, especially for life and health?" Yes; provided we pray in accordance with the will of God. That is always the rule. We must allow that God knows best. He sees the end from the beginning; and when God tells a man that he is to die, and sends a special messenger, a holy prophet, to bear the message, the very best thing for that man, and for everybody else, is that he should die. There is "a time to be born, and a time to die" (Eccl. iii. 1, 2), and knowing how much the death of one of His children costs the Lord, we may be sure that the time for a man to die is when God says so.

"Shall we then not dare ask the Lord for a continuance of life?" Why not? We have not received any message from the Lord, telling us that we are to die, and not live. On the contrary we are told, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sin, they shall be forgiven him." James iv. 13-15. That is for us, unless we have received some direct intimation from the Lord that we are to be an exception. But let us remember that it is the prayer of faith, that

saves the sick, and that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. x. 17. Then we must not ask for anything contrary to the Word of God, and we must know the Word of God as personally addressed to us.

THE USE OF REMEDIES

"And Isaiah said, Let them take a lump of figs; and they bruised them, and applied them to the boil; and he recovered." Some one will say, "Why, Hezekiah was healed by natural means, after all; it was a strange and unusual remedy, to be sure, but it was a remedy, nevertheless." Well, what of it? "Oh, when the Lord heals, He does not use remedies." Ah, how did you learn that? Does not the Lord use instruments for the performance of His will? He uses things that are, and even things that are not, for the accomplishment of His purpose. Do not imagine that a thing is any the less a work of God, because He has done it through some agency, human or otherwise. Know this, that there was never a person healed of any disease in this world except by the Lord, and that He always uses some means, visible or invisible. The means is none the less real, if it is invisible. Do not get the idea that when you see a thing done, and see the thing that doest, it is not from the Lord; and that the miracle occurs only when you cannot see anything but the result. The words of the Lord are medicine, whether they are in visible form, or are invisible. Prov. iv. 20-22, margin. It is His Word that He sends to heal the afflicted. Ps. cvii. 20.

Remedies are always in place when people are sick, and are always perfectly consistent with fervent prayer for their recovery, even with the course that is set forth in the fifth chapter of James. But remember that they must be only the Lord's remedies. They must be remedies which are the embodiment of the living Word of God. They must not be things which contain death, and are themselves but the agencies of death. God heals by imparting life, not by giving death. "Men ought always to pray," but that does not mean that they should sit still and do nothing. We ought to pray for our daily bread; but the command to do that comes from the same source as the command that "if any would not work, neither should he eat." 2 Thess. iii. 10. When we have done an honest day's work, and have received food as the reward, we are to thank God for the gift just as much as if the ravens had been sent to feed us while we sat by the brook. It is from His hands just the same. And so we are always to pray for the recovery of the sick, and at the same time to make use of every means that God has made known to us as serviceable. This does not include poisonous drugs, for they are not life-bearers, but death agents. And then if, after applying the means that God Himself indicated, the patient recovers, we are to thank the Lord just as heartily for the performance of a miracle of healing as if we had heard Him speak with an audible voice, and tell the disease to depart. The Lord is the Great Physician, and there is not a medical man in the world that cannot learn things from Him that will astonish him.

A SIGN FROM THE LORD

The Lord gave Hezekiah a sign by which he might know that he should recover. We notice by reading 2 Kings xx. 8-10 that Hezekiah was very particular as to the sign. He did not want any doubt about it. So the shadow on the dial was made to go backward ten degrees. Wonderful! Yes; but no more so than the healing of Hezekiah. Nay, it was no more wonderful than is the daily going forward of the shadow.

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Everything is wonderful, for in everything the eternal power and Divinity of God are manifest. We have known professed Christian men who had the audacity to attempt to explain the miracle of the going backward of the shadow on the dial, as well as the standing still of the sun in the days of Joshua. Some people think that they are in duty bound to seem to know as much as the Lord; but all will at the last be obliged to admit that the Lord knows many things that we do not. We would not minimise the going backward of the shadow, or the standing still of the sun, but would magnify the miracles that are taking place every day, and which are unnoticed because of their frequency. The fact that the sun keeps its place in the heavens, and that all the heavenly bodies move in their courses so exactly that men who watch them closely can tell to a second when to expect them at any particular point, is a stupendous miracle. God placed them in the heavens "for signs," as well as "for seasons, and days, and years." Gen. i. 14. They are signs to all men that the power and mercy of the Lord are everlasting. They are signs of the faithfulness of God, which is established in the very heavens. When we see the shadow moving forward we may be as sure of the fulfilment of the Word of God to us as Hezekiah was when he saw it going backward. No word of God can fail, and every sunbeam is proof of it. God has not left Himself without witness, and we are not obliged to ask for something special in our case. All we have to do is to look round us.

"What Is Truth?" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

The question of Pilate at the trial of the Saviour should be the honest inquiry of every soul,—"What is truth?" And why?—Because it is by the truth that men are sanctified and made free. John viii. 32; xiv. 6. What then is truth? The answer is simple and short,—"Thy Word is truth." To know God's Word is to know the truth; but this means more than to give a formal assent to it, for the Psalmist says, "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts." Ps. li. 6. This is apparent, for by the law (which is the truth, Ps. cxix. 42,) all are to be judged.

Error comes in with sin; and as there is no union between righteousness and sin, so truth and error cannot mix. Truth does not naturally find a lodgment in the carnal heart, for by it sin is made known, and sin never invites inspection.

Almost from the very beginning of the human race there has been a fierce struggle between these two opposing forces, and in the latter days especially is this conflict to be waged more than ever; for so insidious will the work of Satan be that, if it were possible, the elect themselves will be deceived. Mark xiii. 24.

With the truth there is no compromise. Every decision must be clean-cut. There can be no half-way position. "He that is not with Me is against Me." There is no neutral ground.

"Job's Singing School" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

An old deacon greatly surprised his good wife one cold winter evening by saying to her, "My dear, I am going out to organise a singing school." In astonishment she looked up and said, "Why you can't sing a tune; how can you teach music?" He made no reply, but left the house, harnessed the horses, took a good supply of provisions and fuel, and started for the home of a poor widow with six children. He found her in a destitute condition, with no fire, and the children crying for something to eat. When he made known the object of his visit, and laid before the family what he had brought, tears of joy filled their eyes, and their heartfelt thanks were showered upon him. When he returned home his wife inquired how he had succeeded in getting up his singing school, and he replied, "First class." Then taking from the shelf the family Bible, he read, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." "That is the kind of singing school I have started, one of Job's singing schools," he said, "and it was a success."

"Denmark" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

The little kingdom of Denmark does not desire war with any country, and has no motive for war. It does not desire the territory of any other power; its people are industrious, frugal, and prosperous; and it would have everything to lose, and nothing to gain, by a war. yet it has one great anxiety, which is just now specially troubling it, and that is, that it will not be *allowed*, by the other and greater powers, to retain its position of neutrality. What a striking comment upon the confidence that men have in the present talk about peace.

"A Cheering Thought" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

The marks of sin are plainly visible everywhere around us. Disappointments are on every hand, tears flow freely, heart-strings are bleeding and torn, our loved ones are snatched from our embrace; and were it not for the hope of the Christian, we should truly be "of all men most miserable." But thanks be to the God of love, while it is appointed for man *once* to die, he does not need to die *twice*. And it is a most solemn yet joyful thought that the time is drawing near when the entombed millions who have fallen asleep in Jesus will hear the shout that will call them forth from their dusty beds, and in the twinkling of an eye be made immortal. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

"Little Folks. Fire and Water" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

"All power in heaven and in earth is given unto Me." These are the words of Jesus, and the Psalmist also tells us that "power belongeth *unto God*." If we really believe these words of God, we shall see, wherever there is any power working in the earth, the hand of God.

Think of the power of running water, which, through what is called "the science of Hydraulics," is put to so much practical use for the service of man, to turn his mills and water wheels, etc.

But whose is this power? Where does the water come from, and who causes it to flow? It all comes from God, the "fountain of living waters," and the One who moves all things in the universe by His Spirit that first "moved upon the face of the waters." Therefore this "power belongeth unto God."

Think again of the power of fire or heat, and the wonders that are wrought by it, of the mighty changes that take place under its influence. It can make solids into liquids, and liquids into gases or vapours. What could be done without it in our homes, our manufactories, and in all nature?

This fire and heat, we have learned, comes from the sun, the shining forth upon this earth of God's glory. All this therefore simply shows us *the power of His glory*, the transforming power of the light of His countenance. "Thine is the kingdom and *the power and the glory*."

Now we will think for a little while of something that is produced when these two things, fire and water, are brought in contact with each other, something very familiar to you all,-

STEAM

You see it every day, but have you, I wonder, ever thought what it really is? Even in this we may see the wonderful power of God's life working, and how He has placed this at the service of man.

We said that heat can change solids to liquids and liquids to gases or vapours. This is proved to us very often by what we can see of its motion upon water. In the winter when the water is very cold, it takes the solid form that we call ice. But when the warmer weather comes the solid ice is changed by the sun's heat into liquid flowing water.

But when it becomes warmed still more, like everything else it expands, spreads out and gets lighter, with the heat, until at last it evaporates, becomes so thin and light that it passes into the air and rises up to form the great billowy clouds that float there over our heads, through which God waters and refreshes the earth.

In the power of the great sun working upon the waters of the ocean, warming and drawing them up into the sky in this way, it is easy for us to see God's hand, and to know that it is His power working. But He wants us to learn from this to see the same thing everywhere, and to recognise His power wherever we see it at work.

We have learned how fire and water come from God through the sun and the clouds, and all the power that is in them is the power of God's life. Men see the fire, the heat with which God supplies the earth through the sun, to warm the water which flows to us from Him.

Then through the laws of His life which are working in both the water and the fire, some of the power, the heat that is in the fire, passes into the water and it expands into steam (of the wonderful power of which we will tell you move another time). This power is used to work all kinds of heavy and intricate machinery, to drive the engines which draw long train-loads of people at immense speed over the land, and to push, the huge steamboats across the ocean.

But whose is the power that is doing all this? It is the power of God, whose life is in the water, and from whom comes the heat that changes it into the form of vapour steam. Man cannot create or make power, but can only use the power which God is giving him in all these things.

Men use their talents to find out how best to control a small portion of the power with which God has filled the earth, to supply their own wants. But how few there are who recognise in it all that "power belongeth unto God," and that "there is no power but of God." So they do not "glorify Him as God," but "become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened."

May you, little children, be kept so "pure in heart that you may see God"-see Him working everywhere and in all things, and so learn to "Fear God, and give glory to Him."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

-Russia, has placed orders for 20,000,000 dollars' worth of war material with the United States.

-It is computed that 7,000 swans' skins are annually imported into London to make "puffs," used by ladies to lay powder on the face.

-Quite a number of the fashion-leading women of Paris have decreed that the corset must go, and to this end have begun a crusade against it.

-In the last three months the fire insurance companies of New York have paid in losses two and a half times as much as they have taken in premiums.

-A single fly, if unmolested from the beginning of the fly season, will produce through itself and its successors, in a single season, the almost unbelievable number of 2,080,820.

-At Lambeth, detectives discovered a spurious coin mint, one of the most extensive ever brought to light in the metropolis. The floor was literally strewn with bogus florins, shilling pieces, etc.

-France last week launched a new submarine torpedo boat, costing ?38,000.

-The Dowager Empress of China has issued an edict directing financial reforms, brought about from her study of the works of a leading Chinese reformer.

-Over twenty-five deaths from lockjaw have occurred in New York City and surrounding country, due to accidents from toy pistols, etc., while celebrating the Fourth of July.

-Two additional battleships, one cruise, two gunboats, fourteen destroyers, twenty-five torpedo boats and one submarine torpedo boat are ordered by the Budget Committee to be added to the French Navy during 1900.

-The whole of the American correspondents at Manila have entered an emphatic protest against the alleged systematic suppression and falsification of news carried on by the censorship. They state that the true facts in the case have not been reported.

-Extraordinary qualities are possessed by the River Tinto, in Spain. It hardens and petrifies the sand of its bed, and if a stone falls in the stream and alights upon another, in a few months they unite and become one stone. Fish cannot live in its waters.

-Upon application of the Sanitary Inspector to Bermondsey Vestry, orders were issued for the destruction of several tons of strawberries, raspberries, etc., because of the unwholesome condition of the fruit. A large proportion of it was consigned to Lipton's jam factory.

-The so-called Tugrin fog dispeller, expected to prove a boon to mariners, is simply a three-inch tube eight feet long, through which warm air is forced by a blower. A hole is thus cleared, enabling the navigator to see several hundred feet through the densest fog. Fog is still an unsolved problem.

-According to the report just given, lunatics are increasing in London at the rate of 500 a year, and it is calculated that by 1901, accommodations will be required for 15,918. An appropriation of ?1,000 has been made by the Asylums Committee for inquiries and preparations of preliminary designs for further accommodation.

-Nine shop-keepers were prosecuted at Sheerness for Sunday trading. The magistrate imposed a fine of five shillings in each case, on technical grounds, but declined to make any order for the payment of costs, on the ground that he thought it absurd to invite people to that place for fresh air, and then make it impossible for them to get even an apple or an orange.

-London requires 600,000 cows to supply it with the products of the dairy, 84,000 being needed for milk alone. Nearly 12,000 of these "milk machines" spend their lives in sheds, and hardly ever see daylight, so to speak; 4,000 horses are engaged in delivering the products, and rather more than 30,000 hands are engaged permanently in the traffic.

-The Peace Conference is proving itself to be a farce. Russia has, since the proposal of the Peace Conference, never ceased arming. War vessels are being built and ordered at a hitherto unheard-of rate; new guns are being bought, and orders have just been placed in America for ?5,000,000 of ammunitions of war; and the latest proceedings at The Hague confirm the belief that nothing will prohibit the use of newly-invented engines of war.

"What Is in Your Heart?" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

Hezekiah king of Judah was a good man, who "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." He could remind the Lord that he had walked before Him in truth and with a perfect heart, and done that which was good in His sight, and God did not correct him. Isa. xxxviii. 3.

Nevertheless at one time Hezekiah acted very foolishly and wickedly. God had wondrously healed him, and had given him a sign in the heavens, which could not but be known in all the earth; yet when messengers from Babylon came to enquire about it, Hezekiah, instead of using the opportunity to lead them to God, vainly showed them all his treasures, like a child exhibiting his toys. We read that he "rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up." 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. Pride goeth before destruction, and in this instance we see how it prepares the way for it; for the vain-glorious exhibition of the treasures of the kingdom only aroused the cupidity of the Babylonians, and resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem.

But how could Hezekiah, who had always lived a humble, godly life, turn so suddenly to folly, and to sin against God? The answer is: "In the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. We see, therefore, that all this folly was in Hezekiah's heart, unknown to him, even while he was serving God in truth and uprightness.

The hearts of all men are alike. All have the same nature. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness." Mark vii. 21, 22. These things are in the heart, not of a few men only, but of all mankind. No one need say that none of these things are in his heart, for they are all there, even though they have not all appeared openly. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord search the heart." Jer. xvii. 9, 10.

Was not Hezekiah a converted man? was he not a Christian?-Certainly he was. The history of his life shows that. Yet all this evil was present, waiting the time when it could reveal itself. In the flesh of no man dwells there any good thing. It is only when we walk in the light as God is in the light, that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John i. 7. The life-blood must continually flow through us, to cleanse away the impurity. Only in the Lord have we righteousness and strength; there is none in us. If we allow Him to leave us for a moment, some of the wickedness of the flesh will manifest itself.

Many are trusting in themselves, and congratulating themselves upon their own supposed righteousness. They are ready enough with their condemnation of others, forgetting that much of their own seeming goodness is simply lack of opportunity or of special temptation to do wrong. Forgetting to give God the glory, they will surely some time be allowed to exhibit the weakness of their lives. If

from such a fall they learn, as did Peter, to trust in the Lord, then even that will contribute to their salvation.

None of us have any reason to boast over another. "By the grace of God I am what I am." "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. We have no occasion to boast of any goodness that appears in us, since it is all of God; but we have much reason to be ashamed of any sin, because grace from God is given us in sufficient measure to overcome all sin. Although sin, like a beast of prey, always croucheth at the door, with its desire toward us, we may rule over it; but this can be only when we recognise that the sin of all the world is ours, and in humility trust in the Lord.

Even though God should for a little moment leave us, He will gather us with great mercies. Isa. liv. 7, 8. But this history of Hezekiah was recorded in order that we might know what is in our hearts without its being necessary for God to leave us. Even while we are serving God in truth and righteousness, we may and should know that we stand only by the power of God's hand. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "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 Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude 24, 25.

"Rejoicing in Truth" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

Rejoicing in Truth .-Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." 1 Cor. xiii. 6. It "thinketh no evil." What is love?-"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. xiii. 10. True love-the love of God-is "that we keep His commandments." 1 John v. 3. Love is righteousness. Now here is a test by which we may know ourselves. If we find a sort of satisfaction in hearing that some person has some weakness, some bad habit that he has not overcome, or if we find any pleasure in talking or hearing of the failures of any person, especially if that person be one from whom we expect better things, then we may know that the very evil of which we are talking or hearing is in our own hearts and lives. Our satisfaction in hearing of the evil is because we regard it as a sort of excuse for our own sin. If the love of God is in our hearts, the mere thought of another's failure will give us pain. God is love, and He takes no pleasure in hearing or seeing evil. Our sin causes Him pain and sorrow. Moreover, He thinks no evil concerning us. He is not suspicious, but treats us as though we were good, in order to draw us and hold us to the good. "For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Jer. xxix. 11.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

Every nation is represented in the Peace Congress; at the same time every nation is planning for an increase in its military force, each one expressly stating, however, that this preparation is designed only for defence, and not for attack. But if no one ever attacks, there will be no occasion for defence, and if there were any mutual confidence among nations, some of them, at least, would relieve themselves of the burden of preparing for defence which we are assured will not be needed. Who believes it?

August 3, 1899

"The Gathering of Israel. Ezekiel's Great Vision. Eze. xxxvii. 1-14" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

THE RESURRECTION, AND THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest.

"Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

"So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them.

"Then said He unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

"Then He said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. [Revised Version, "We are clean cut off."] Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put My spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

The most cursory reading of this chapter is sufficient to show that it deals with the resurrection of the dead. It is a most literal description of that event. Some one will say that it is a representation of the restoration of the Jews to their own land. That is exactly the truth, for that is what the text itself says; but it also tells us that the restoration is to be effected by the resurrection.

In the eleventh verse the children of Israel are represented as saying that they are clean out off. Death cuts man off from the face of the earth, and is *apparently* the destruction of his hope; for the promise is that the children of Abraham shall inherit the earth, yet they die without having any share in it. Accordingly the scoffers say, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Peter iii. 3, 4.

But "the righteous hath hope in his death." The Apostle Paul writes: "I

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would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first," etc. 1 Thess. iv. 13-16. The promise of the land to Abraham included, and was based upon, the resurrection, and Abraham so understood it, else he could not have died in faith, not having received the promise.

The children whom Herod slew in order to kill the infant Jesus represent all the dead children of Israel. Rachel, the wife of Jacob, is represented as weeping for her children; but all the children of Israel are her children just as much as were the innocent babes who were slaughtered by the tyrant. Now read what is said of the death of her children:-

"Thus saith the Lord: A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." Jer. xxxi. 15-17.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." 1 Cor. xv. 26. Those who are dead are in the land of the enemy, but God has promised that they shall come from that land, and shall return "to their own border." So we see that the return of the children of Israel to their own border, to their own land, is by the resurrection of the dead. That is the hope of Israel. The Apostle Paul was seized and bound by the unbelieving Jews because he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and he said, "For the hope of Israel am I bound with this chain" (Acts xxviii. 20), and to another congregation of the Jews he said, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." Acts xxiii. 6.

There is therefore no hope for Israel except in the resurrection at the coming of the Lord; but that hope is a "lively hope," to which we are begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Peter i. 3. Christ's resurrection is the surety of the general resurrection. And from this we may learn that every righteous person is counted as Israel, and will be included in the restoration; for it is by the resurrection of the dead, through Christ, that Israel are restored, and what Christ does for one He does for all. There are no people who have some special interest in the death and resurrection of Christ, that others do not have. Since it is by the resurrection of Jesus that the children of Israel are restored to their own land, it follows that everybody who sleeps in Jesus, and is raised from the dead through Him, is an Israelite, waiting to be redeemed from exile in the enemy's land.

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. . . . Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Heb. xi. 9-13. Now we know that they did not inherit the promise; for God, in making to Abraham the promise of an innumerable seed and an everlasting inheritance in the land wherein he was a stranger, said to him: "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." Gen. xv. 13-16. David said, "I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." Ps. xxxix. 12. And he repeated this statement when at the height of his power he handed the kingdom over to Solomon. 1 Chron. xxix. 15. All the faithful are alike waiting the return of the Lord, and the resurrection, as the consummation of their hopes. It was by faith in the resurrection of the dead that Abraham offered Isaac. Heb. xi. 17-19.

The prophet says that as he prophesied according to the command of the Lord, "there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone." Verse 7. In the Revised Version we find "earthquake" in the place of "shaking," and the margin gives "thundering" in the place of "noise." This agrees exactly with the description of the resurrection at the coming of Christ. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. iv. 16. When Christ died upon the cross, "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Matt. xxvii. 51-53. Three days afterward "there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven,

and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Matt. xxviii. 2. So we see that the resurrection of the dead is accompanied by an earthquake.

It is by the breath of God that men live. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. ii. 7. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." Acts xvii. 25. In His hand is the soul of every living thing, "And the breath of all mankind." Job xii. 10. Job said: "All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils; my lips shall not speak wickedness." Job. xxvii. 3, 4. If He thought only of Himself; if He gathered and kept to Himself His Spirit and His breath; all flesh would perish together, and man would turn again unto dust. See Job xxiv. 14, 15. He takes away the breath of man and beast, and they die, and return to their dust; but He sends forth His Spirit, and they are created, and He renews the face of the earth.

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Accordingly God told Ezekiel to prophesy to the wind, and say, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." From this we see that the wind that plays upon our cheeks, and that refreshes us as we draw full inspirations into our lungs, is the breath of God. Surely it is so, because we breathe the air, and yet we have the breath of God in our nostrils. Our breath is the same as Adam's. Adam's breath the second minute that he lived, and the third, and the fourth, and so on, was exactly the same as the first moment. Moreover, neither Adam nor any of his descendants has ever had any power over the breath, either to start it or stop it. Eccl. viii. 8. It comes involuntarily. For a minute, by a great effort, we may hold our breath, and then it will come in spite of us. No man could commit suicide by voluntarily refusing to breathe. The breath comes arbitrarily while we are asleep and entirely unconscious. Therefore it is plain that not only did God breathe the breath of life into Adam's nostrils in the beginning, but that He continued doing so, and has performed the same operation for every man that has ever lived, every moment of his life.

How near God is to us! So near that we can feel His breath in our faces; so near that He is face to face with us, breathing into our nostrils. How real it is that He is "not far from every one of us." And He is just as near us when we fall asleep in death; for all the righteous ones "sleep in Jesus," and the same breath that keeps us in life now will revive the dead from their sleep in the grave. "The hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." John v. 28, 29. And this resurrection from the dead is but the same process by which those who are dead in trespasses and sins are now quickened, and made to pass from death to life. Therefore we may know that if we believe God the life of righteousness will be just as easy as for that is what will give it to us. "The just shall live by faith," but every man, whether just or otherwise, lives by breathing; therefore that which makes a man righteous is the fact that he breathes by faith. Our hope in Christ and His resurrection rests in the fact that God has surrounded the earth with an atmosphere of grace.

**"The Gospel of Isaiah. Hezekiah's Tribute of Thanksgiving. Isa.
xxxviii. 9-20" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXVIII. 9-20, LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

9. T HE WRITING OF HEZEKIAH KING OF JUDAH. WHEN HE HAD BEEN
SICK, AND WAS RECOVERED FROM HIS SICKNESS:

10. I said, when my days were just going to be
cut off,

I shall pass through the gates of the grave;
I am deprived of the residue of my years!

11. I said, I shall no more see Jehovah in the land
of the living!

I shall no longer behold man, with the in-
habitants of the world!

12. My habitation is taken away, and is removed
from me, like a shepherd's tent;

My life is cut off, as by the weaver; He will
sever me from the loom;

In the course of the day Thou wilt finish my
web.

13. I roared until the morning, like the lion;
So did He break to pieces all my bones.

14. Like the swallow, like the crane did I twitter;
I made a moaning like the dove.

Mine eyes fail with looking upward;
O Lord, contend Thou for me; be Thou my
surety.

15. What shall I say? He hath given me a
promise, and He hath performed it.

Through the rest of my years will I reflect on
this bitterness of my soul.

16. For this cause shall it be declared, O Jehovah,
concerning Thee,

That Thou hast revived my spirit;
That thou hast restored my health, and pro-
longed my life.

17. Behold my anguish is changed into ease!
Thou hast rescued my soul from perdition;

Yea, Thou hast cast behind Thy back all my
sins.

18. Verily the grave shall not give thanks unto
Thee; death shall not praise Thee!

They that go down into the pit shall not await
Thy truth;

19. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as
I do this day;
The father to the children shall make known
Thy faithfulness.

20. Jehovah was present to save me; therefore
will we sing our songs to the harp,
All the days of our life, in the house of
Jehovah.

In this writing we learn why it was that Hezekiah was so much troubled when he learned that he must die. It was because it did not mean an entrance into a larger life with greater possibilities, as some would have us believe. Death is not life, in any sense of the word. The message to Hezekiah was, "Thou shalt die, and not live." If death had meant life under far better conditions than are possible on this earth, then we may be sure that Hezekiah, who all his life had "walked before the Lord," would not have had any objection to it. But he knew better. When the word came to him, he said, "I am deprived of the residue of my years." It was not that he was going to live in another place, under somewhat changed circumstances, much as one will go to a distant country;-a man does not weep sore over that, even if the country be not quite so good as the one he is leaving;- Hezekiah wept because he was not going to live anywhere any more.

"I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world." But this could not be if at death Hezekiah were going to be with the Lord. He had learned to see the Lord in His works and ways,

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but now this delight was to be cut off. He could no longer behold God or man. The same thought was expressed by David, when he had been delivered from death. He said, "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Ps. cxvi. 9. It is a fact that "God hath given to us eternal life," so that the life that we now live, if it be by faith, is but the beginning of that which we shall live in the world to come. The future life will be but a continuation of this, so that while we live, whether in this world or that which is to come, we may walk before the Lord. At this present time we may walk in the light of His countenance (Ps. lxxxix. 15, 16), and in the new earth His servants "shall see His face" (Rev. xxii. 4); but "in death there is no remembrance" of the Lord (Ps. vi. 5); only by the resurrection, at the coming of Christ, can the righteous dead "ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. iv. 16-17.

In verse 12 Lowth has it, "My habitation is taken away," while our common version has it, "Mine age is departed." The Revised Version has the same, with "habitation" in the margin as an alternative reading. The Hebrew allows both renderings, and both are in reality the same, since so long as a man lives he must live somewhere. When a man's life is taken away, his habitation is taken away; and if there is absolutely no place for him to live, it is because he has no life any more. Most vivid expressions are used to indicate the great change that death brings. "My life is cut off, as by the weaver; He will sever me from the loom; in the course of the day Thou wilt finish my web." Life is likened to a web in the loom, the threads of which are composed of moments; Hezekiah's web was

about to be cut off from the loom incomplete. An end was to be made of him. This explains the reason of his great sadness at the thought of death. It does not, however, excuse Hezekiah's lack of resignation to the message of the Lord. Death is an enemy, and always hateful, and the fact that God Himself allows one of His servants to suffer it, does not in the least make it any more attractive; but the fact that the Lord Himself does allow His servants to die, and that even in death they do not suffer anything that He has not suffered, should make them resigned, and even happy, in the face of it. "The righteous hath hope in his death." Christ, who died, is alive for evermore, and has the keys of death and the grave, so that, although Satan has the power of death, he can hold no one except at the pleasure of the Lord. The grave can no more hold a child of God beyond God's will than it could hold Jesus after the third day. Therefore although the grave is indeed a hateful, terrible place, no one whose life is hid with Christ in God need fear it.

"Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." What kind of place is the grave?-It is "the pit of corruption." That is where people go at death. The patriarch Job said, "If I wait, the grave is mine house; I have made my bed in darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister." Job. xvii. 13-14. The land of darkness, and the shadow of death, is "a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." Job x. 21, 22. Yet the Christian, who knows the Lord, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike, may fear no evil, even in the valley of the shadow of death.

We must not think that Hezekiah's prayer for deliverance from the grave was wholly selfish. No; the reason why he wished to live, and not go into the grave, is thus told by him to the Lord, "For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth." "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Ps. cxv. 17. The psalmist also said, "I cried to Thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made my supplication. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise Thee? shall it declare Thy truth?" Ps. xxx. 8, 9. Thus we see that it is not wrong to ask the Lord to keep us from the grave: much of the Psalms, which are given for our guide in the matter of prayer and praise, is composed of this very petition. Again we read, "Mine eye mourneth because of mine affliction; Lord, I have called daily upon Thee, I have stretched out my hands unto Thee? Wilt Thou show wonders unto the dead? shall the dead arise and praise Thee? Selah. Shall Thy loving kindness be declared in the grave? or Thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark? and Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" Ps. lxxxviii. 9-12. From this we get the facts as to the nature of the grave, and the conditions there. Who that has ever looked into an open grave cannot appreciate the description?

"The living, the living he shall praise Thee, as I do this day." In this there is something more than a point of doctrine for us. Notice in all the scriptures that have been quoted, that the inability to praise the Lord in the grave is the reason why these faithful servants of the Lord wished to be delivered from it. The matter

of praising the Lord makes all the real difference between death and life. The man who does not praise the Lord is as dead. Idols of silver and gold, the work of men's hands, which are in every respect the farthest removed from any likeness to the God that is in the heavens working all things after the counsel of His own will, are thus described: "They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them." Ps. cxv. 3-8. That is to say, that every one who does not trust in the Lord is like a dead piece of metal. The man who sees nothing in the world for which to praise the Lord, does not see anything, for all His works praise Him (Ps. cxlv. 10), and is the same as though he had no eyes. And he who does not speak to the praise of God is as though he had no mouth at all; and if his feet and hands do not move in the service of the Lord, then he is as though he had no life. "Dead in trespasses and sins." The same Psalm that tells about the deadness of idols and of those who trust in them, tells us that "the dead praise not the Lord." See a man that does not praise the Lord; he is dead, and needs to be made alive. As surely as a man is alive he will praise the Lord. "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." Ps. cl. 6.

One thing more must not be overlooked in reading this tribute of thanksgiving. Hezekiah said to the Lord, "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Sin and death are inseparable. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have

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sinned." Rom. v. 12. God redeems our life from destruction, and heals all our diseases, because it is He that forgives all our iniquities. Ps. ciii. 3, 4. In the directions for prayer for the sick, given by the Apostle James it is said that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." James v. 15. Not that we are to understand by this that everybody who dies is a sinner: far from it; "the righteous is taken away from the evil to come" (Isa. lvii. 1), and a blessing is pronounced upon those who die in the Lord. Rev. xiv. 13. Yet if it were not for sin, there would be no death. We have inherited mortal bodies, and they are allowed to go into the grave; but it is the power by which sins are forgiven, and the very forgiveness itself, that insures our resurrection from the dead. There will be a people, however, in the last days, just before the unveiled revelation of the glory of Christ in the heavens, who will represent Christ so completely that death will have no power over them, and they will be translated to heaven without seeing death. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." 1 Cor. xv. 51. Therefore "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

"The 'Mystery' of God" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

When Nebuchadnezzar dreamed and it passed from him so that he could not recall it, he demanded of the magicians, the astrologers, and soothsayers to declare to him the dream with the interpretation. But to them it was a secret that none could reveal, according to their own confession, "except the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh." Because they were unable to do this, the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men should be slain, because, as he said, "ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me."

Then the captain of the king's guard brought Daniel and his companions to put them to death, as they were counted among the wise men. But Daniel confidently told him that if he would give him a little time he would make known the dream with the interpretation. Then with his companions he sought mercies of the God of heaven concerning the matter, and the simple record is, "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision."

This secret that they desired to know was the secret of God. He only could reveal it, and they knew it. But their experience is simply the experience of finding out the Gospel secret. The knowledge of this secret is to every individual just as much a matter of life and death, as was the knowledge of the king's secret to the wise men of Babylon. And just as only God could make known to Daniel and his fellows the secret they desired, so a knowledge of the Gospel can be revealed only by Him.

In the Gospel the word used to represent this secret is "mystery." Christ said, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God,"-"the mystery which was kept secret since the world began." This secret, according to the apostle is in 1 Cor. iii. 16, is "God manifest in the flesh," or "Christ in you the hope of glory." Gal. i. 17. He is then the "mystery of godliness;" and anyone who knows what it is to have Jesus Christ dwelling within him, knows the Gospel secret, and in no other way can he know it. And yet it is a mystery after all. No one can explain it or reason it out, because the deep things of God are beyond human reason. It must simply be accepted as a fact.

There is something more to this secret than simply the abstract knowledge of it. To him who knows it, it is a "well of water springing up into everlasting life,"-not alone to himself, but to others also. Christ will in him be manifest in the flesh, and the works that the Master did for those around Him, he will do. In his everyday life, the Saviour will be lifted up, and thus others will be, drawn to Him. John xii. 32.

"Witness for the Truth" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

Christ said to Pilate, "For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." The Christian is to bear witness to the truth in his daily experience, not to say that he believes this or that, but to witness for the truth by being the truth. Wherever Jesus went as He moved among the people, in His attitude toward them, in His speech, in the way in which He set principle above custom, He bore witness to the truth. "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I

you," were the Saviour's words to His disciples, and those who go forth as witnesses for the truth must bear that witness as Christ did.

"Little Folks. A Lesson from the Heat" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

THE LAW OF LOVE

Remember that in all these things which we have been studying together lately, we are learning of God Himself. "All things come of Thee," said King David, and in all things in nature that we can see, and even in things that we cannot see, like the air and the heat, the laws of God's own life are written.

"The laws of nature" are the law of God's life which is in all things controlling everything according to His will of love for all. Therefore "the Book of Nature" is really "the Book of the Law," the book where God has written for us "the great things of His law," and in all these things we are studying the law of God.

Read the first Psalm, and you will see that His special blessing is upon the one "whose delight is in the law of the Lord," and who studies it and thinks of it by day and night. As we see the laws of His life working in all the things that He has made, we shall learn from Him such lessons of practical wisdom that He says of the one who does this: "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

Let us then, dear children, as we go on with our study of God's great works, pray earnestly the Psalmist's prayer: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

"God is love; His nature, His law, is love;" and so in all these different forms of His life we may learn the lesson of His love. See how plainly this is written for us in what we have been talking about lately, the heat, produced by the sun's rays, God's glory which He has "set upon the heavens."

In the description of love which God has given us in 1 Corinthians, chapter thirteen, we are told that love "seeketh not her own." Love gives itself out freely wherever there is need.

It is one of "the laws of heat," called the "conduction" or "diffusion" of heat, that it gives itself out constantly from things of a higher to those of a lower temperature, until there is "equalisation," an equality of temperature, until they both have exactly the same degree of heat. Last week we spoke of how, when cold water is set upon the fire, the heat from the fire passes into the water, until it has received all that it is possible for it to hold.

If you want to cool anything, you put it in a cool place, or against something cold, or plunge it in cold water. It soon becomes cooler, while the air, the water, or whatever is brought in contact with it becomes warmer. This is because it has parted with some of its heat to warm that which had less.

We sometimes blow upon anything hot when we want it to cool quickly, and we are doing the same thing when we fan ourselves this hot weather in order to keep cool. This sets the air in motion and makes it pass more quickly over us, and as the air is cooler than our bodies, each puff of air carries off some of the

heat. For the law of heat is "equality" or having "all things common," so whatever has any degree of heat must give it out to anything having less with which it is brought in contact.

So the more cool air that passes over us, the more heat our bodies give out. Fanning or blowing does not make the *air* any cooler, but warmer; it makes whatever is fanned or blown upon cooler, because it gives out its warmth to the air which is colder than itself.

If you take a stone, or any cold object, in your hand, and hold it there a little while, you will find that it gets just as warm as your hand; your body gives out some of its heat to warm that which does not have so much, until there is an equality.

You see how God has written the law of His love even in your very body. If you yield fully to His life which fills you, He will write His law of love in your heart by His Holy Spirit, so that you will be just like Him.

When His Spirit filled the disciples on the day of Pentecost, we are told in the book of Acts that they "had all things common." "Neither said any man that ought of the things that he had was his own," but "they distributed to every man according as he had need."

This shows us what God is, for it was His Spirit resting on them that made them do this. He does not keep His glory to Himself; for Jesus said: "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." Though everything in all the universe is His. He shares it all with every one of His creatures, and each may take just what he needs.

Here is a lesson of love for each little child to practise every day. All that God gives to you it is His law of love that you should not call it your own, but be ready always to share with those to whom He has given less than you, to give of what you have to every one you meet just according to his need.

Even if you have nothing but a light happy heart, you can give smiles and bright kind words to those who are downcast. If you have strength and health you can help those who are weak. "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil *the law of Christ*."

"Sleep as a Restorer" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

Sleep as a Restorer .-Children grow more rapidly during the night. In the daytime, while the child is awake and active, the system is kept busy disposing of the wastes consequent on this activity; but during sleep the system is free to extend its operations beyond the mere replacing of worn-out particles. This is why so many invalids need so much rest and sleep. The system has been taxed for years beyond its ability to repair the tissues, and hence the organism has become worn and disabled from the accumulation of waste products, and disease has resulted. With the proper conditions restores, and a season of perfect rest, nature will reassert herself, clearing up the clogged and dirty tissues, and restoring the organs to their normal condition.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

-An egg of the Great Auk was sold in London last week at auction for 300 guineas.

-In the province of West Gothland, Sweden, a strange disease has broken out which attacks cattle and human beings alike. Many are succumbing to its effects.

-An Anglo-Hungarian syndicate is soliciting the concession for a railway from Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, whereby the journey to India will be greatly shortened, and a vast tract of country opened up to trade.

-On the 16th July 9,000 men employed by the Brooklyn electric tramway lines went on strike, because of refusal to redress certain grievances and establish a regular working day of ten hours. The cars are being run under police protection, 2,000 policemen being engaged on this special duty.

-The latest trust is by Spiritualists. According to Dalziel such a trust has just been organised at Washington, U.S.A. "Only members of the trust are to be permitted to materialise spirits for their patrons, and the prices of *sÉances* are to be raised. It is intended to discourage the public belief in non-members of the trust, by asserting that such spirits as appear at their *sÉances* are evil, or at least untrustworthy."

-A violent earthquake shock was felt at Rome, Italy, and the surrounding country. Many houses were reduced to ruins, and much damage done. Shortly before the earthquake Etna broke out into eruption. The mouths of the volcano at present number fourteen, of which four emit fire and three sulphur. Over the central crater hangs an immense plume of smoke towering to a great height. The imposing spectacle is attracting large numbers of foreigners to Sicily.

-In official statements lately published, some startling facts are given concerning the number of suicides in the various armies of the world. Austria heads the list, the average rate for the year being 131 per 100,000 men. The French come next, with 92 suicides for each 100,000 men. Germany is given at 68; Italy 45; Belgium 24; Engalnd 23 (nearly all of them being in India); Russia 20 (which is believed to be far below the actual number), and Spain comes in at about the bottom of the list with 14. There are more suicides among the officers than among the privates.

-The final report of the Royal Commission on Licensing has been issued. It is a Blue Book of 330 pages, and there are many recommendations upon which the whole body of the Commissioners are in practical agreement. Among them are a large reduction in the number of public-houses with limited compensation to the owners; the making of simple drunkenness a crime without other disorderly conduct; that either husband or wife may be entitled to judicial reparation for habitual drunkenness; the sale of any kind of intoxicants to children under ten years old prohibited; habitual drunkards to be placed on a black list and license-holders warned not to serve them; to be drunk when in charge of a child of tender years to be a punishable offence; and complete Sunday-closing to be extended throughout Wales and Monmouthshire.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. xi. 1. It is because of the lack of faith that so many Christians feel that there is no real substance, no satisfying, sustaining evidence in their experience. Instead of always rejoicing, it would be nearer the truth to describe them as always murmuring.

They murmur for the same reason that ancient Israel did. "They forgot God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt: wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea." Ps. cvi. 21, 22. It always seems to us a very wicked thing that Israel should forget the great things God had done for them. It was, but it is just as wicked for us to forget Him too, or to query in our hearts, "Is the Lord among us or not?" It is a sin to forget that God is our salvation, and that He has promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. xiii. 5. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. xiv. 23.

Let us not forget that God is with us, but believe it. Then consider how much it means. He is not like us, weak and inconstant. The universe is upheld by His command, the innumerable angels do His will, all nations before Him are as nothing and "none can stay His hand, or say, What doest Thou?" What a wonderful effect it must have upon anyone's life to spend his days in the presence and under the protection of such a Being! Suppose trials, difficulties and Satanic assaults come upon us. What can they do if the Lord of hosts be with us?

Read what happens to God's enemies when they come into contact with Him. "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." Ps. lxxviii. 1, 2. Certainly. Nothing else could possibly happen. So if we will only remember that God is with us, never to forsake us, we will know that we are perfectly safe, and that for the enemy to come to close quarters simply means destruction to himself. Satan knows this too, and it not at all anxious to try his strength with the Lord. "Resist the devil, and *he will flee* from you."

The mistake we make too often is to think that we are alone, and think only of ourselves as meeting the assaults of the enemy. When we remember that God is with us, so that it is He who must bear the brunt of the fighting, that alters the situation entirely. Satan's whole strength is not to be compared with God's; therefore we are quite safe, and can dwell confidently. So we read on, "But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to His name."

Now here is an opportunity for us to discover whether we are believers or infidels. Do we walk in weakness and fear, often falling, or do we go in the strength of the Lord? Do we become discouraged because we are so sinful, or do we rejoice that God's righteousness is upon us? God says He is with us, and that in Him we live and move and have our being. Therefore our life is made up of ourselves and God. He is everything, we are less than nothing. How much

thought do we bestow upon Him, and how much upon ourselves? Do we remember Him more than ourselves, or is it the other way about? the life which acknowledges God in all its ways will be as much better and higher than the life which forgets Him, as the life of an angel is better than that of the brutes that perish.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their strength; and in Thy favour our horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king." Ps. lxxxix. 15-18.

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them." Deut. xxxiii. 26, 27.

Work on Christ's lines will be successful, as His was. He had no difficulty in getting the ears of the people. The secret of His success was that "He went about doing good." Christianity has not changed. All the world knows of Christ is what it sees revealed through His representatives, and when their work is entirely different from that of the Saviour, He is not revealed, but His character is misrepresented.

There are many people who are physically weak because of lack of exercise. So there are many who are spiritually and mentally weak because they do not exert themselves. One good rule for a Christian worker is never to refuse to do any work that comes in his way, whether it be small or great. Do not despise the small things, and do not be afraid to take hold of the great ones. God gives strength according to your need. If you never take hold of any work that is beyond your strength you will never have any reason to expect more strength. There will be no occasion for God to give you more. No one can ever learn anything, if he never reads anything that is beyond his present capacity. Always be ready to every good work, and God will work in you to show the perfection of His strength in your weakness.

It is very easy for men to see the marks of the curse everywhere. In plague and pestilence, in famine and in drought, in havoc and disaster, in ruined homes and blighted lives, the deadly working of the curse is seen. But the curse is the cross of Christ. Christ has been made a curse for men. Gal. iii. 13. It is He who bears its weight, and wherever we see the curse, we see Christ crucified. When we see it in our own lives, we are not to be discouraged, for wherever the cross is there is Christ. Where sin abounds grace does much more abound. Christ crucified is the power of God. "Though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God." 2 Cor. xiii. 4. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. ii. 20.

August 10, 1899

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Going to Babylon. Isa. xxxix" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. XXXIX., LOWTH'S TRANSLATION.)

At that time Merodach Baladan, the son of Baladan king of Babylon, sent letters, and ambassadors, and a present to Hezekiah; for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. And Hezekiah was rejoiced at their arrival; and he showed them his magazines, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and his whole arsenal, and all that was contained in his treasures; there was nothing in his house, and in all his dominion, that Hezekiah did not show them.

And Isaiah the prophet came unto King Hezekiah, and said unto him: What say these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said: They are come to me from a distant country, from Babylon. And he said: What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah said: They have seen everything in my house: there is nothing in my treasures, which I have not shown them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah: Hear thou the word of Jehovah God of hosts. Behold, the day shall come, when all that is in thy house, and that thy fathers have treasured up unto this day, shall be carried away to Babylon; there shall not anything be left, saith Jehovah. And of thy sons which shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah: Gracious is the word of Jehovah, which thou hast delivered! For, added he, there shall be peace, according to His faithful promise, in my days.

And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour; and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks. Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him substance very much. This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. 2 Chron. xxxii. 27-31.

EXHIBITIONS OF SELF

This lesson is very short, and very simple, yet it is one of the most important in the whole Bible. Everybody stands in need of it. The tendency to "show off" seems to be inherent in human nature, and it is most assiduously cultivated. The baby in its mother's arms must exhibit its infantile attainments to every visitor, besides a hundred times a day to its admiring friends, until the child as soon as it begins to think, very naturally concludes that whatever he does must be of

exceptional merit and interest, simply because it is he that does it. At home he must show off his accomplishments, in order that the parents may be complimented on having so wonderful a child. At school he must be put on exhibition for the benefit of the school and the teacher; and in Sabbath school he is used for the same purpose. No wonder that so many continue through life to exhibit themselves on their own account.

The good housewife gratifies her pride, and awakens the envy of her neighbors, by showing them all her stores of household goods; and the merchant and the farmer do the same. It is true that one may very often show another some of his possessions, in order to help that other one, -to give him some ideas as to how to get something for himself, or simply to bring some freshness and change into the life of one whose range is very limited. That is all right; but every one who reads this will know that very often there is in the exhibition of one's attainments or possession merely the gratification of pride, and the desire to receive compliments, to excite astonishment, and to be the subject of conversation.

"SEE MY ZEAL FOR THE LORD"

It is this same spirit that leads religious societies and churches to publish many of the statistics that are continually being given to the world. So much of a business has this become that in many instances men are kept constantly employed to make note of every step of progress, or of supposed progress, so that no time may be lost on any occasion in impressing visitors with the amount of work done, the liberality of

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the donations, and the vast sums expended in buildings, etc. All this is done of course "for the good of the cause," in forgetfulness of the fact that since even "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke xii. 15), much less does the cause of God consist in material wealth. It is not what a man has, but what he is, that God looks at; even so progress in the Lord's work is not indicated by numbers of professed converts, by large amounts of money contributed, or by huge piles of buildings in which church work is done, but in soul-growth, which can be measured by the Lord alone. Its praise is not of men, but of God. None of us are aware of how much emulation there is in our work for the Lord. We may not always say in so many words, with Jehu, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord" (2 Kings x. 16), but the feeling is present, nevertheless. Where there are hundreds who are willing to engage in even the most disagreeable work, provided it comes before the eyes of the public, there are very few who are willing to work for the Lord unknown, except by Him, and with none to recognise and applaud. In fact, we must all plead guilty to more or less selfishness in our work for the Master, who is unselfishness itself.

THE BABYLONISH SPIRIT

Now all this is evidence that God's people have not yet got free from Babylon. It was at least a striking coincidence that it was to the ambassadors from Babylon that Hezekiah made this exhibition of his wealth and grandeur; for that was the very spirit of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar had received from the Lord "a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory." Dan. ii. 37. It was He who made Babylon "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency." Isa. xiii. 19. But he did not in humility of heart give God the glory, but as he walked in his palace he said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" Dan. iv. 29-30. This is the spirit of Babylon, derived from Lucifer, the real king of Babylon, who thought only of exalting himself, and gave not God the glory. Isa. xiv. 13, 14. Since the possessor of the treasures that were shown to the messengers from Babylon had the Babylonish spirit, it was very fitting that they should be taken to Babylon. They belonged in Babylon as much as in Jerusalem. They were in reality Babylonish possessions, although gathered by the kings of Israel. But Hezekiah did not know this at the time.

A LOST OPPORTUNITY

What a wonderful opportunity Hezekiah had to teach those Babylonian ambassadors the truth of God. They had heard that he had been sick, and had recovered, and they knew of the great wonder in the heavens, the sign of God's healing power, and they came to enquire about it and at the same time congratulate Hezekiah. What better preparation of the way could anyone ask than that to make known the saving power of God? It was for that very purpose that God had put it into their hearts to come. But instead of improving the time by telling them of the God that made the heavens and the earth, and making Him known as the sole Healer of the souls and bodies of men, Hezekiah magnified himself in their eyes, by showing them his own treasures. What a mistake he made!

But we must not condemn Hezekiah; our part is simply to note the facts, that we may see ourselves in his picture. Do not get the idea that there was conscious self-exaltation in Hezekiah's act. The treasures were not his own personal property, but belonged to the kingdom. He had not gathered them all himself, but they had been accumulated through many prosperous reigns. It was not his personal wealth that he was showing to the ambassadors from Babylon, but he was impressing them with the greatness of the Jewish kingdom, to the throne of which he had been called. In this exhibition of the royal treasures, Hezekiah was trying to advance the cause of God among the heathen; for "when Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion." Ps. cxiv. 1, 2. We may be sure that Hezekiah thought he was impressing those heathen ambassadors with a sense of the greatness of God's cause and people, and preparing the way for the Babylonian people to be favourably impressed with the truth. He did not know that he was preparing the way for the captivity of Israel.

ROBBING GOD OF THE GLORY

Hezekiah's course has been repeated thousands of times to this day. Christians who would not boast of their own possessions, take great pride in telling what "our church" has done, how much it has contributed, and how great facilities it has for carrying on the work of the Lord. They forget that the only impression that can possibly be made on the world is that the men who have been engaged in this work are shrewd business men; for the world is full of instances of poor boys who have amassed great property, without any thought of Christianity. It is true that it is God who gives men the power to get wealth; but the possession of property is not by any means an evidence that God is pleased with a person or a society, or that He has any special connection with them over other people. If it were, then it would show that God's favour is specially with the world, for more property is in the hands of the world than in the church. Babylon had greater riches than Jerusalem had, so that while the ambassadors might be impressed with the progress of the Israelites, they really could only think that their gods were greater than the God of the Jews. But there were none of their gods that could heal diseases or forgive sins, and in telling of that, Hezekiah might have led the proud heathen to worship in spirit and in truth.

But why should God say that for this error on the part of Hezekiah all the people and treasures of Israel should be taken to Babylon? Ah, there was nothing arbitrary in this; it was a necessity, and the natural consequence of the king's act. God had sent the ambassadors to Jerusalem to learn the truth, and since they did not get it, He had to send His people to Babylon to teach it to them there. This was the necessary consequence of Hezekiah's act. That the cupidity of the ambassadors should be aroused at the sight of the treasures, was a most natural thing. When the king of Babylon afterwards took it into his head to besiege Jerusalem, he knew what he was after. The treasurers in which Hezekiah had taken so much pride, "honest pride," rejoicing to think that he was connected with so great a people, were scattered, and the treasure-houses destroyed, but the truth of God remained the same. That in which men can boast will all pass away, and God will make it plain to His own people as well as to the whole world, that His truth does not depend upon, and cannot be measured by, anything that men can make or gather together. It is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God, that His work is

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to be accomplished, and therefore no display of wealth or power, but only the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, can draw men to Him and His truth.

Hezekiah was a good man, one who sincerely loved the Lord. God was with him, and prospered him. God loved him, and He loved him none the less when he fell into the error concerning the visit of the ambassadors. But God left him to himself for a while, "that he might know what was in his heart." And it was written for our learning, that we might know what is in our hearts; for the hearts of all men are alike, and what is in one is in all. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Jer. xvii. 9. Pride of every kind is in the hearts of all men; when they turn to the Lord, then it is apt to exhibit itself in

other forms. God has left this case on record for us, that we, knowing that it is in our hearts, may allow Him to cleanse us from it. May He deliver us all from Babylon and the Babylonish spirit, and fill us with His own Spirit, the Spirit of meekness.

"Genuine Sacrifice" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

No good deed, no genuine sacrifice, is ever wasted. If there be good in it, God will use it for His own holy purpose; and whatever of ignorance or weakness or mistake was mingled with it will drop away, as the withered petals drop away when the fall flower has blown.

"Christianity Practical" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

Christianity is practical. It is designed to give courage and strength to meet the trials of life, just when and where they come, and to be victorious over them. It was this that enabled Joseph and Daniel to live such upright lives, even amid the most adverse circumstances. If an individual has not such a hold on God that he can receive strength for the everyday and perplexities that come to him, of what use is his Christianity? None whatever. That kind of Christianity is spurious.

Only a short time ago a person said, "There is no use in my trying to be a Christian *here*—I can't stand the pressure of the opposition I have to meet. If I could only get away from these temptations that would be different." Yes, if he could; but he can't. These trials come in consequence of a weakness in his character, and until that weakness is overcome, these trials will come in one form or another no matter where he is.

There was a time when Israel thought to escape the judgments that the Lord permitted to come upon them by saying: "We will flee on horses; we will ride upon the swift." But the Lord immediately replied, "Therefore shall they that pursue you be swift." Isa. xxx. 16. So it is in the Christian warfare, in our struggle with the enemy of souls. There is no place we can go to that he cannot go also; and there is no means of flight so swift that he has not a way just as rapid. Then to think that by change of location, we can get away from the devil and his temptation, is only deceiving ourselves.

Then what is to be done? Put our trust in one stronger than Satan, and that is Jesus Christ. He has met the enemy and conquered him, and He says unto us, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." There is the secret of the Christian strength and security.

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness." Deut. viii. These words come to every one personally. When they were first spoken, many of the audience had not spent forty years in the wilderness, yet that did not excuse them from the obligation of remembering how God had led them forty years. Later generations were required, just as much

as that one was, to keep the experience fresh in their memory. Some of us think if God would only give us bread from heaven, or water from the rock, we would never fall our life long, doubt Him again. Well, He has given these experiences to every one. Surely to us, in this generation, He says, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led *thee* these thousands of years." Let us remember it with joy, and as we dwell upon what He has already done, and what He has promised yet to do, be glad that "this God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death." Ps. xlviii. 14.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The River of Salvation. Ezekiel xlvii. 1-12" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

Probably the last chapters of the book of Ezekiel are less understood than any other equal portion of the Bible, and they are doubtless the most difficult part of the book. Referring to the fortieth chapter, where the trying portion begins, we find that the prophet was in the visions of God brought "into the land of Israel," and set "upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south." Verse 2. This was in the fourteenth year after the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. Now the Lord had already said through Ezekiel (xxi. 25-27) that when Zedekiah ceased to reign, the kingdom of Israel should be no more "until He come whose right it is." Therefore we must conclude that the description of the city and temple which is given in the last chapters of Ezekiel is not a portrayal of something that was for the Jews in their state as one of the nations of earth, but that it refers to the new earth, and is something that will be the portion of all who are saved.

It is true that there are difficult passages in the description, which seem irreconcilable with this presentation, but we must remember that a difficulty is not an argument against the truth. In the

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writings of the Apostle Paul there are "some things hard to be understood," but that is no fault of the writings themselves. It is our dullness and slowness of comprehension, that makes the Scriptures difficult. The only way to understand difficult passages of the Bible is to hold fast to certain firmly-established principles. The plain facts of the Gospel are always the same, and must never be lost sight of. It must also be remembered that the whole Bible is given for the purpose of revealing God to men, and that this is done only through the cross; so that wherever we read, we may be sure that there is something that concerns the great work of salvation. Nothing is placed in the Bible merely to satisfy curiosity, or as a mere matter of history. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. xv. 4. In this chapter of Ezekiel, therefore, we may be sure that there is something to give us hope. Holding fast to the truth that we know, we shall gradually come to an understanding of those things that are at present obscure.

After reading Eze. xl. 2 read Ps. xxviii. 1, 2: "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." It was to this place that God was leading the children of Israel when He took them from Egypt. Ex. xv. 17: "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established." It is this place which Ezekiel saw, and which he has described for us with so much minuteness that our minds are overwhelmed. Of the place which Ezekiel saw, God said to him: "Son of man, this is the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever." Eze. xliii. 7. It is when the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven, and there is a new heaven and a new earth, that the voice from heaven says, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Rev. xxi. 1-3. So we may be assured that what we read of in Ezekiel pertains to the new earth state.

It may be urged that in the course of this description we read of the offering of sacrifices, which is not consistent with the idea that it refers to the new earth state. That is a difficult thing to understand, it is true; but no more so than other statements. For instance, take Jer. xxxiii. 14-18, which undoubtedly refers to the redeemed state. There we read:-

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness. For thus saith the Lord; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually." It is after Christ sits as a Refiner and Purifier of silver, and purifies the sons of Levi, "that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, as in former years." Mal. iii. 3, 4. Verses 1 and 2 show that the time referred to is the last days.

We must therefore rest content for the present with the fact that there are some things in this connection that we cannot understand, and not let them deprive us of the good of that which is plain, and evidently parallel to other scriptures concerning which there is no chance for a misunderstanding. And now we can consider the portion of Scripture that is assigned for the lesson, which, however, after we have settled the application of the last part of Ezekiel, as already done, is so plain as to need no comment.

The prophet was brought to the door of the house, where he saw the "waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; for the forefront of the house stood toward the east." Verse 1. It was "eastward in Eden" that the

Lord planted a garden (Gen. ii. 8), and after He had driven man out of the garden He "placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim and a flaming sword," the symbol of His presence. Gen. iii. 24. The tabernacle built by Moses, which was a picture of the temple in heaven, was always pitched facing the east, and the temple of Solomon faced the east. We know also that out of the throne of God and of the Lamb there proceeds a river of water of life. It is this river, therefore, that we have presented before us in this lesson.

How wide is that river? We may ask that question, because in this lesson the measurements are given, and it is always allowable to ask anything of which the Bible speaks. All we can learn, however, is that it is very wide; for we find from the measurements made by the angel who showed the house to Ezekiel, that the river deepened gradually from the shore for six thousand cubits, or more than a mile, where the water was deep enough to swim in, that is, a man could no longer wade. We may know then that the river of God is of a size commensurate with the greatness of the God from whose throne it flows.

"And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed; it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine," or "for healing." Verse 12. All that is necessary in order to understand the reference here is to read Rev. xxii. 2: "On this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The two passages of Scripture are identical. The tree mentioned by Ezekiel is the tree of life, or, rather, the trees of life, for it is many trees in one, extending along the banks of the river indefinitely. The river is the river of life, for "everything shall live whither the river cometh."

That river is a real stream, and is flowing to-day. It is the life of God sent out into all the universe, and wherever it comes there is life even in spite of the death that rests upon this earth. How little we know of the infinite variety of forms which the life of God can assume. We breathe in the air, we eat it in our food, we drink it in the pure water, we are cheered and strengthened by it as it comes to us, the

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sunshine, and in many other ways it refreshes us. There are many things that contribute to our existence here, but they are all forms of the one life. All proceed from God, who is our life. From that river of God, which is full even to overflowing, we drink day by day, since it is from it that the earth is refreshed and made to bring forth fruit. Ps. lxxv. 9, 10. Every shower that falls upon the earth is but the overflowing of the river of life, which nevertheless never runs dry. From that river we drink, and since it is the life of God, which is righteousness, if we would but recognise God in His gifts, living by faith, we should drink in righteousness every time we quench our thirst. Only God can supply the desires of mankind He satisfies the desire of every living thing. Our hunger and thirst are but cravings for a renewal of the life which comes alone from God; and the drinking of the children of Israel from the rock in the desert, which Rock was Christ (Ex. xvii. 5, 6; 1 Cor. x. 4), and the feeding of the five thousand in the

wilderness, are demonstrations to us that when we eat and drink we are taking from Christ Himself. So it is God that we are unconsciously longing for when we feel the pangs of hunger and thirst. He satisfies our longings by giving us Himself; and if we would remember this, every meal that we eat, and every draught of water that we drink, would be to us healing both of body and soul, even as though we were standing by the throne, looking into the unveiled face of God, and eating and drinking from the tree and the water at life.

"Made New" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

"Behold I make all things new." Now they are old, but they were not always so. In the beginning, at the close of creation, the freshness of youth was upon everything, and it would have remained so, but for sin. Sin is death, and when it entered the world, everything began to grow old and show the marks of decay. Ever since then there has been a steady decline till the earth has waxed old like a garment. Isa. li. 6. But a change will come. When that is removed which caused the earth and all that is in it to grow old, then everything will be new again. Then God will wipe away tears from all faces, sorrow and crying will be no more, death will be swallowed up in victory, the desert shall blossom as the rose, and all the former things will be passed away.

This is not only true of the earth, but it is also the experience that each individual may have within himself. Out of Christ, he is the "old man," and eternal death is his portion. But "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." The change is in him. The "old" has been supplanted by the new, and the righteousness of Christ rules in his life. The fruits of the new life within him are manifest-love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law. The old things are forgotten, as he presses forward in the new life, and by patient continuance in well doing, seeks for glory and honour and immortality."

"Working with Christ" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

Great as is the work that God has to do in the earth, yet to all, even the humblest, He offers an opportunity to be a co-labourer with Him. "To every man *his* work;" so every man has something to do, and no one else can do it for him. This is a message to each one of us. God would have us show forth to the world what it is to be a man among men as was Christ, who though tempted in all points like as we, was yet without sin. Of ourselves we can do nothing, but united with Christ all things are possible. Remember how Jesus, after the feeding of the multitude, "constrained" His disciples to get into a ship and go to the other side, while He went into a mountain to pray. When the vessel was away out from the land twenty or thirty furlongs, in a boisterous sea, the disciples were nearly discouraged with their efforts to reach the port, they looked out upon the water and saw Jesus coming to them. The record says, "They received Him gladly,"

and "immediately the ship was at the land whither they went." Separated from the Master their efforts were almost fruitless; with Him in the ship, the transportation was instantaneous. So with us all when we connect with Christ, all things are not only possible, but easy to accomplish.

"And the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein." Every one who professes to know the Lord must be measured by the standard of God's Word, that it may be seen if he is complete in Jesus. As with the New Jerusalem, the length, and breadth, and height of it are equal. So the Christian should have a symmetrical development. To this end it is necessary that proper regard should be given to healthful living, so that not only the spirit and soul, but the body also shall be preserved blameless (healthy) until the coming of the Lord. Sickness comes in consequence of the transgression of some of nature's laws-it is the penalty; and the one who lives in constant violation of God's laws pertaining to his physical welfare will invariably find that he is weakened in his effort to develop his spiritual nature. The gifts in the church were for the perfecting of the saints that they might become perfect men, (physically as well as spiritually) and grow up unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Eph. iv. 12, 13.

"Little Folks. The Flame of Life" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

We have talked together a good deal lately about fire, and what it is. But there is something we have not spoken of in connection with it,-something so necessary to it that without it no fire can burn,-that is, air.

You know that you cannot make the fire burn if all the air is shut away from it. There must be a draught, a current of air, to keep it burning. How rapidly a fire burns out in the open air, especially if the wind is blowing on it. And perhaps you have seen the old-fashioned bellows that need to be in every household for blowing air into the fire to make it burn brightly.

It is the oxygen in the air that makes the fire burn. Perhaps you are already learning something about this how this oxygen gas that is in the air unites with the gases that are in the fuel, and the light and heat that the fuel has absorbed from the sun's rays are set free again into the air. We see the bright flame and feel the heat of this compressed sunshine.

When this takes place, and these things are turned back into what they were made up of, we can see just what formed them,-gas and sunbeams! or, in other and truer words, God's breath and His glory. Can you not see then, children, that all things in the earth are only different forms of the wonderful life of God?

The air, without which no fire can burn, is the breath of God. So the fire, besides being, as we have found it to be, the gleaming of God's glory, and all its light and heat coming from Him, can burn only in His breath which kindles it.

An ancient wise man once said: "Know ye that the fire in your huts and the life in your bodies are one and the same thing." It will perhaps surprise you very much that he should think so; but I want to show you that there is truth in what he

said. For the fire in the stove and the life in your body are both sparks from the Divine fire of God's own life.

The fire is kept burning only by the air blowing upon it. You too are kept alive, as you know, by breathing in the breath of God, or rather by the breathing it into you every moment.

But have you ever thought what is the work that this breath does for you? It is the same that it does for the fuel in your stoves, it keeps the flame of life burning within you. Your life is a fire, for it is the life of God, and His Word tells us that "Our God is a consuming fire."

The food that we eat is the fuel that we need to burn to keep up this life, but like the fire it must have air to make it burn. It is the oxygen in the air that comes into us that burns this fuel, and so keeps life and heat in our bodies. When one stops breathing, the fire of life dies out, and the body becomes quite cold.

The oxygen burns up all the waste matter that is in our bodies; those things that are no good or that are harmful to us. Like the fuel in the fire, they are turned again into gas, which our blood carries to the lungs, and this poisonous gas is then breathed out into the air, and we take in a fresh supply of oxygen. How marvellous is the breath of God, which, like a consuming fire, is cleansing our bodies in this way every moment.

Then if you want pure, clean bodies, dear children, you must be sure to get plenty of fresh air; for air that has been breathed over and over again has much poisonous gas in it, and very little oxygen. So the poisons are not burned up and carried out of our bodies.

Then you must be careful too about the fuel,-the food,-that you put into your bodies. You know that if you put too much fuel into the stove, or things that do not burn well, you get a dull, smoky fire. Too much food, or things that are not good, taken into our bodies, have just the same effect upon our lives. Instead of bright, clear minds, and free happy lives, we become languid and slow, and have dull brains, and seem only half alive.

Exercise is another thing very necessary to keep a good clear fire in our bodies. How warm you get when you run, play, or work hard, do you not? This is because you are breathing quicker, and so taking in more air, and your blood is moving quicker and carrying the air through every part of your body. You can feel it tingling all over you. Then the waste water is all quickly burned up and carried away, and your body is kept pure and healthy as God wants it to be.

"God make my life a little light
Within this world to glow,
A little flame that burneth bright
Wherever I may go."

"Out of Fashion" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. He is anxious that all should receive everlasting life, but the enemy is working against the purposes of God "with great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." It is his studied

purpose to fasten upon men soul and body-destroying practices under the plea of fashion; and when the sinfulness of these practices is pointed out, the excuse for their continuance is, "What do all people say?-I might as well be out of . . . as out of the fashion." This is why the command is given, "Come out and be ye separate."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

- The world uses 3,500,000 steel pens a day.
- There are 6,400 square miles of coalfields in Great Britain.
- The preparation of human hair for the market gives employment to 7,000 Parisians.
- Germany has more electric railways than any other European country. England is third in order.
- The opening of the Dreyfus trial is fixed for August 7.
- Cleveland, Ohio, is under martial law, on account of the violent demonstrations of the trolley railway strikers.
- Robert G. Ingersoll, the noted American infidel, died on July 21, at his New York country home, of apoplexy.
- There is in Australia a continuous wire netting fence 1,295 miles long, its object being to keep out rabbits from the cultivated fields.
- An Austrian professor, in a recent lecture on hygiene, declared that England largely owes her supremacy over other nations to the national bath tub.
- The Spanish premier has made a proposal to his minister of war favouring the reduction of the country's military force from 107,000 to 80,000. It has been favourably considered.
- After three years of inaction, the summit crater of Manna Loa, Hawaii, has been active, the lava flowing down in three streams, threatening coffee plantations and sugar lands.
- The spider is so well supplied with the silky thread with which it makes its web, that an experimenter recently drew from the body of a single specimen 3,840 yards of thread-a length rather more than two miles.
- During the final trip of the English torpedo boat destroyer, Bullfinch, on the 21st of July, an explosion occurred in the engine rooms of the vessel, resulting in the death of eleven men, and severe injury to five others.
- Four million women in the United States earn their own bread. They are found in all occupations, and one-third of all persons engaged in professional services are women.
- A school has been opened in Pekin, for the exclusive teaching of Russian, and for the training of Chinese as interpreters and railway assistants by Russian teachers, at the expense of the Chinese government.
- The city authorities of San Francisco have ordered that the streets are to be sprinkled with crude petroleum oil instead of water. They claim that it is cheaper, and that it lays the dust for a longer time, also that it helps gradually to harden the road bed.

-Matters between Canada and the United States concerning the Alaskan difficulty are at a standstill. Each country declares that it has gone to the limit of concessions, and now the dispute can be settled according to Sir W, Laurier, only by war or arbitration.

-The eggs of a blue-bottle fly, if placed to the sun, will hatch in two or three hours. Linnaeus declares that the larvae of three blue-bottle flies will devour the carcass of a horse as quickly as would a lion, so rapidly do those insects increase, and so voracious are they.

-General Alger, Secretary of War under President McKinley, has resigned his position, owing, it is said, to the bitter newspaper attacks that are been made on him because of the "embalmed beef" scandal, and the general mal-administration of affairs during the Spanish war.

-At Carpinteria, California, is growing the largest grape-vine in the world, the trunk being seven feet eight inches in circumference. Its branches cover a third of an acre, and produce annually ten tons of grapes. It was planted in 1842. Eight hundred people can find protection from the summer heat beneath its foliage.

-After a canvass of the leading nations of the world, it is figured that the total number of newspapers printed in a single year is 12,000,000,000. To print these requires the use of 881,240 tons of paper per day, and it would take the fastest printing press made, 333 years to print a single year's edition, which would make a stack of papers five hundred miles high.

-An interesting surgical use has just been made in a New York hospital of a powerful magnet which will support 260 pounds of steel. A man in whose eyeball was deeply imbedded a sliver of steel from a swift lathe, was the patient. He was placed on a table, and gradually moved toward the magnet. As the eye came nearer, it was drawn out from the socket, and the pain became almost unbearable, but the bit of steel soon flew to the magnet, and the eye returned to its intend position. It is said the operation with instrument would have been impossible without destroying the eye.

-Two cases of wholesale poisoning occurred in London on July 22. One was at Blackheath, where a large number of school children were attending a treat. After partaking of refreshments, many of them became very ill, and in the course of an hour, seventy of them were in a serious condition. They were removed to different hospitals, and medical attendance summoned. By midnight the most of them were able to be removed to their homes. Several came near dying. Impure milk is thought to be the cause of their illness. The other occurred at the Inns of Court Hotel, where twenty people became simultaneously sick after eating dinner. One of them died and several others were in a critical condition for some time. Special attention should be given to diet in hot weather, to see that it is perfectly wholesome before being cooked. It is poor economy to throw away human lives instead of throwing away unwholesome food.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

Beginning August 4, a ten days' Convention for Bible Study will be held in a tent at Ashton Gate Park, Bristol. A large attendance is expected, and any of our readers who would like to join us for a part or all of the time will be very welcome. There will be two or three meetings every day. The subject for study will be the whole Gospel of healing for body, soul and spirit. Particulars as to reduced railway fares and lodging accommodation can be had on immediate application to the office of this paper.

A new monthly journal, *Life and Health*, makes its first appearance the beginning of August. The name of the paper indicates its scope and purpose. It will deal with the subjects of healthful diet, proper dress and hygienic living generally. So far as its space permits, the PRESENT TRUTH has endeavoured to set before its readers, and will continue to do so, the underlying principles and most practical methods of healthful living, but those who desire to have a fuller acquaintance with the subject, will find all its branches dealt with in a practical and helpful way in *Life and Health*. The editor has been for many years connected with the Battle Creek Sanitarium. The price of the paper is two pence per copy, or, post-paid, 2s. 6d. per annum.

Our Swiss Camp-meeting will be held this year at Lausanne, August 17-27. There will be one service in English on each Sunday. Dr. De Forest, who has charge of our Sanatorium at Basle, will be present to render such help as he can to any who may desire it. Health foods will be obtainable on the Campground. The editor of PRESENT TRUTH will assist in the conduct of the services. All visitors will receive a hearty welcome.

"Walking in Light" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

The Word of God is called "a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path." In Prov. iv. 18 we read that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." So in truth there is progression. With this agrees the statement of our Saviour (John xii. 35), "*Walk* while ye have the light." Why?—"Lest darkness come upon you." Then in Matt. vi. 23 Jesus says, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness how great is that darkness."

But people will walk in darkness. They will not come to the light—they will not even recognise the light. Why is this?—The scripture is definite: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, *because their deeds were evil.*"

Now "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." But this state of things will not always continue. There will come a time when the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light, and the counsels of hearts will be made manifest. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Then it is that those who have thought to avoid the "overflowing scourge" by placing their trust in lies and falsehood, will find that "the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." Isa. xxviii. 15, 17. Then it is that God "will render to every man according to his deeds."

How much better it would be to come to the light of truth now-cherish every ray of light, let it reveal our defects, and by the help of Jesus Christ put them away, so that we may stand with God's people who will be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." But this means a sacrifice of self; it means to let Jesus come into our lives and work in them to "will and to do of His own good pleasure."

"How to Be Strong" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

We heard a sister say the other day, "I wish I knew how I could be a *strong* Christian." She is not the only one who longs to be a Christian with strength sufficient to withstand the temptations of the devil.

Now let us look at the matter in the simplest way. When we wish to become strong physically, we eat the right kind of food, and take proper exercise. Spiritual life is not much different from physical life, so far as its healthful maintenance is concerned. Christian strength is obtained in just this way. First there must be proper food-and that is, *the truth*. And what is that? "Thy Word is truth." Then study the Scriptures with the heart open to receive the light that God will cause to shine into your soul. When the light comes, cherish it as you would a lighted candle on a dangerous roadway. Put its precepts at once into practice in your life.

It may be that it will require the forsaking of many former ways, and the giving up of many cherished idols, but *do it*, no matter what the sacrifice. Eve was driven from the garden because she listened to the words of Satan rather than the command of the Lord. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt because she "looked back" toward Sodom, contrary to the Lord's express command. Joseph and Daniel and his three companions were strong to stand for the right in a great crisis, because they stood by principles every day in the ordinary duties of life.

There is nothing that begets weakness like hesitating when there must be a decision between right and wrong. So if you want to be a *strong* Christian, the first thing is to know what God requires, and then promptly, and without hesitation, do that thing. Remember that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." 1 Sam. xv. 22.

"Always Watching" *The Present Truth* 15, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

Just before His trial and crucifixion, Jesus took several of His disciples and went into the garden to pray, for He was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." As He withdrew Himself a short distance from them, He said, "Tarry ye here, and watch with Me." Then He fell upon His face, and in the agony of His soul He cried to God for strength to carry Him through the awful ordeal. When He returned to His disciples, "He findeth them asleep." To Peter He said in tender reproach, "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" And then He gave that admonition, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

As it was then, so has it always been; there is not one moment when we can safely cease to watch. The devil is a wily foe, and at this time especially he "is come down unto you having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Peter neglected to watch that "one hour," and a little later on he denied his Lord. So there is no hour which may not prove an hour of defeat and overthrow, if we neglect to watch. The watching must be constant. Watch against evil; watch against sin; "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

August 17, 1899

"Salvation Near" *The Present Truth* 15, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high if we to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed, The night is far spent, the day is at hand." Rom. xiii. 11, 12.

Paul's words refer to the "blessed hope" of the church, the return of Jesus Christ and the restoration of all things. At that time the fulness of the salvation is made manifest, in destroying the last enemy, death, and freeing the earth from the curse.

But the rapid approach of that day is only bringing salvation nearer to those who already find it near now. If the church had only believed and realised how near salvation was to them, the fulness of it might have been revealed long ago. The prophecies of Christ's coming are not to lead us to think that there is no time left in which to attempt much. He will come because a highway has been prepared for Him in the desert, and a people has been made ready to meet Him. We are encouraged to put forth every effort possible, knowing that a mighty work can be done in a short time. Christ cannot come until that work is done, and the way prepared for Him in every tribe and tongue and kindred and people; yet His coming is near, "even at the doors." This is evidence that God is about to work mightily through His servants, and do a short work in the earth.

"Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land." Ps. lxxv. 9. So it is possible for glory to dwell in us, because His salvation is not far off, it is near. It is those who sin that come short of the glory of God (Rom. ii. 23), and the Saviour was named Jesus, because He should save His people from their sins. Therefore His salvation fills men with glory, so they do not come short of it. So we read, "Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it, . . .

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that He might present it to Himself a *glorious* church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." Eph. v. 25-27.

How near is the salvation? "The church is His body." "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." Eph. v. 30. It is impossible for it to be

any nearer than God has made it. He is one with us. "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?" Deut. iv. 7. Jesus said to His Father, "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." John xvii. 22. "Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land."

We allow ourselves to forget too much how near the salvation is. We feel as though it were in heaven, but we are not to say in our hearts, Who shall go up to heaven to bring it down to us? because it is right in our own lives. This was Paul's strength and rejoicing; it filled his life with glory. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." Gal. ii. 20.

This was Christ's own strength also. In Him men saw glory, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." It was because He remembered always that salvation was near Him. "I foresaw the Lord always before My face, for He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved." Acts ii. 25. "For the Lord God will help Me: therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth Me." Isa. l. 7.

When we remember that "surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him," we will not be afraid of the temptations and evils that gather around. We can say with Christ, "Who will contend with me? Who is mine adversary? let him come near to me." We will not be afraid, no matter how near the enemies come to us, because "He is near that justifieth me." The constant recognition of this truth will fill our lives with the glory of God, prepare us to stand in the presence of the Saviour without shame at His appearing, and give us the needed qualifications for turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and making ready a people prepared for the Lord.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Coming Out of Babylon. Ezra i. 1-11" *The Present Truth* 15, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Ezra i. 1-11

Two years after the fall of Babylon, Cyrus became ruler over the Persian empire. His accession marked the beginning of a great movement, which had been outlined in prophecy long before Cyrus himself was born. In the Divine plan, which gives to every man, small and great, his life work, Cyrus had been assigned his task. It was to rebuild the city and temple of Jerusalem, and to let the exiles of Israel go free from their captivity in Babylon. Isa. xlv. 13. The prophet Isaiah had named Cyrus as the one who should do this work, even before the captivity had commenced. Daniel, who was prime minister to Cyrus, understood the prophetic writings which foretold that, at the end of seventy years, Israel should return to their own land (Dan. ix. 2), and he would have opportunity to show the king that which was foretold of him. Cyrus obeyed the word, and in his first year issued a proclamation, to every part of his kingdom, declaring that

"the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem." The proclamation went on to invite the people of Jehovah to return to Jerusalem and engage in the work of rebuilding the temple.

It is evident from the record that the influence of Daniel's godly life had not been lost on the people whom he helped to govern. It had won for him and the truth he represented warm friends in every part of the kingdom. This was seen when Cyrus called upon his subjects to further the restoration by rendering the needed assistance to all who desired to return to Jerusalem, and to furnish the travelers with gold and silver, and goods and beasts, "beside the freewill offering for the house of God." The proclamations which had been sent out by Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, declaring the power and greatness of Jehovah, as manifested in Daniel's behalf, had spread the knowledge of God. Now when the call was made on the people to help "them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord," we read that "all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered." When God requires a work to be done, He provides the means. While He was raising the spirit of His people to go up to Jerusalem to build a house for Him, He was also at work on the hearts of the people about them, raising the necessary funds. There is a lesson in this for Christian workers. If we yield ourselves to do God's will, and be sure that it is indeed His work that we undertake, we may rest in the assurance that God will supply all our need.

Cyrus also brought out from his treasure-house, five thousand four hundred vessels of gold and silver, which had been originally taken from the temple at Jerusalem. It is not a light thing for a king thus to strip his treasure-house, and the hearty way in which all took hold of the matter showed that a real work had been done for king and people.

The departure from Babylon recalls to mind the exodus from Egypt fifteen hundred years before. But how different were the circumstances! Then, the movement had been carried out in the face of Pharaoh's opposition, and against the strength of Egypt. Now Cyrus was heartily supporting Israel's journey to Jerusalem, and the resources

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of its empire or placed at their command. Yet only a handful of people, comparatively, went up to Jerusalem, numbering some fifty thousand. The remainder preferred to stay where they were and to merge themselves and their interests with the world around them, rather than face the hardship and uncertainty involved in a return to the ruins of Jerusalem.

When Israel first came out of Egypt, they were not really delivered from the house of bondage because their hearts were still there. This was why they did not enter into rest. They were still in bondage, and most of them died without entering into rest. It is little profit to have the body come out of Egypt and leave the heart in. In bringing His people out of the captivity of Babylon, the Lord desired to give them a perfect freedom, of soul as well as body. So all were left to come out or to stay in. None could be really set free, so long as the very thing

that caused them to go into captivity was allowed to enslave their hearts. God was doing a deeper and more lasting work than merely to strike fetters of iron from the limbs of his people. So we are not to judge of the success of this work by the few that then heard the call and came out. As we read the prophecies of Isaiah, concerning the work of Cyrus, we can see that these go on to speak of the work of Jesus, of whom Cyrus was a type. It is Christ who alone can build God's eternal city, and let go His captives, for only He can set men free from the bondage of sin. He is the Good Shepherd who shall perform of God's pleasure. Isa. xlv. 28. In the departure from Babylon, in the days of Cyrus, we see the beginning of a work which is not yet completed, and which will not cease until God's people are all set free from every species of spiritual bondage. In the closing call of the Gospel, we find God's last appeal to His people to come out of Babylon. Rev. xiii.

But although Christ is the real deliverer, we may have a part in His work, just as Cyrus had. God is no respecter of persons, and to us, if we will receive it, He gives the commission to set the captives free and break every yoke. "He whom the Lord loveth shall perform His pleasure on Babylon. And His arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken, yea, I have called him; I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous." Isa. xlviii. 14, 15; margin R.V. If we will allow God to speak and live through us the same irresistible power which wrought through Cyrus, and made the lofty walls and brazen gates of Babylon an ineffectual defense against his attacks, will work through us to the casting down of strongholds, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. The promise given to Cyrus is just as much for us, "I will go before thee and make the rugged places plain; I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; and I will give thee the treasures of darkness." Isa. xlv. 2, 3. The souls of men, Satan's treasure, shall be wrested from him by those who fight the good fight of faith.

The kingdom of Babylon bear rule over all the earth, and the work of restoration will not be completed until God's true people are gathered from every tribe and kindred, and people and nation. The work to be done for these is set forth in the 49th chapter of Isaiah. The Lord says, speaking to His servant, "I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people. . . to make them inherit the desolate heritages; saying to them that are bound, Go forth, to them that are in darkness. Show yourselves. . . and I will make all My mountains a way, and My high ways shall be exalted. Lo, these shall come from far; and, lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim."

The land of Sinim is China. That country, like many another, seems walled in by impenetrable prejudices, but it must be remembered by those who take up the work commenced by Cyrus, that they have the same promise that was made to him; "I will break in pieces the doors of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron." But those who desire to have a part in the grand consummation of the Gospel work, and to claim these promises, must live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. When a man rejects any part of God's Word, he does not really believe even that part which he thinks he is accepting. Every word of God is infinite, and any particular scripture, before it can be appreciated and

understood, must be taken with every other word given to man. No man can set others free who is bound himself. The first thing for one who would deliver others from Babylon, which is the kingdom of Satan, is to come out of it himself. And no man can come out alone. Whoever is content to leave a single soul in its bondage, shows that he himself is not free from the selfishness which is its vital principle.

The vessels of the house of God were also taken to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar, just as the ark had been taken by the Philistines centuries before. As the ark, when placed in the house of Dagon vindicated the majesty of Jehovah above false gods, so when Belshazzar brought forth the vessels of God's house, wherein he and his lord's might drink wine to the gods of silver, iron and stone, that very hour the fingers of a man's hand traced his death sentence on his palace wall. Cyrus restored the vessels to those who returned to Jerusalem, but the sacred things which those vessels represented, remained in Babylon, for we read of their removal at a future time, when all the nations shall see the Lord's arm made bear, and behold his salvation. "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." Isa. lii. 11. God's people are His holy vessels (1 Cor. iii. 17), and until they recognise this, and acknowledge Him in all their ways, counting themselves dead indeed, they are still in Babylon. When the Lord gets entire control of human beings, He can do what He pleases in a way that other human beings cannot fail to understand, and thus He can make bear His holy arm in the sight of all the nations. The things of God are foolishness to the natural man, but when the Word of God is made flesh, and translated into every day life, even the flesh can see its working. So we see that those who would have a part in God's great worldwide work must first be clean themselves. This the Word will do for them, when they let it. John xv. 3; Eph. v. 26, 27.

There is one important fact which must not be overlooked in this connection. Israel went into captivity because of their Sabbath-breaking. Jeremiah states this (Jer. xvii. 19-27), and the same thing is repeated in 2 Chron. iii. 6; xx. 21, where the reason is given why the captivity was just seventy years in length. It was because the land, and therefore, of course, the people, had not kept the Sabbath. Now this being so, it is evident that no one can escape from the real spiritual bondage of Babylon unless he has ceased to commit the sin of Sabbath-breaking, and it is equally clear that all who come out of Babylon, at the call of God, will come out

as Sabbath-keepers. They will not observe the false Sabbath, the Sunday which owes its origin to the king of Babylon, Satan, but will keep the true Lord's day, the Sabbath of the Lord their God. They will bear the sign of God, which is only placed upon those who are His own handiwork, having ceased from their own works and enter into rest. Heb. iv. This rest remains for all, ever since God ceased from His own works, and entered into rest on the seventh day. Babylon from the beginning has stood for man's works directed against God, and its mark is the most presumptuous of them all, an attempt to substitute a man-made Sabbath for God's own rest day. The Sabbath, on the other hand, calls men to

show faith in a living God, by ceasing from their own works. The Sabbath can only be kept by faith, and those who thus keep it share God's works, and bear the seal of the living God.

We see, therefore, that since in these days God is calling His people out of Babylon, He must also of necessity call them to observe the Sabbath according to His commandment, and thus show their faith in the sufficiency of His power to make them righteous and sustain their life. Yet because this calls for the exercise of faith, many who claim to live by faith, drawback on the ground that they would lose their living if they should keep the seventh day Sabbath. But they miss the point altogether. God is not calling them to starve, but to come out of Babylon. In Ezra's rest time, doubtless many thought that they would starve if they should leave their home and business in Babylon, yet we do not read of any starving because they obeyed the call. On the contrary, they were immediately made stewards of great wealth for the cause of God, "gold and silver, and goods, and beasts, and precious things." Much more will this be the case in the final departure from Babylon. "The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the wealth of the nations shall come unto thee." Isa. lx. 5. Then it was only Cyrus to help the movement, but at its consummation we read, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet." Isa. xlix. 23.

"Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans; with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob. And they thirsted not when He led them through the desert: He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: He clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out." Isa. xlviii. 20, 21.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Last Loud Gospel Cry. Isa. xl. 1-11" *The Present Truth* 15, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

1. Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith
your God;

2. Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, and cry
unto her,
That her warfare is accomplished, that her
iniquity is pardoned;
For she hath received at the Lord's hand
Double for all her sins.

3. A voice crieth: In the wilderness prepare ye
the way of Jehovah!
Make straight in the desert a highway for our
God!

4. Every valley shall be exalted, and every
mountain and hill shall be made low;
And the crooked shall be made straight, and
the rough places a smooth plain;

5. And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed;
And all flesh shall see together the salvation
of our God;
For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.

6. A voice sayeth, Cry! and I said, What shall
I cry?
All flesh is grass, and all its glory like the
flower of the field;

7. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth,
Because the breath of Jehovah bloweth upon
it;
Surely the people is grass.

8. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth;
But the Word of our God shall stand for
ever.

9. Get thee up upon a high mountain, O thou
that tellest glad tidings to Sion.
Exalt thy voice with strength, O thou
that bringest glad tidings to Jerusalem.
Lift it up; be not afraid;
Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

10. Behold, the Lord Jehovah shall come as a
Mighty One,
And His arm shall prevail for Him.
Behold, His reward is with Him, and His
work before Him.

11. Like a shepherd shall He feed His flock;
In His arm shall He gather up the lambs,
And He shall bear them in His bosom; the
nursing ewes shall He gently lead.

In these first eleven verses of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah we have not followed any one translation, but have combined several, in order to present the best and most vivid rendering; for the passage is a very vivid one. The student can compare the variations with his own Bible. Nothing is given that is not strictly literal.

Although we have printed eleven verses at this time, we shall not try to cover them in this lesson. All we propose to do in this lesson is to give an outline, so that we may be perfectly sure of the nature of the message, and the time to which it applies, and may know to whom it is addressed, and who is to give it. We therefore request all who may be using these lessons in Sabbath schools to confine themselves at this time to these things; for the details of the verses will be considered in subsequent lessons.

Not a single reader of the Bible will have any difficulty in connecting this message with the work of John the Baptist, for the connection is plainly made

in the Bible. John came preaching "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Luke iii. 3-6. Our lesson therefore has direct reference to the work of John the Baptist.

What was the work committed to him?-To prepare the way of the Lord. "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke i. 16, 17. Thus spoke the angel Gabriel. John's father, filled with the Holy Ghost, spoke these words to him. "Thou child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke i. 76-79.

If anything were needed to convince any reader that we have the Gospel in Isaiah, we have it here. It is that Gospel which preaches the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and makes known salvation through this remission; it brings men from the darkness of death to the light of life, guides their feet in the way of peace and righteousness, and prepares them for the coming of the Lord. And that is just the Gospel for this time.

Then it would seem as though the work of John the Baptist did not end with his death. Most certainly it did not; and the scripture before us teaches us that it did not. Indeed, it was only begun when he died. Most people have obtained the idea that John's work was simply to prepare the way for and announce the coming of Jesus as a Preacher and Teacher in Galilee and Judea; but it was much more than this. The same portion of scriptures which tells us of his work, to prepare the way of the Lord, says, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Now compare this with Rev. xxii. 12, where Christ says, "Behold I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be," and we cannot fail to see that the work of John the Baptist reaches to the second coming of Christ in glory; "for the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He reward every man according to his works." Matt. xvi. 27.

Notice that this message is to be given with a loud voice. The voice that cries is to be lifted up with strength, and the crier is to get up upon a high mountain, in order that the sound may reach to the furthest possible extent. Now read Rev. xiv. 6, 7: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that

made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." This message, as might be expected from its nature, is followed by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven to reap the harvest of the earth, which is the end of the world. Rev. xiv. 14-16; Matt. xiii. 39.

Every message of importance must be earnestly proclaimed. One cries with a loud voice in order to make many people hear; and this message preparing the way for the coming of the Lord is to be proclaimed so extensively that all the world shall hear. The Gospel of the kingdom is "for all people," and is to be "preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. xxiv. 14; Luke ii. 10. But the nearer one comes to the end, the louder must the message be proclaimed. If you saw a man approaching a precipice, you would cry out, to warn him of his danger. If he did not pay any attention, you would cry louder; and the nearer he approached, unconscious of his danger, the louder you would cry. Even so the nearer we come to the end of the world, which will be the destruction of those who are not looking for it, the louder and more clear must the Gospel message announcing it ring forth. So the scripture which we are studying has a more direct application to the people of this time than to any other people that ever lived. It is emphatically present truth.

Who shall give this message?—"Let him that heareth say, Come!" Rev. xxii. 17. Remember that John the Baptist was but a voice. "The Word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness." Luke iii. 2. John was called "the prophet of the Highest." A prophet is one who speaks for another. Compare Ex. iv. 14-16 and vii. 1. A prophet of God is therefore the mouthpiece of God, proclaiming the Word of God. Every one to whom the Word of the Lord comes is to sound it forth, that people may be saved from their sins, and be ready for the second coming of Christ.

From this it follows that the last message of the Gospel is preeminently a prophetic message. It is given by the power of the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of prophecy. God's people are "a kingdom of priests," and the holy wish for them is that all the Lord's people might be prophets, and that "the Lord would put His Spirit upon them." Num. xi. 26-29. Those who proclaim the Gospel and the coming of the Lord, must do so with authority as the oracles of God.

But there must be the most perfect unity, and there will be when the true message is given; for it is nothing but the unchangeable Word of God that is to be given. The voice is God's; the people furnish only the mouth; so that although there be tens of thousands of mouths, only one voice is heard. In the days of the coming of the Lord the admonition of the Apostle Paul will be perfectly heeded: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. i. 10. "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Isa. lii. 8.

Let us now sum up what we have learned from this first part of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah. 1. It is the message of John the Baptist. 2. It is the Gospel of

the kingdom, the Gospel of salvation. 3. It prepares the way for the coming of the Lord, even for His coming in glory, that is, to the end of the world. 4. This part of the scripture has special reference to the last days, because then the imminence of the coming of the Lord makes a loud cry especially imperative. 5. It consists simply of the preaching of the Word of God. 6. It is to be proclaimed by every one who hears it, if he will. 7. There are many mouths concerned in the proclamation, but only one voice. 8. The Spirit of prophecy is in it, and it goes with power.

Finally, let it be noted that the whole of the remaining portion of the book of Isaiah is but the continuation of this message. Therefore as we proceed in our study let us not forget the setting of any portion of the text. There is no part of Scripture more important at this time than this book, and none that can more thoroughly furnish the student to good works, and fit him for the presence of the King in His beauty.

"Little Folks. The Gospel of Life" *The Present Truth* 15, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Shall we read together this week, dear children, another chapter in the wonderful Gospel of life which God has written for us in His works? The truths which He tells us in His Word are working out all about us in the things that He has made, for He is "the Truth," and He "fills all things." This world is full of disease and death, because it is full of sin. Yet there is a pure, sweet, healthy, life-giving influence coming to us from God. Still His life comes to fill all things, and everywhere His Spirit is working to destroy and overcome the deadly influences of sin which surround us. If it were not for this, we could not live a moment here in this earth where the curse and blight of sin have fallen.

You will remember that last week we were talking about the air, and how wonderfully, by the power of His breath, God is cleansing and renewing our bodies continually, burning up the poisons and impurities that are formed there. In this way we are experiencing with every breath we draw, the cleansing power of God's life, and how it destroys whatever is hurtful to us, when it is allowed to circulate freely through us.

The sunlight also destroys and burns up impurity. Sunshine is nature's disinfectant, for it destroys the deadly germs by which disease is spread. The healthiest rooms in the house are those into which the sun shines freely, bringing purity and life.

This is the light of God's countenance, so you see that in this He is showing us just what He tells us in His Word: that "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," and "evil cannot dwell with Him." Everything impure and evil coming into the pure and powerful light of His eyes, cannot exist there; it vanishes away, and ceases to be.

Fire, condensed sunshine, we know is a most powerful purifier. You have read in your histories of the Great Plague of London in 1665, and of the Great Fire that followed it. This great fire, coming at the time it did, is looked upon as a special blessing; for it destroyed the germs of the plague with which the city was

infested, and so stamped it out. Otherwise it might have lingered, and broken out from time to time, even to the present day.

Think, too, of the cleansing properties of water, which has been called "The World's Great Cleanser." With it we wash our bodies, our clothes, our houses, our streets, and all the filth of our cities is carried into the rivers upon which they are built. Yet at some distance from the city the water will be found perfectly fresh and clear, without a trace of the impurity that it carried away.

How is this? Where has it all gone to? It has disappeared completely, for it has been swallowed up and destroyed by the power of God's life that is in the running water. It is all blotted out.

Now what a beautiful lesson there is in this for us, and how clearly God is teaching us in it what He is able to do with our sins, with our sicknesses, with everything that would soil the purity of His life that fills all things.

He is showing us the power of His Cross,-how He has taken upon Himself the curse of our sins, and blotted them out "by the power of His endless life," so that mortality might be swallowed up of life," "death is swallowed up in victory."

God tells us in His Word of a time when the iniquity of His people "shall be sought for, and shall not be found," for "there shall be none," because He has blotted it all out. If we let His pure and Holy Spirit of life now fill us, its power will blot out and destroy all traces of sin in us, so that they shall not be found even though they may be sought for.

But if we will not do this we shall be like the wicked of whom we read in the thirty-seventh psalm: "Yet he passed away; and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but *he could not be found*." If we cling to our sins, and do not let the life of Jesus cleanse them away from us, when He blots them out at last, as He will all sin from His universe, we also shall be blotted out, and "shall not be found."

"For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be."

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

- India is threatened with a drought extending over a considerable area.
- Over 1,000 people die every year of delirium tremens in England alone.
- In consequence of the Tsar's action in Finland, over a thousand persons, all young and healthy, have left Finland for other countries.
- Advices from Honolulu report that Hawaii has been visited by a terrible earthquake, accompanied by volcanic eruptions. Two hundred people were killed.
- The Wesleyan Conference at its late sitting rejected a resolution stigmatising as un-Christian those engaged in the manufacture or sale of its intoxicating liquor.
- A popular Episcopalian minister of New York City has ceased to preach for pay. He has rented a site opposite the Moody Mission, and has erected an immense tent, in which he holds services, and for a livelihood has opened a

restaurant, where he acts as cashier. He claims to be setting an example that all minister should follow.

-There is only about two-thirds as much water in the Thames this year as there was last at the same time.

-There is a newspaper published in Pekin over 1,000 years old. More than 1,900 of its editors have been beheaded.

-The President of the Santo Domingo Republic has been assassinated, by the son of a man whom he condemned to death thirteen years ago.

-A disease hitherto unknown in the district has attacked the wheat crop in Alfold, the grainery of Hungary, as it is called. The ears and stalks turn white and then wither.

-In case of a non-peaceful settlement of the Transvaal question, arrangements have been made to transport 10,000 men from India. Several of the Colonies have offered their services if needed.

-Experiments with liquid air have been carried on by eminent physicians of New York with surprising results. It is claimed to be a cure for shingles, soiatrics, and intercostal and facial neuralgia.

-Scientists have discovered that the memory is stronger in summer than in winter. Among the worst foes of the memory are too much food, too much physical exercise, and strangely enough, too much education.

-A bill is introduced into Parliament providing for the expenditure of over ? 6,000,000 on new works, a large part of it to be used in building five new docks for the accommodation of the British war ships.

-General de Negrier, one of the most popular officers of the French Army, has been relieved of his duties as army inspector and member of the Superior Council of War for insubordination over the Dreyfus affair.

-The Russian Minister of Finance is projecting the adoption of measures to promote the extension of trade between Russia and Afghanistan in such a way as to nullify the importation of British manufactured articles into that country.

-Since coming into office in 1887, Sir William White the chief Naval Construction, has spent on the British navy, exclusive of money laid out and armaments, over ?66,000,000. He is responsible for a fleet of 212 ships, armed with 2,000 guns.

-A new disease has broken out among the sheep in Australia, affecting particularly the lymphatic glands. Seventy per cent. of some flocks are affected. The news should be of interest, if not of value, to consumers of Australian mutton.

-An Old-Age Pensions scheme, to be established at a cost of ?10,000,000 has been considered by the Parliamentary Committee charged with the matter, and it is understood that most of the members have agreed to recommend it to the Government.

-Wireless telephony is now claimed to be practicable. A Russian professor has invented an apparatus which will, he says, allow a person in London to converse with one in New York. This sounds impossible, but so did wireless telegraphy a little while ago.

-Another engineering strike is probable. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers has given fourteen days' notice to Lincolnshire employers that the men will leave work unless a shilling increase per week is given, as promised provisionally in April. The employers say that business does not warrant any advance.

-A new explosive has been invented by an English chemist which is pronounced more destructive than dynamite, less dangerous to handle, and absolutely smokeless. It has been adopted by the Russian and German governments, and England, France, Austria, and the United States are experimenting with it.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

After taking nearly three months to consider the matter, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have delivered judgment against the use of ceremonial incense and the carrying of lights in procession. These are declared to be illegal practices, at present, in the Church of England.

We know that heaven is deeply interested in the doings of men. There is joy among the angels over one sinner that repenteth, but there is no ground given us in the Scripture for supposing that the angels behold with joy the spectacle of a church divided over the question of whether it should burn incense or not in its services. The incense that God desires is the fragrance of a Christian life, and the light that He wishes to see is the word of life held out to a crooked and perverse generation, by those whom He has made lights in the world.

The church in Christ's day was occupied with questions of detail and ritual, but was omitting the weightier matters of the law. Thus their eyes were blinded to the spiritual truths that Christ presented to them, and in their hatred of his simple, spotless life they crucified Him. Satan is still working in the same way. Men become very zealous in disputing over worthless trifles, but reject the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. While they think they are doing God service, they are unconscious the becoming members of the synagogue of Satan, and yielding themselves to work out his evil purposes.

People who wish to excuse themselves from obeying the fourth commandment as it reads, will often say that Sunday commemorates the work of redemption, because Christ rose on the first day of the week, while the seventh day commemorates creation, and since redemption is greater than creation, it is better to observe the first day than the seventh.

So far as the argument in this is concerned, it is not worth notice, especially as no one who has really accepted redemption would make use of it. The very thing that we are redeemed from is that which caused the fall of angels and of men, all lawless spirit of way in God's commands against human imaginations or desires. But it is worth notice that redemption is comprised in creation, so that the two are really the same thing. Further, since creation and redemption are identical, it becomes evident that no one can honour the redemption unless he

keeps the Sabbath which commemorates the creation. It is the Sabbath which reveals the oneness of Creation and redemption.

"We which have believed do enter into rest." Heb. iv. 3. Paul is referring to Christians who have been purified from dead works, who believe and therefore enter into rest. Now it is certain that the works, the completion of which makes it possible for the Christian to rest, must include redemption. It is in that that the believer rests. But every work in which the believer rests was "finished from the foundation of the world." Therefore redemption was finished from the foundation of the world. In other words, creation is redemption. "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day, on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works." Verse 4.

So we read of Christ as a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Man and all things were created by the Word of God. But the Word was God. John i. 1-3. So that Christ, who was the Word, in the beginning shared His life with His creatures. The work of redemption simply revealed this truth in all its wonderful depth of meaning. Christ showed that He was one with us, and despite our fall, was "not ashamed to call us brethren."

Because the Word of God has creative power, and endureth for ever, God could rest from His works. That Word still upholds all things. Heb. i. 3. Therefore, the rational thing for us to do is to rest upon it. The same Word which sustains our life has power to save and sanctify us. Therefore we may rest from our own labours and trust the Word. The creative Word "is the Word by which the Gospel is preached unto you." 1 Pet. i. 25. The power and the agent in creation and redemption are the same.

The Word is able to make us perfect, and to keep us so. Acts xx. 32. All our labour is to be directed, not to sanctifying ourselves, but to entering into rest. Heb. iv. 11. But we cannot really rest unless we know that that in which we trust will not disappoint us, but will perform perfectly the work which we have dropped. This evidence we see in the creation, where the perfect and unbroken working of the Word shows it to be entirely trustworthy. So we may rest, with our minds kept in perfect peace, even counting ourselves dead, because the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. Heb. iv. 12.

Every excuse that men make for disregarding the Sabbath shows that they have not entered into rest. They claim to be believers, yet are afraid to rest on the seventh day for fear of losing their living. By this they plainly show that they do not believe that God has finished all His works. They say, in effect, "If we trust to that we shall starve. God has not provided for us. We must do it for ourselves." If the Sabbath question had not come to them, they would always have supposed that they were believers, but now they find they are not. Still even they may enter straightway into rest and have a real experience instead of a sham one, for faith comes by the Word of God (Rom. x. 17), and the Word is living and powerful enough for all needs. The Sabbath comes as a touchstone to test man's faith. Those who have faith are led by it into a fuller light and deeper rest. Those who are strangers to real faith reject the Sabbath, and trust in their own works for salvation.

The sufferings of mankind are often looked upon as punishments, visited by the Creator. This has a tendency to keep men in ignorance with reference to the transgression of the laws of health which has brought about this condition. God's relation to the sinner is not merely that of an executor of the judgment against sin. He simply leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves. The sinner is left to reap the results of his own transgression. The prophet, in speaking to disobedient Israel, said: "Thou hast destroyed thyself, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." Isa. xiii. 9. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee." Jer. ii. 9.

August 24, 1899

"Christ Is the Tree of Life" *The Present Truth* 15, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

Christ "knew no sin." 2 Cor. v. 21. It is not at all necessary therefore that man should be acquainted with sin, in order to develop a strong, perfect character, for no character ever was known on earth as strong as Christ's. One knows only what one has experienced. Now one may be sorely tempted by sin, yet if he resists, as Christ did, so that there is no taint of the sin on him, he does not know the sin. Sad to think, we have all known sin; but we do not need to continue to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Christ is the tree of life, and if we eat of Him we shall learn only the good. The ever new life will make us new creatures, so that "the former shall no more be remembered, nor come into mind." Blessed, glorious thought! We may in Christ forget all about sin, although we shall never forget that we were sinners, and eternally indebted to Him for His salvation. The black abyss of sin from which He saves us will only be to us as the memory of a horrid dream whose details are forgotten on awakening, Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Rebuilding the Temple. Ezra iii. 10; iv. 5" *The Present Truth* 15, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

Ezra iii. 10; iv. 5

At the return of the Jews to Babylon, each family went to its own city and dwelt there. In the seventh month of the year however, "the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem," and an altar was erected on which they might offer their burnt offerings. At that time the foundation of the temple was not laid, but steps were taken to prepare the necessary material, and, seven months later, the builders commenced operations, under the oversight of the priests and Levites.

When the foundation stones were laid, there was great rejoicing among the people. Musical instruments were brought, and songs of praise and thanksgiving arose to God "because He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever toward

Israel." "And all the people shouted with a great shout." It was indeed an occasion for thanksgiving that God had not cast off His people, but had again delivered them out of the hand of their enemies. Another chance was being given to Israel to be unto God a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, exalted high above all other peoples as the children of the Most High, a wise and understanding nation.

We may learn a lesson from Israel's joy on this occasion. To outward appearance their situation was not an enviable one. Hostile nations were all around them, and they themselves were poor and few in number. How came they to be shouting for joy! It was the blessing of the Lord that brought the rejoicing, and they had opened the way for the blessing to come by their liberality in contributing to the erection of

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the temple. Although Cyrus had undertaken to meet the expenses, the people desired to have their part in the work, and they offered freely for the house of God according to their ability (chap. ii. 68, 69). The times of greatest rejoicing in Israel's history had been the occasions when they gave freely of their substance to the work of God. The Gospel calls upon men to show liberality of spirit, not because its object is to impoverish its recipients, but because God gives everything freely. We are called to be channels of the manifold grace of God, and we never can give it away as fast as God will pour it into us. The only reason why men lack is because they refuse to be channels to others. God tells why some are cursed. It is because they rob Him of His own. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. iii. 8-12. So if we would find comfort in adversity, and joy in tribulation, let us open our hearts as Israel did, and remember God's claims on us, and bless the poor and the needy. "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Isa. lviii. 7-11.

Yet while many shouted aloud for joy, there were some among the people, "ancient men, that had seen the first house," who wept with a loud voice as they thought of the old-time splendour of the temple. Their lamentation was so loud "that the people could not discern the noise of the about of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people." The old man may have been wrong in allowing themselves to cast a cloud of discouragement over the day's rejoicings, but it may be too, that the younger generation needed to be reminded of the evil that had befallen their backsliding fathers. The Lord deals tenderly with all, and He declared later by His prophets to those who lovingly recalled the glories of the earlier temple, that "the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former," for the Desire of all nations should come and fill it with His glory. Haggai ii. 3-9. The discontented were warned by another prophet not to despise the day of small things. Zech. iv. 9.

Satan was determined to thwart, if he could, the re-establishment of God's people in their own land. He had rejoiced to see Jerusalem laid low and its people go into captivity. His feelings are expressed in the rejoicing of Tyre. "Aha,

she is broken that was the gates of the people she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished now she is laid waste." Eze. xxvi. 2. Satan himself was the king of Tyrus as plainly appears from Eze. xxviii. 11-19, and so expected to have complete control over the earth, now that he had gained the victory over the one nation which withstood him. But in the captivity of His people, God's strength had been made perfect in weakness, and He had won for Himself a glorious name. Now that Satan saw Israel returning to Jerusalem he set himself once more to the work of their destruction.

The adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple of the God of Israel, and they came to offer their services. They claimed to worship the true God, and said that they had sacrificed unto Him since the days that Esar-haddon, king of Assyria, had brought them to the cities of Samaria. But the superstitious character of their perverted worship can be seen from the record in 2 Kings xvii. 24, 41. "They feared the Lord and served their graven images." The Lord had warned Israel not to enter into relations with the surrounding peoples, because they had made the land unclean, from one end to the other, with the filthiness of their abominations. Ezra ix. 11, 12. Zerubbabel and the rest of the fathers of Israel acted on this instruction and refused to allow the people of the land to co-operate with them. Then these showed their true colours, by opposing the work all they could, hiring counsellors at the Persian court to frustrate the purpose of Israel, and writing complaints to the king. Satan's most deadly devices often come in the guise of offers of friendly assistance. But if we hold fast to the Word of God, and make no move that He does not command, it will not be long before the cloven hoof of the tempter will show itself, as it did on this occasion.

It will be noticed that when Israel repulsed the offer of their would-be allies, they rested their position on the commission given to them by Cyrus. We might wonder that they did not take higher ground, but it was true that they were as much the servants of Cyrus as ever. They recognised this. Ezra in his prayer, recorded in the ninth chapter, said, "For we are bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia" (verse 9, R.V.), and Nehemiah confessed also, "Behold, we are servants this day, and as for the land that Thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold we are servants in it. And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom Thou hast set over us because of our sins also they have power over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress." Neh. ix. 36, 37.

In all this God's infinite patience and long-suffering stand out. Since His people would not serve Him in prosperity, He goes with them into poverty and servitude. "In all their affliction He was afflicted." Isa. lxiii. 9. He "delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the adversary's hand." Ps. lxxviii. 61. He desired to have a throne among a kingdom of priests and an holy nation, but He had to be content with an enslaved, backsliding and despised people. Yet, for all this, He did not forsake them. No matter how low we fall, we may know that God has not cast us off, and that even in the depths of sin and misery, He is able to make known the exceeding greatness of His power toward those who believe. So

let no one think that God cannot do a great work for such as him for He has chosen to hamper Himself with every possible phase of human weakness in order that He may display to men how strong He is to save. The base and despised are His elect. 1 Cor. i. 26-29.

There is one most important feature about this period of Bible history with which every Christian should be acquainted. The time of "the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem," marks the commencement of a prophetic period, revealed to Daniel (Dan. ix. 24-27), which gives the time of Christ's first advent. Seventy weeks are mentioned, divided into three portions, - seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. In prophecy, a day stands for a year, so that the full term here brought view is one of 490 years. Now it is important to fix the date of the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, for from this point the years must be reckoned. Without, going into details, it is clear that the command was not fully given until the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (See

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Ezra 7), which was B.C. 457. The Scripture (Ezra vi. 14) shows that the decree of Artaxerxes must be included in the commandment. Therefore in B.C. 457, the 490 years began. In seven weeks, or 49 years, the city of Jerusalem was rebuilt. Another sixty-two weeks equal 434 days, or 434 years, and Messiah appeared on the same in A.D. 27. In the midst of the last week, after three and a half year's ministry, He was cut off, but not for Himself, and in another three and a half years, the period closed with the stoning of Stephen and the preaching of the Gospel in every direction.

We saw, in the last lesson, that the restoration of the temple under Cyrus was but the beginning of a great work which Christ was to do for His holy temple, the church. To Daniel was revealed the time when Christ would come "to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." Dan. ix. 24. In a previous vision he had seen how long the sanctuary of God should be defiled and trodden under foot. It was to be for 2,300 days, or years. Daniel viii. 14. Both of the periods we have mentioned refer to the same subject, and both begin at the same time, B.C. 457. The 2,300 years, therefore, ended in 1844. Then began the work of the cleansing of the sanctuary. What took place in 1844? Great light began to shine into the hearts of many at that time from the prophetic Word, and many rejoiced in the discovery that the coming of the Lord was nigh. They saw the importance of being sanctified through the truth, and living by every word of God. At this very time, the three angels' messages of Revelation xiv., which are to be proclaimed just before the second coming of Christ (Rev. xiv. 7-16), began to be studied and understood, and one of those declare, that Babylon is fallen, and all must come out of her. As we saw last week, these who come out of Babylon must be observers of God's Sabbath, and in that very year of 1844, light came on the Sabbath truth, and many began the observance of the seventh day. From that time to this, the Word of God has been opening more and more, and its purifying power has been working on men's hearts, to make them meet temples for the spirit of God, cleansing the sanctuary. It is true that men have been slow of heart to believe, but because God has waited to be gracious

for so many years, let no reader conclude that it was a mistake to believe that the end of all things is at hand. Let him rather "account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation," and see that he cause no delay himself by refusing to walk in the light that comes to him. Meantime, the message of the everlasting Gospel with its final appeal to men, is encircling the earth, and it will not be long before the Israel of God will be gathered from all places where they have been driven.

Remember that when the Jews left Babylon in the days of Cyrus, they were a feeble and despised people, yet the arm of their God was not shortened, and although they were confronted with hardship and contempt, yet their lot was more to be desired than that of any people on the earth. So now, although the wealthy and the learned turn away from God's call to come out of Babylon, rest in His power, and be sanctified through His truth, so that only the humble and despised are connected with the message, it will be better to share the reproach of Christ than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Comfort of the Gospel" *The Present Truth* 15, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

Isa. xl. 1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

1 John ii. 1, 2, R.V., margin: "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have a Comforter with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

John xiv. 16-18: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you."

John xiv. 26: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John xvi. 7, 8: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of Judgment."

2 Cor. i. 3-5: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, even so our comfort also aboundeth through Christ."

WARFARE ENDED

John xvi. 33: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

Eph. vi. 11-13: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Heb. ii. 14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

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Col. ii. 15, margin: "And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself."

1 Peter iv. 1: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

John xiv. 27: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

1 John v. 4, R.V.: "Whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith."

DOUBLE FOR SIN

Heb. i. 3: "God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. . . who. . . when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Rom. v. 20: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

John i. 16: "And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

Isa. lv. 7, margin: "Our God. . . will multiply to pardon."

SPEAKING TO THE HEART

Recall the marginal rendering of the second verse, as given in the study last week, which is literal: "Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem." When God speaks words of comfort to His people He speaks to the heart. A great many people have an abundance of words at their command, which they can pour into the ears of the afflicted, but which do not really comfort, although they may all be true, and very appropriate to the occasion. Only those who have shared the same experience as the sufferer can speak to the heart; and they may do this without many words.

THE LORD'S PEOPLE

Doubtless some one will say, "But I am not one of the Lord's people, and therefore His words of comfort are not addressed to me." Do not allow the devil to cheat you out of your comfort in that way. It may be that you have not acknowledged the Lord, but He has never cast you off; He claims you as His own. The prodigal son is a son nevertheless, no matter how far away he has wandered. The whole of the book of Isaiah shows that it is not merely the good people whom God claims as His own. Read the first chapter, and that alone is sufficient to show that the comfort here offered is for those who are "laden with iniquity."

COMFORT FOR ALL

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Matt. v. 4. There is no exception. Christ does not specify a certain class, and say that they that mourn in a certain way, or for certain things, shall be comforted. His comfort is for all that mourn. Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and sent "to comfort all that mourn." Isa. lxi. 1, 2. Doubtless the words from the talk on the mount are generally applied to those who mourn departed friends. Well, they apply there, but they go deeper. Death and pain are but the consequence of sin. It is sin that has caused all the sorrow and mourning in the earth. Therefore the Lord sends comfort to all who mourn because of sin, that is, to all whom sin has in any way caused to mourn. His comfort is as boundless as His life and His love.

WHO IS THE COMFORTER?

God is the "God of all comfort," and "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John i. 18. So Christ is the Comforter which we have with the Father. Note the close connection of the statement that He is the Comforter with the one that "He is the propitiation for our sins," and for those of the whole world. It is the comfort of pardon, and freedom from the bondage of sin, that He gives. He comforts us by giving us Himself.

The Holy Spirit is Christ's Representative. He is Christ present in the flesh of all men, and not simply in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, He comes in the name of Christ; not merely taking His name, but revealing the living Christ. Therefore He is another Comforter. His comfort is the comfort of Christ. "The comfort of the Holy Ghost" has the effect to multiply believers. Acts ix. 31. This is because the Holy Ghost teaches all things that pertain to Christ.

THE COMFORT OF REPROOF

Comfort does not always consist merely of smooth words. The surgeon has sometimes to use a knife, and for a time add to the pain, before he can give a sufferer complete relief. So when the Holy Ghost comes to us, He reproves us of sin the first thing. He comes with conviction. In this way He often causes pain

where there was before only numbness and insensibility. Shall we complain of this?

Shall we say that we do not wish any such comfort? By no means. Is it not a good thing to rouse the man who is fast becoming insensible through cold? When a man is freezing to death he falls into a condition of insensibility to the cold. He feels as though he were falling into a delicious sleep. But it is the sleep of death. When the rescuer finds him, and begins to restore him to life, he experiences great pain. It may be that he will wildly say that it would have been far better to leave him in his former painless condition; but when he comes to himself, and understand what has been done, he will for ever thank the one who brought him to life at the cost of much suffering. Just as much comfort as there is in life, so much comfort was the rescuer giving the frozen man when he was causing him the pain of experiencing his condition.

Let us never forget, therefore, that the Holy Spirit is always the Comforter. In convicting of sin, He is imparting comfort. If the way of life leads by the cross, then there is just as much comfort in the cross as there is in the life that is gained by it. We must never think that God is angry with us because He makes us know how greatly we have sinned. He is not doing it to taunt us, but to comfort us.

CONVICTION NOT CONDEMNATION

Remember that conviction does not mean condemnation. This is true even in an earthly court. A man may stand convicted of a crime, and still not be under sentence. But this is but a feeble illustration; for we are all condemned already. We are "born under the law." Therefore the conviction of the sin-the bringing home to our consciences the fact that we are sinners-does not make matters any worse than they were. That conviction is but the first and the necessary step towards our freedom from the sin; for we must know and acknowledge the sin before we will accept the remedy for it.

CONVICTED BY THE REVELATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

It is by the revelation of the

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righteousness of God, that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. iii. 20. But the law is not sin; on the contrary, it is "holy, and just, and good." Rom. vii. 7, 12. No man could ever become convicted of sin by looking at sin. It is by looking at the righteousness of God that we may become conscious of the fact that we are sinners. He who knows nothing of any better state than the one he is in, never desires anything better. Dissatisfaction with one's condition comes only with the knowledge of something better. God produces a feeling of dissatisfaction with our sinful condition, by revealing to us His own perfect righteousness.

NO CONDEMNATION FROM GOD

This is a most wonderful and blessed thing. That which causes the conviction is that which saves. Therefore we need not be condemned at all. Neither need we go a long time mourning under conviction of sins. If we will but grasp God's way of working, we shall in the very moment of conviction find the comfort of pardon. The righteousness that is revealed for the purpose of taking away the sin, is that which makes it known to us; therefore if we will but believe God's word our suffering for sin may be but as the lightning's flash; the moment of the revelation of sin may be its departure. To be sure the Spirit abides with us as the continual reprover of sin; but since He does this by the revelation of the righteousness of God, we may be in a state of continual justification, although continually conscious of the fact that we are sinners. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. 1. "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Rom. viii. 33, 34. Every soul that is condemned is self-condemned; and even wherein our heart condemns us, we may have confidence, and may assure our hearts before Him, because God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things, and by His knowledge He justifies. 1 John iii. 19-21, R.V.; Isa. liii. 11.

"Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience." Rom. v. 3, 4. Patience means suffering, endurance. No man has patience unless he has something to suffer, for without suffering there is no need of patience. The word is from the Latin word that means, to bear, to suffer. Therefore the possession of patience necessarily imposes suffering. It is not suffering that makes people impatient; it is the lack of faith that does that; suffering works patience, when our faith in Christ makes us suffer with Him.

THE OBJECT OF COMFORT

Patience works experience. If we wish experience, we must not shun suffering, nor refuse to bear burdens. No matter how great the tribulation, God has comfort enough to enable us to endure it. He comforts us in all our affliction and tribulation. Do not forget this; His comfort is inexhaustible. "My grace is sufficient for thee." And why does He comfort us?—In order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any sort of tribulation with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. We are to accept God's comfort, and pass it along. God thus makes us sharers in His own work. The Holy Spirit takes us into co-partnership, as it were. He makes us comforters.

REJECTING COMFORT

Nobody can give to another that which he himself does not possess. We cannot comfort another unless we have been comforted. And if we never have any tribulation, then we have no need of comfort. There are burdens and tribulations enough in this world for everybody, and we do not need to seek them; but the fault with us is that we often refuse to bear those that naturally and legitimately fall to us; and thus we refuse the comfort that God would bestow upon us. But when we reject the comfort of the Holy Ghost, we reject the

possibility of comforting others. Thus we see that by refusing to bear burdens, and by refusing to face tribulation, we are simply refusing to be fitted for the work of helping those who are in trouble. What would be thought of a man who should see people in great distress, perishing before his eyes, and should have the means wherewith to help them, but should turn away, saying, "It is none of my business; I don't care; I shall not lift a finger to help them?" We can scarcely conceive of so heartless a man; and yet that is what we virtually say whenever we refuse to bear some burden that falls to our lot. We are saying, "I do not wish to be a helper of the poor and needy; I do not care to comfort those that mourn."

INVINCIBLE ARMOUR

God comforts us by telling us that our warfare is accomplished. We are enjoined to "fight the good fight of faith;" but we do so by laying hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. vi. 12. We are to fight only in the armour of God, which is Christ Himself; and He has overcome the world. Note the various pieces of armour. We are to have our loins girt about with truth; and Christ is the truth. John xiv. 6. Next comes the breastplate of righteousness; and Christ is made unto us righteousness. 1 Cor. i. 30. Our feet are to be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; and Christ is our peace. Eph. ii. 14. Most important of all is the shield of faith. Now "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" and Christ is the Word. It is by the faith of Christ that we are saved. Then we must have the helmet of salvation; and God in Christ is become our salvation. Isa. xii. 2. Jesus Christ is the Saviour. "And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Christ is the Word. So we see that to put on the whole armour of God is but to put on Christ. That armour has been tested in the fiercest fight, and has been proved invincible.

We have to fight with principalities and powers and wicked spirits; but Christ has "spoiled principalities and powers," and has led them openly in His triumphant procession. He triumphed over them in Himself. He is the Conqueror. He has won the victory. Therefore the foe with whom we wage our warfare is already defeated. What is it then but that our warfare is accomplished? We have but to share in the victory already gained.

We are promised tribulation in this world, but in the midst of it we may be of good cheer. What we have already learned as to the use of tribulation should be enough to make us cheerful; but here we have additional reason: "I have overcome the world." We are in danger of forgetting that all that Jesus did and suffered was for us. He did not need to come to this earth on His own account. It was our sins that He bore, our battle that He fought. Therefore the victory that hath overcome the world is the faith that lays hold of Jesus Christ. He is our peace, because He is our victory. "Thine, O Lord, is the greatest, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty." 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

Because Christ is our peace, in Him we have peace. But peace means a victory won. The fact that in Christ we have peace, shows that the warfare is accomplished. When we fight in the strength of Christ, the battle is won before it is begun.

Read the twentieth chapter of 2 Chronicles. See how Israel gained the victory by faith. They began to sing a song of victory, and, lo, the battle was won. There is therefore no need of ever being defeated. Who would run from a defeated foe? Moreover, Christ has disarmed the principalities and powers; for that is the meaning of the statement that He "spoiled them." In some versions it is so rendered. Surely there is no excuse for defeat, when we have invincible armour, and the foe has none at all. Is not this comfort enough for anybody in any tribulation whatsoever?

OUR SINS CONQUERED

Remember that it is through our own sinful disposition that the devil works, and therefore it is our own sins, our sinful nature, that we have to contend with; and it is this that has been overcome. Do you doubt this? Then tell me whose sins it was that Jesus bore. With whose sinful nature did He contend? Was it with His own? Did He have sins of His own, that He must overcome? "Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." 1 John iii. 5. All that He suffered was altogether for our sakes. It was our sins that He bore, our sinful nature that He took upon Himself. Therefore the victory that He gained was gained over our own personal sins, our own peculiar besetments. So whenever we are tempted by our own lusts, and enticed, we have only to remember that that particular sin has been overcome. What then?—Why, we have only to give thanks to God, who "giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. xv. 57. What glorious comfort the Lord gives us!

THE DOUBLE

"But what about the *double* that we are to receive?" How many people have been troubled over that, and in their trouble they have consulted doctors who did not heal their hurt even slightly. Some translators have even gone to the length of inserting the word "punishment" in the passage. It is not there, and nobody has any right to put it there, or to think of it as being there. Poor souls stand appalled at the thought that they must suffer punishment equal to double the amount of their sins, and of course they see no hope of escape. Strange comfort that! Can anybody extract any comfort from the thought that they are to receive double punishment for their sins? Certainly not. But this is a message of comfort, and therefore there can be in it no such thought.

Even if it were punishment that is referred to, bear in mind that the text does not say that we are to receive double. A good deal is lost by a too hasty reading of the Word. "She *hath received* of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Suppose it is punishment; we are alive, and the subjects of the mercy of God; therefore if we have already received double punishment for our sins, we have abundant cause for rejoicing. Surely that is enough, and we are entitled to go free.

There is in this the key to the mystery. God has made to light on Him the iniquity of us all. "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isa. liii. 4-6. Christ has suffered in His own body all that any unrepentant sinner will ever have to suffer; therefore there is no need that any sinner should suffer for sin. If we but accept the sacrifice of Christ, that is, accept the person of Christ in our own lives, we are freed from all the consequences of sin. We are "dead to the law by the body of Christ." We are counted as having already received our punishment, and therefore are free.

MULTIPLIED PARDON

Thus it is that in Christ grace and peace are multiplied to us. And it is the grace of God that bringeth salvation; therefore we have received of the Lord's hand double salvation. Grace abounds over all sin. God is not niggardly. He gives "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." He has enough, and to spare, and of His fulness have all we received. Let us then accept it, and rejoice in the Lord.

That this is not in the least a straining of the text, is provided by the text itself. "Her iniquity is pardoned." Of whom is this spoken? Of a people "laden with iniquity." Has God already pardoned my sins? Certain He has; He says so; can you not believe Him? You never heard of such a thing? Well, then hear it now, and rejoice as you never did before. Let me recall to your mind something that you surely have heard at some time in your life. It has come into your own experience. You have, wilfully or otherwise, committed a wrong against somebody. Afterwards you have gone and confessed it, begging pardon, and have been stopped before you could finish your confession, with the words, "Don't mention it; it was forgiven long ago." Perhaps you have yourself used just such language, and have spoken from the fulness of your heart. If you have, then you know the free pardon of God, for it was only His love in your heart that could have made you do so. Can you not admit that God is better than any man, even though that man be a saint? If a man can refuse to hold a grudge, cannot God do the same? Is it so strange a thing that the God who is love should forgive our sins even before we ask forgiveness, and should be longing for us to come and accept the reconciliation? He took all our sins on Himself, and in giving His life for us, He made a purging of sins. Christ "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter ii. 24. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." 2 Cor. ii. 14.

"Christ hath for sin atonement made;
What a wonderful Saviour!
We are redeemed!-the price is paid;
What a wonderful Saviour!

"He gives me overcoming power;
What a wonderful Saviour!
And triumph in each trying hour;
What a wonderful Saviour!"

"Little Folks. The Power of God" *The Present Truth* 15, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

A little while ago we told you something about the power of steam, and showed you what this power really is, the power of God's own life, for "there is no power but of God." Steam is water in another form, into which it is changed by heat which the sun brings to the earth. So you will see whose is the power; it all belongs to God, who is "the Fountain of living waters," and "the Light of the world."

I hope you will remember, too, what we have told you about the laws which are working in all created things, being the laws of God's own life, of which they are all but different forms, and then you will learn from them precious lessons of the power of God to fulfil His own will in all the things that He has made. When there is nothing in the way of their fulfilment, these laws bring life and blessing. But when there are obstacles and hindrances in the way, the purpose of God is carried out just the same, only, it brings destruction and death to everything that would hinder it. So "that which is ordained to life, is found to be unto death."

Sometimes we are reminded of the awful power of God which is in the water, by hearing of some accident which has been caused by something which has stood in the way of the carrying out of His laws which are in it. How often in the winter we hear of burst water pipes and water jugs; and even solid stones and rocks will split open in the frosty weather. Do you know why this is?

It is because the water expands as it freezes, and the jugs, or whatever holds the water, is burst open to make room for the increasing volume. When the moisture that is in the rocks and stones freezes and expands, even the rock is shattered. The water is the life, the visible Word of God, and He says, "Is not My Word like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

You have sometimes heard of a boiler explosion, or perhaps other accidents caused by the expansion of steam when there has been no outlet for it. Nothing can then withstand its terrible force; it bursts whatever would confine it. Boiling water, if there is an opening, expands upward and runs over, as you have often seen it, and the steam escapes into the air. But if it has no way of escape, it makes a way for itself by bursting open and destroying whatever is in the way of its fulfilling the law which is in it.

Did you know that earthquakes and volcanoe eruptions are also caused by the power of steam? (Read Mr. Kingsley's description of this in the article following this one, and perhaps next week we will tell you more about it). These things are becoming more and more frequent as the earth "waxes old," and Jesus has told us that they are one of the signs of His coming "to restore all things," to "make all thing new" again.

This is to be a warning to the people to prepare for His coming, and let His power working in them make them "new creatures," and take away from them everything that is not in harmony with His law of life, instead of destroying them at His coming.

"When the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make Thy name known to Thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Thy presence." "He putteth forth His hand upon the flinty rock, He overturneth the mountains by their roots."

But these things should not make afraid, but lead us to rejoice in the mighty power of our God, and of His life that is in us. If "God is our refuge and strength" and we are letting Him do His own will us, we shall be able, even in such terrible times, to say, "Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and thou the mountains be carried into the midst the sea."

An old woman who remained perfectly peaceful in the midst of an earthquake was asked why she was not afraid. She answered that she was "glad that she had a God who could *shake the earth*." So to His children everything that shows the power of their Heavenly Father is a cause of rejoicing and not of fear. They know how safe they are in His keeping, and how strong He is to "perform all things for them."

There is power in His life in us to overcome and remove every obstacle that would hinder Him from doing His own will in us. So let us yield ourselves to Him in loving trust, knowing that He is able to "make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which well-pleasing in His sight."

"Let mountains from their seats be hurled
Down to the deep, and buried there,
Convulsions shake the solid world,
Our faith shall never yield to fear.

"Loud may the troubled ocean roar;
In sacred peace our souls abide;
While every nation, every shore,
Trembles, and dreads the swelling tide."

"Health and Temperance. Something About Drinking" *The Present Truth* 15, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

The matter of eating and drinking is always an important one, since it is by eating and drinking that we live, and those acts must be repeated every day; but in the hot weather of summer it is necessary to give more attention to our drink than at any other time, because we now feel the need of drink more than at any other time. The principles, however, that should guide us at this time are always applicable.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DRINKING

Our bodies are composed largely of water. The blood, by means of which all the nourishment we receive is conveyed to the body, is seventy-nine per cent. water. If it were not liquid, so as to hold all the solid substances of our food in solution, the extremities of the body would be deprived of nourishment, and would starve. Our vital organs, as the heart and lungs and brain, are encased in water, and depend on it for free movement. Our muscles have a large portion of water in their composition; if they were to become dried, they would be utterly useless; we should be palsied; and so it is with all the organs of the body. Even the bones have a portion of water in their composition, so that fully two-thirds of the entire body is water.

Evaporation is continually taking place from the body. There is always in health insensible perspiration, and moisture is given off with every breath. In order, therefore, for the body to be kept in a normal condition, water must be taken in every day. A portion, of course, is taken in with our food, even though it is dry, but not sufficient to make up for the loss, and we must therefore drink.

WHAT SHALL WE DRINK?

Water is the universal solvent; it is the cleansing fluid. It not only serves to clean our clothing and houses, and to cleanse the outside of our bodies, but it also removes the impurities from the interior; and it is water that God has given for the drink of all living creatures. Men have adopted many other drinks, but whatever fluid it be, water is the basis of it, and is the portion from which we receive the benefit. Only man has added to the original drink which God gave; beasts are content to drink water, refusing all other drink, and they are strongest and healthiest.

If alcoholic liquors be taken into the system, they tend to increase thirst, instead of to diminish it. Alcohol extracts water, so that in drinking it men make the conditions of life more difficult. The various organs become dried, so that every vital function is carried on at a disadvantage. Beer, therefore, is not an improvement upon water, but a degeneration of it. It is not food, and it is a very poor drink, not really satisfying the need of the body, but actually increasing it.

Even so it is with tea and coffee. It is true that the water which is the basis of these drinks, does good, in that it supplies fluid to the body, but this good is to a great extent counteracted by the active poisons which are conveyed throughout the system at the same time. No one who has any respect for his stomach will dose it with these poisons, which hinder digestion, and destroy the nerves.

The only thing that may properly be added to the water as it comes from the heaven and the earth, is the fresh, natural juice of fruits, lemons, grapes or any other kind. Fruit is one of the means God has provided for conveying to us both food and drink. "The blood of the grape," "the fruit of the vine," is the "wine that maketh glad the heart of man." It is the only wine that gives real gladness, in that there are no sorrowful after effects.

WHEN TO DRINK

If people drank only at the right time, there would be far less drinking of substances that are injurious; for it is a fact that the greater portion of the tea, coffee, chocolate, etc., which ought never to be drunk, are taken at meal time, when one ought not to drink anything. If it were not for the "table beer" and wine, a great deal less of those harmful beverages would be swallowed.

Drinking at meals is injurious in that it leads one to eat more than is really needed for satisfying hunger, and it dilutes the digestive fluids, so that the result is indigestion. No one knows better than the writer, how difficult it is to eat dry food when the habit of drinking at meals has become established; but a little perseverance, together with the adoption of proper diet, will make it a matter of enjoyment; and the gain in strength of body and clearness of mind will amply repay the preliminary self-denial.

If people would take pains to satisfy their thirst from half an hour to an hour before eating, they would not care to drink when they come to the table; and if at table they eat proper food, masticating slowly and thoroughly, they will not feel the need of drinking immediately at the close. Those who have not tried this do not know the real satisfaction there is in eating and drinking, - a satisfaction the great recommendation of which is that it continues without interruption from one meal to the next.

Even though we may feel somewhat thirsty when the meal begins, if we slowly eat a little dry food we shall soon find this thirst quite disappear; and if there should still be a slight thirst at the close of the meal, if it be resisted, the process of digestion, which will be accelerated by the refraining from drink, will remove it. Thus after two or three hours, where one is in ordinary health, water may be drunk freely. One may also drink freely at night and this will well replace the late supper which so many imagine that they need.

HOW TO DRINK

This is an important matter in hot weather, especially if one is engaged in exercise that increases the heat of the body. Do not, when hot and thirsty, swallow a glassful of water at a draught. Exercise a little self-control, and wait a bit before drinking. Take the mouth full of water hold it for a moment, and then spit it out. Do this several times, letting it run down the throat as far as possible without swallowing it, until mouth and throat are cooled off. This will materially assuage the thirst. Then little sips of water may be swallowed until the thirst is wholly

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quenched. By so doing there will be no danger of injury.

It should also be stated that much unnatural thirst may be avoided by keeping the teeth clean, and the mouth well washed. We ought to drink all the water that the system requires, but we must guard against artificial thirst. All the drinking that is done to satisfy artificial thirst, is an injury, and not a benefit. So the mouth should be kept free from any portions of food that by fermenting, will produce inflammation.

These are some of the things which, if heeded, will add materially to one's welfare. If there be any who think that this matter is out of place in a Gospel journal, let them read the inspired words: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 2.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

-Anthrax has reappeared at Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, in a virulent form, and the cattle owners are fearing serious results.

-In Louisiana, a mob recently caught a negro supposed to be guilty of a crime, and without investigating, at once lynched him. It was afterwards found that their victim was the wrong man.

-According to the report of the Prison Commissioners just issued, there has been a marked increase in crime and committals to prison in both Wales and England since the last report was rendered.

-An unknown man, who escaped, shot Ms. Labori, one of Dreyfus's counsel, in the back, as he was on his way to the court-martial, August 10. The evident plan was to secure important documents which the counsel had in his possession. The shot was not fatal.

-The Pope of Rome claims the honour of inducing the Czar of Russia to call the late Peace Conference, yet through the influence of the Italian Government, no papal delegation is present at the Congress. Now Cardinal Rampolla, the Papal Secretary of State, has sent out a note in the name of the Pope, denouncing the attitude of the Italian Government in the matter, and attributing the failure of the Conference to accomplish what it was hoped it would, to the fact that no delegate of the Papacy was present.

-The General Post Office Department of the United States will ask the next session of Congress for an appropriation for the use of automobiles in collecting the mails at all first-class post-offices.

-The plague has appeared in Europe. There have been twenty-six cases and eleven deaths at Oporto, Portugal. Other countries are taking precautions against goods and passengers from the infected country.

-An American tender has been accepted by the Glasgow Corporation for driving power for their electric tramway plant. This is caused much comment in Glasgow, the centre of an immense engineering industry.

-The first day all of this year's American cotton crop has been sold by auction at many towns in the States, bringing as high as ?400 in some places. The proceeds of every sale have been given to the sufferers from the Texas floods.

-The Report of the Government Laboratory shows that there have been thirty-six prosecutions against the sellers of "temperance drinks" for mixing them with an excess of proof spirit. People who wish to be temperant had better leave all such uncertain compounds alone.

-Greenland has only one newspaper. It is owned and edited by a man who at first used a little more than rough illustrations. Gradually he taught his subscribers to read, first words then sentences. After the paper is printed, he

dons his snowshoes and goes out over the ice fields to distribute it to his subscribers.

-As an instance of what litigation costs, in 1851 a money lender in San Francisco foreclosed a mortgage on a property for \$320. The case was contested by the owner, and has been in the courts ever since until a few days ago, when it was settled and judgment rendered to the defendant for \$4,250,000, including interest and costs.

-The plague continues to rage in Poona, and there is little likelihood of its being checked for some time to come. The natives are fleeing from the town. The victims of the scourge are cremated outside the city, but this work is only partially done, and jackals and vultures are devouring the partially burnt bodies.

-The action of the Council of American Catholic bishops, recently held in Rome, has been ratified by the Pope, decreeing that all the decisions of the Council of Trent and the subsequent decrees of the Pope are valid in America. This is regarded as a mortal blow to the aspirations of those who desired a Catholicism in conformity with the social conditions of the New World.

-During the first week of this month a hurricane passed over portions of the West Indies with terrible results. Thousands of lives were lost, whole towns blotted out of existence and the crops and live stock over large areas were destroyed. The worst havoc occurred in the Dominican Republic. Puerto Rico was devastated, and several hundred were drowned. In Ponce and surrounding districts the loss of life is estimated to be nearly 2,000. This calamity, following the period of commercial depression, has produced a terrific state of distress, and appeals are ever being made for help.

-The third Zionist Congress has been held in Basle. Dr. Herzl stated that the movement was progressing, they had 1,000 subscribers and the executive were in possession of \$2,000,000 sterling. All that was needed was Turkey's permission of the Jewish colonists to settle in Palestine. It might be thought that the history of the Jew would have cured them of any tendency to put their trust in princes. Besides, why should any of Abraham's descendants look for their inheritance in a country where he counted himself a pilgrim and a stranger. He looked for a better country, that is an heavenly, and only those who are Christ's are Abraham's seed. Gal. iii. 27.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

At one time when Jesus stood by the multitude, He lifted up His voice and said, "Father, glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said it thundered." John iii. 28, 29.

That was the voice of God, and was perfectly intelligible to Jesus, but to the others it sounded like thunder. Why? Simply because they did not understand the voice of God; they were not sufficiently acquainted with Him to recognise His voice, and so to them it was only a loud noise.

The Lord is now speaking in the ears of the people a message of salvation. "Turn ye from your evil ways"-*"why will ye die?"* It is the personal word of God Himself to every waiting soul, "Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation." Plain and definite as that message is, and easy to be understood, yet if it is refused to-day, it becomes as thunder to-morrow, and so is meaningless.

As with the hearing, so with the sight. There is no need that anyone walk in darkness, for Jesus is "the light of men"-*"the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."* But the reason why so much darkness exists is because when that light is not received, the eyes become blinded to it, and the power to see is lost. So Jesus says: "Yet a little while is the light with you. *Walk* while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." And "if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?"

God has "dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Rom. xii. 3), and "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Eph. iv. 7. The power by which Jesus overcame is given to every one. Out part is to *keep the faith*, as Paul did. 2 Tim. iv. 7. Christ alone is righteous; He has overcome the world, and He alone has power to overcome it. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of God, and if he dwells in our hearts by faith we shall be filled with the same fullness. Eph. iii. 17-19. He has kept the law to perfection, for it was in His heart; by His faith,-by *living* faith, that is, the faith that comes by His life in us,-can we be made and kept righteous-obedient to God's holy law. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. xiv. 12.

The law of God convicts us of sin, and condemns us to death. But instead of waiting to be driven to execution, we willingly and gladly suffer death with Christ, who gave Himself willingly for us, and who for our sakes "was reckoned among the transgressors." It is in Christ that we receive the penalty of the law-death. So long as the "old man," "the body of sin," that transgressed the law, and which the law condemned to death remains destroyed, and a "new man" lives in his stead, the law has nothing against us, any more than it has against Christ. We are to remain dead to sin, but alive unto God.

"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. iii. 20. The law which condemns also kills. The law condemns all, and therefore it will kill all; but each one has his choice as to how he will die. He may either die now willingly, or have his life taken from him at the last day. If in Christ we willingly allow the law to take our life now,-yielding it up even as Christ did,-then so long as we remain in Christ we are considered dead by the law, doing nothing to offend it; and at the last day it will have no occasion to take our life. It cannot do it then, for there will be no cause of death in us. "In those days and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve." Jer. i. 20.

Christ is "the Holy and Righteous One." Acts iii. 14, R.V. "He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him is no sin." 1 John iii. 5. Therefore it is impossible that He should impart any sin to anybody. In the stream of life that flows from the heart of Christ, there is no trace of impurity. It is impossible that he

should be the minister of sin, that is, that He should minister sin to anyone. If in any persons who seek righteousness through Christ, or who have actually found it, there appears any sin, it is only because they have dammed up the stream, and allowed it to become stagnant; they have not kept the channel open, so that the water of life could flow freely. The Fountain is pure, but the purest water becomes corrupt if it is confined after it has left its source. Keep the channel constantly open; let the stream of life from the slain Lamb in the midst of the throne flow through you, and cleansing from sin will be constant.

It is through much tribulation that we enter into the kingdom of heaven. Many put the kingdom of heaven entirely in the future, and think that the Scripture means that only those who suffer persecution from wicked men or who suffer severe affliction, can get to heaven. With this thought in mind, they often wonder how it can be that so many godly people have led such quiet, peaceful, uneventful lives. The erroneous thought leads many to seek persecution, in order to make sure of reaching heaven. That, of course, is pure heathenism, of the same class as that which leads the Hindu devotees to try to throw himself before the car of juggernaut.

The fact is that "the kingdom of God is at hand." It is now. It is "within you." It is a hidden treasure waiting for discovery. We enter into the kingdom of God when we enter into perfect fellowship with God, sitting with Christ on His throne. It is only through tribulation that this is attained. The Psalmist says, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray." Deep sorrow, -the very deepest, so deep that nobody but the one who has it is conscious of it, -is necessary in order to make us acquainted with the fulness of the joy of Christ. He suffered alone, and "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. Therefore we glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

August 31, 1899

"The Mercy of the Lord" *The Present Truth* 15, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

"For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." Ps. xxv. 11.

How different that is from the way persons uninstructed by the Holy Spirit would come to the Lord. Ordinarily, when we are asking for mercy we minimise the offence as much as possible; plead great provocation and extenuating circumstances, and thus cover up for the moment the extent of the sin until it is passed over and forgiven. But in this prayer David makes no excuses-"Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great."

No matter how much we know about the Lord, we need continually to be reminded of the basis of pardon, or we shall get discouraged, give up, and fall out of the way. The only thing, that keeps us in the way, is the one thing that

starts us in the way. We, can never get discouraged so long as we are holding on to that which started us, and the more we get of that the stronger we are.

When we sin, the only way of escape is to be lifted out by the Lord, and have the sin forgiven and taken away. Jesus can do that, and the way He does it is by putting righteousness in the place of sin-Christ putting Himself there, taking the sin on Himself, and swallowing it up. Although He had the sin of the world upon Him, no one ever saw anything but righteousness.

It is as though all the refuse matter and corruption were cast into a pit, yet the pit swallows up everything, hides it away,

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disinfects it, so that no miasma, foul odours, or disease come from it. So with Christ. All the disease and sin and filth of the world were put upon Him, yet nobody ever saw it there. There is the marvel, for with men "the works of the flesh are manifest;" they are visible in the very flesh of men, women, and children as you pass them on the street, even though not a word be uttered. Christ puts Himself in our lives, and that takes the sin away. It is buried. And the magnitude of the sin makes no difference. He can pardon a great offence as well as a small one. To limit the Lord when He says He pardons, is to say that He will pardon up to a certain point, and then will go no further. This would make Him a finite being. That was the sin of ancient Israel-"they limited the Holy One of Israel."

Look at it in another way. The true physician is the one who can give relief in the most critical cases. It is the cases of extremity that need help; but if the help fails when it is most needed, what is it good for? "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." The Lord never fails. So we can come to Him with this thought right before us-"Lord, my sin is great-greater than I can measure, therefore, I want pardon;" and because it is great; is the reason why the Lord pardons. It is our *great need* that commends us most to Him.

Again: If we were to follow an army as nurse, to help the wounded-extend our aid to all alike, friend or foe, after a battle,-it would be the most urgent cases that we would help first. Those who were but slightly wounded we would leave till the last. Or, if a house were on fire, or a flood coming, those who were in the greatest danger would appeal first to us for the help we could give.

It is just this that most recommends us to the Lord. In Isaiah, the first chapter, the Lord speaks of His people as a sinful nation, laden with iniquity, the whole head sick, the heart faint, from the sole of the foot, even to the crown of the head there is no soundness; but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores. This is no figure of speech, for at the very last, when men have filled up the measure of their iniquity, and there is no hope for them, the very next thing is that a "noisome and grievous sore" break out upon them. It is even so now, for sin will break out upon men who have rejected God. And even though the body may appear fair to look upon, yet when sin is there inside, to the Lord that body has within it a loathsome ulcer, and that is the condition, in God's sight, of all mankind whom the blood of Christ has not cleansed.

In the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah we find another characteristic of this rebellious people brought out. In the first verse we read: "Ye take counsel, but not of Me; ye cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit." And in the 9th verse and

onward: "This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord. Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things; prophesy deceits. Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to come from before us."

Yet in the face of all that-to this people, unsound from head to foot, lying children, rejecting the Lord altogether, to them it is said: "And therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you." What loving-kindness, what tender mercy!

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The Desire of All Nations. Haggai ii. 1-9" *The Present Truth* 15, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

Two kings have reigned in Persia since the period of our last lesson, and one of them, Artaxerxes in response to complaints to assist those who were not allowed to assist in rebuilding the temple, has given orders that the work of restoration is stopped, "So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia." In that year, Haggai and Zechariah began to prophesy unto Judah and engaged them to go on with the work of rebuilding the temple.

It is evident from the first chapter at Haggai that the people had become discouraged. They were saying that the time had not come for the Lord's house to be built. Yet they were building goodly houses for themselves. It was just as true then as it is now that those who seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness will find all other necessary things added to them. The prophet called the people to consider their ways. He reminded them. "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink, ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house." Haggai i. 5-11.

We may find in this lesson an explanation of much of the misfortune that attends the plans of men in these days. A lack of liberality toward the cause of God is no economy. "There is that withholdeth more than is meet but it tendeth to poverty." "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. xi. 24, 25. It is true that there were a great many very serious obstacles in the way of building the temple, but because of this the people were not justified in concluding that it was not yet time to build the Lord's house. Faith is that which connects us with God. No one can come to Him who does not believe Him. Hence it is important that faith shall be able to endure testing and trial. Men would like to escape

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this experience and go right into heaven without a trial, but if they did, it would not be heaven very long. Israel desired to go straight from Egypt into the Promised Land, but till the influences of Egypt and the love for the ways were taken out of their hearts they would have turned Canaan itself into a copy of Egypt. In the building of the second temple, God was not so anxious to see the

completion of an erection of wood and stone, as to see in the hearts of His people that preparation for a pure and spiritual worship which would make it possible for Him to bless them. The people had not arrived at this state, and it was necessary that they should be schooled and disciplined by the trying of their faith, that this being much more precious than gold that perisheth, or even the structure of a magnificent temple, might be found unto praise and honour and glory.

For this reason, they were tried, to see whether, in the face of difficulty and temptation, they would still seek first the kingdom of God, or make the food and raiment of chief account. That they did the latter, showed them lacking in the first principles of the service of God, but they were not for this rejected. They needed instruction, and prophets were sent to teach them the right way. The words spoken by these prophets are for us also, that we may not make the mistake of letting the service of God become secondary to anything else. Nothing is more foolish than for a man to weigh his chances of getting a living against the call to obey God. It is true now, as it was in Haggai's day, that faith must be tested, but there is no question about the Word of God being sure. The only uncertain element is our confidence in that Word. When we believe it and obey it with all our heart, our welfare is assured, for it rests upon the security of promises which cannot be broken. We must learn now to trust God's Word, even in the face of adverse circumstances, for the unbelieving and fearful never enter the city of God.

Even after the Jews had set to work on the temple, their hearts were discouraged when they remembered how far short it fell of approaching the splendour of Solomon's temple. Some of the people had seen this before the captivity, and they despondingly compared these two. But this was a small matter. The Lord sent a message by Haggai to all the people of the land bidding them work and be of good courage. The most splendid temple that men could have built would have fallen far short of God's grand purpose. This was that men themselves should be His temple. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest?" Isa. lxvi. 1. Solomon had recognised how impossible it was to build a habitation meet for the God who had created all things. In his prayer of dedication he had said, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" 1 Kings viii. 27. God's chosen dwelling place is not in temples made with hands. He Himself has constructed a temple, a living one, in which He may reveal His glory. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. We cannot make ourselves holy; God has done that already; but we can defile the temple of God by enthroning idols in the holy place where God has chosen to dwell. The sacredness of the human body can only be measured by the holiness of Him who dwells there. "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit." Isa. lvii. 15. But in this same verse, we read, "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity." Think how much is brought into God's temple. There is the

loftiness and height of God, as well as His eternity. So we read that we are to comprehend the length and depth and breadth and height of the love of Christ, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God. Eph. iii. 18, 19. God will infinitely enlarge the life that is submitted to Him, so that it shall be a fit temple for Himself in every respect.

This was the truth which God desired to teach Israel. So long as they got no farther than to build Him a temple of wood and stone, it was evidence that they could not see His purpose or enter into it. "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." Heb. ix. 8. The lesson will be learned when God's people enter the New Jerusalem, for John says, "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." There is no shadow needed there of the good things to come, for the good things have come. Then we know even as also we are known. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." The relation between God and His people, in their perfect union, is typified by the relation of the bridegroom and the bride. These are one flesh, yet each can see the other as a separate person. In a perfect marriage there is perfect union so that both lives are merged in one, yet the happiness is wonderfully increased by reason of the separate existence of the loved one. Thus not only do the heart and will and judgment find enjoyment, but also the senses that convey impressions from the inner life. So, "as in a glass, darkly," does the Lord instruct us how we may be temples for His indwelling, and yet see His face, and find in Him our temple, wherein we may dwell always, and go no more out. "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." John xiv. 20.

This was the truth which God spake to the Jews through Haggai, if they had had ears for it. "I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you." God does not withdraw His Spirit from men, though they grieve it more, and resist its working. Ps. cxxxix. 7-10. He dwelt in Israel, and that fact made them an holy people unto the Lord their God. Deut. vii. 6. Now the Lord assures Judah that His Spirit remains among them still; therefore they are holy, if they will but acknowledge it. The same thing is true to-day. Men have lost the knowledge of God and think that to be saved, they must purify themselves. But "in returning and rest shall ye be saved." It is true that God requires holiness, but how shall it be gained? God sanctifies every place where He dwells, and what men need to learn is what God does not cast off, but that He dwells in them still, and therefore they are holy. The holy place may be defiled, the sanctuary trodden underfoot, but He who dwells there can cleanse it, and He alone. We are called to rest in a work which has been completed from the foundation of the world (Heb. iv. 3); and to show our faith in God's finished work, by resting on the seventh day, whereon God rested from all His works. The Sabbath is a sign between God and His people "that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them." Eze. xx. 12.

Because God has formed every man for His own dwelling place, and implanted in

every soul desires that can only be satisfied by the fulness of God dwelling within, Christ is truly "the Desire of all nations." Men are ever in a state of unrest, seeking variety for satisfaction in the things of this world, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," but, as we have seen, man was made for "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity;" consequently nothing short of this gives lasting satisfaction. The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest; there is no peace for them; because they do not receive the one thing that brings peace and rest, the fulness of God. Do we hunger and thirst after something we have never yet attained? It is the crying out of our heart and our flesh after God, like a thirsty land. Perhaps we have same ambition or longing, which, if we can only get it satisfied, will, we think, be all we desire. It is not so. Let no grasp longer after fleeting shadows, but take the substance that is freely offered, and which makes the receiver "satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord." The highest stage of Christian life is to be "filled," and by the infinite greatness of that which fills, we may learn the insatiable character of the desire which God has placed in men. It is folly to think of finding satisfaction in the broken cisterns of this world.

"I will fill this house with glory." It was to this building, though much enlarged by Herod, that Christ came so many times in His earthly life. The Son of God, whose glory could not be contained by the heavens and the earth, filled the temple with His sacred presence. The mere adorning with silver and gold was nothing compared with this. "In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Christ, came to give peace to every restless, unsatisfied, longing heart. Malachi foretold that the Messiah, whom Israel desired, should suddenly come to His temple, but "who shall stand when He appeareth?"

Jesus Christ has come to the temple which was building I Haggai's time, but that does not fulfil the prophecy in its completeness. "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations." The Lord will come to His temple, the men and women who are His dwelling-place, and fill them with glory. but how will it affect them? "Who may abide the day of His coming? for He is like a refiner's fire." Those who have defiled His sanctuary with their detestable things, will desire to be hidden from the wrath of the Lamb. His glory is to them a consuming fire; and they are "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." 2 Thess. i. 7-10. It is not that they did not obey His law. They "obey not the Gospel." The Gospel declared that they were the holy temple of God, and made known to them His sanctifying rest in the Sabbath, but they would have none of it. God is no respecter of persons, and it is His life that has been revealed in all mankind. Those who have confessed that Christ has come in their flesh and have acknowledged Him in all their ways, when He appears in His glory, are made like Him, for they see Him as He is. 1 John ii. 2. "He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," but the disobedient are unable to bear the revealing of His glory. Christ must fill all things, and it is for those whom He has chosen for His dwelling-place to decide whether He shall purify them from sin now, that they may be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; or whether they will forget that they are not their own,

defile His temple, and be consumed when he gathers out of His kingdom "all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Preparing the Way of the Lord. Isa. xl. 3-5" *The Present Truth* 15, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xl. 3-5.)

A voice crieth: In the wilderness prepare ye the way of Jehovah!

Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill be brought low;

And the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places a smooth plain;

And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed;

And all flesh shall see together the salvation of our God;

For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it."

Ps. cxix. 1-3: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways."

Ps. cxxv. 5: "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace shall be upon Israel."

Ps. ciii. 7: "He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel."

Ps. xxv. 9: "The meek will He guide in judgment; the meek will He teach His way."

Ps. xviii. 30: "As for God, His way is perfect."

Ps. cxlv. 17: "The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works."

John xiv. 6: "Jesus saith unto Him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

Ps. lxxvii. 13: "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God?"

1 Cor. iii. 16: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

Luke i. 76-79: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Luke i. 16, 17: "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the Spirit and power of Elias, to turn the

hearts of the father to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Mal iv. 5, 6: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," or "utter destruction."

Ps. lxxxv. 13: "Righteousness shall go before Him; and shall make His footsteps a way to walk in." Revised Version.

Ps. xix. 7, 8: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

Let us not forget, in studying this lesson, that while all Scripture is always true, and the Gospel is always applicable, this prophecy of Isaiah has special application in these last days. This message is one to make ready a people prepared for the coming of the Lord in glory, to give reward to His servants, and to give every man according as his work shall be. Do not make the mistake of thinking that because it was written twenty-five hundred years ago, it does not specially concern us. The Word of the Lord is living, and never loses any of its force. Its exhortations are more emphatic "as we see the day approaching."

Remember also what we have learned concerning the message of John the Baptist. It reaches till the coming of the Lord in glory, and all who love the Lord and His coming are commissioned to proclaim it. John the Baptist therefore stood not as a single individual, having a work to do that ended with his death, but as the type of a great movement embracing tens of thousands of people, and reaching till the end of time.

The command to the voice is, "Prepare ye the way of Jehovah!" It is to prepare the way for the Lord's coming. Well, what hinders His coming now? Why could He not have come at any time in the past? Simply because the people were not prepared for His coming. The condition of His professed followers hindered His advent. The way of the Lord is in the sanctuary, and His sanctuary is His people, therefore we see that the way of the Lord is prepared only by the preparation of His people,-by the cleansing of the sanctuary.

The words "straight" and "right" are really the same. The Latin word *rectus*, from which we derive our word "right," as seen in the word "rectitude," the meaning of which everybody knows, means literally, "straight," as can be seen from the word "rectilinear." A "right" line is a straight line, just as a "rectangle" is a right or straight angle. To make the way of the Lord straight is therefore to make it right.

But all the ways of the Lord are right; His way is perfect. Therefore there is nothing about the Lord that needs correcting. Everything with which He has to do is as good as it can be. But we have refused to allow the Lord to have His way, for "we have turned every one to his own way." Isa. liii. 6. His rightful way is in us, but we have kept Him back by our unrighteousness. We have made our ways crooked. So the Lord sends His messengers to straighten us out-to make us right before Him, so that there may be nothing to hinder His complete possession of us.

God is light. The characteristic of light is that it proceeds in straight lines. So with God, who is "the Father of lights," there "can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning." James i. 17, R.V. Consequently all in whom He has His way must be sincere, that is, clear and transparent, so that the beams of the Sun of righteousness may not be hindered in their course. The work of this Gospel message is to "give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." "Ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light." Eph. v. 8.

"He made known His ways to Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." Ways and acts are the same. When we say of a person that we do not like his ways, we mean that we do not like his habits, his actions. So the way of the Lord is His manner of life. He made His ways or acts known to Moses and the children of Israel, in revealing to them His law. "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments; and madest known unto them Thy holy Sabbath, and commanded them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses Thy servant." Neh. ix. 13, 14. The law of the Lord is His way, as we learn from Ps. cxix. 1-3. The way of the Lord is prepared, therefore, by putting His law into the hearts of the people.

When the Lord comes in the clouds of heaven, it will be with glory. "The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory." Ps. xcvii. 5, 6. Since God is light, and dwells in light, being clothed with light as a garment, it follows that wherever He goes the glory must be revealed. So we read that when the way of the Lord is prepared, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. This will be because that when His way is prepared He Himself will go in it.

The way of the Lord is in His sanctuary, and His sanctuary is His people. The idea prevails that the coming of the Lord is an arbitrary affair; that He will come when He is ready, regardless of the condition of people on this earth. That is a great mistake. The coming of the Lord is but the consummation, the crowning act, of a great work. It is the natural and inevitable result of what has preceded. Christ came to reveal God to men, so that they might know His will concerning them. It is God's will that men shall be like Him, so as to be fit companions for Him, and to this end Christ was once manifested, to reveal God to men, in man; and the possibility of this was secured by His death. His coming to this earth was the emptying of Himself, really His death, so that it is only by the death of Christ that God can be manifest in the flesh. The whole work of the Gospel is to secure this revelation of God in man. It is the work that God began at the creation, when He made man in His own image; and to restore this image is the work of the Gospel. The "new man" is after God "created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv. 24. But the heavens must retain Christ "until the times of restoration of all things." Acts iii. 20, 21. His coming means the restoration of the earth; but this cannot be until the new man is made ready for it-until it has a ruler,-and so before the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven, He must be fully revealed in His people. The shining forth of the Lord from heaven is but the fulness of His

revelation. "He shall come to be glorified in His saints." 2 Thess. i. 10. He cannot come, therefore,

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until in the church the ways of God are seen as perfectly as they were in Jesus of Nazareth.

When the way is prepared, the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see it. This is because as soon as the way is prepared, the Lord goes in it, and wherever He goes the glory must be revealed. But His way is in His people, therefore His glory is to be seen in them. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. iv. 6. Why has God shined in our hearts?-To give the light of the knowledge of His glory. To give the light of the knowledge of His glory to whom?-To others, of course; for no candle shines for the purpose of giving light to itself. God shines in our hearts in order that others may take knowledge of His glory. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. v. 16. Good works are the light, according to these words of Christ. So again we see that God prepares the way by putting His law in our hearts by His Spirit; "for the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light." Prov. vi. 23. The preaching of the law of God as revealed in the life and character of Christ, must precede the coming of the Lord. When the last message shall have been completed, these words will be uttered: "Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. xix. 12.

"And all flesh shall see it together." When the glory is revealed, it will be seen. That will be the testimony to the saving power of our God. In the inanimate things that God has made, His power and Divinity are seen. Rom. i. 20. Although man has proved unfaithful, and has even imposed his evil traits upon the creation that was given into his care, God has not left Himself without witness. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." Ps. xix. 1. But that is not enough. Man, the highest creature of God, ought to give the most perfect testimony to His power and goodness, and this will be the case before the Lord comes. Not only must all the works of God praise Him, but His saints must bless Him. When the voice in the wilderness has completed its message, then will the work for which Christ ascended to heaven, namely, "that He might fill all things," be accomplished, and He will come. Then all creatures, animate and inanimate, will unite in saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Rev. v. 13.

"Little Folks. The Blessed Hope" *The Present Truth* 15, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

"Where is the promise of His coming?" for "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." This, dear children, is what will be said in the last days, the Apostle Peter tells us, by "scoffers" who do not believe the Word of the Lord that tells them of His coming, of which we talked a little last week.

From "the beginning of the creation," from the days of Adam and Eve, God's people have looked forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This has been their one great hope and comfort through all the ages.

Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," prophesied of this time, saying "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His holy ones." Job who lived very early in this world's history, spoke also of the same "blessed hope," in these beautiful words:-

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

He knew that although his body should go into the grave and crumble into dust, yet at the coming of Jesus, "the Resurrection and the Life," he should awake from his long sleep to "see God."

In another beautiful passage he tells us what was to waken him in that glorious day for which he longed: "Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee." Yes; at the voice of Jesus, even the dead awake, and answer to His call. He "calleth the things that *be not* as though *they were*," and immediately *they are*. He calls *the dead*, and *they live*."

Perhaps you are thinking of how He showed His power to do this when He was on the earth,-how he stood at the grave of Lazarus, and cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" "And he that was dead came forth," even though he was "bound hand and foot with grave clothes."

Oh, there is power in His Word of life, dear children, power that can overcome death and every obstacle, and cause all things to be just what He says.

Before this Jesus had told His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep;" and they answered, "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." They did not understand that his was the sleep of death,-a sleep from which Jesus alone could wake him.

Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, "Thy brother shall rise again," and she answered, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said: "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

It was just as easy for Jesus to call Lazarus forth then as it will be at "the last day," in "the hour that is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth."

The Apostle Paul tells us not to sorrow as those that are without hope, over "them that are asleep." For "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise." And again he tells us that at the coming of the Lord, "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible."

Think how much, then, dear children, depends upon the coming of the Lord Jesus. Think of the thousands of His children still sleeping in the dust, waiting for His mighty voice to shake the earth, and rend the tombs, and form them again from "the dust of the ground," out of what He made man in the beginning by the power of His Word.

As you, little ones, fall peacefully asleep at night, knowing that in the morning you will hear the voice of your mother calling you from your slumbers to the light and joy of a new day,-just so peacefully, and in the sure hope of a joyful

awakening, did those holy men of old, of whom you love to read in your Bibles,- Abraham, Jacob, Samuel, David, Daniel,-lie down to rest when

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their appointed time came to "sleep with their fathers."

And of the "early Christians," those who lived in the centuries just after the time when Jesus was on earth, we are told that "they were accustomed to bid their dying friends 'Good night,' so sure were they of their awakening in the Resurrection morning."

But what a long, long night, you will think; thousands of years for some of God's children, and, still "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," and "Where is the promise of His coming?"

Read the third chapter of the second Epistle of Peter, where you will find his answer to the "scoffers" who say these things, and we will perhaps talk it over together next week.

"Jottings" *The Present Truth* 15, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

-There is great distress in large sections of Central India because of lack of rain.

-A great fire at Victor, Colorado, on the 21st instant, destroyed eight hundred buildings.

-The plague has broken out in Hong Kong, and twenty-three deaths occurred last week.

-The coast of North Carolina was recently visited by a hurricane. Sixty lives were lost and much damage to property done.

-A manufacturers' trust to control the price and output of wall paper in England has just gone into operation, with \$3,000,000 capital.

-On the 20th instant there was a riot in Paris, in which 380 persons were more or less injured, and considerable damage done to property.

-Terrific gales and floods are reported from Santiago. A passenger train fell into the river when crossing a bridge, and fifty people were drowned.

-There are new cases of the plague at Oporto, and the city has been quarantined. There were 1,076 deaths from the plague at Poona during the past week.

-According to the official reports just issued, the number of lunatics in England and Wales has increased 105 per cent. since 1869, although the population has increased but 45 per cent.

-On the 19th instant there occurred at the Llest Colliery, in the Garw Valley, South Wales, a terrible explosion, by which nineteen lives were lost, and a number were seriously injured.

-A dispatch from Ponce (Porto Rico) states that as near as can be determined 2,500 victims of the late hurricane there have been buried. 1,000 persons were injured, and 2,000 are missing.

-Anti-Imperialism is so strong in America that a convention has been called to frame a policy for the next presidential campaign, making a declaration against territorial expansion its chief plank.

-Captain Welby, who recently made a journey of exploration through Abyssinia and regions to the southwest of the country, reports on his return, that he discovered a tribe of immense stature, most of the men being seven feet in height. They had long hair extending to their waists.

-Major Ronald Ross, head of the Malarial Mission, which left Liverpool a few weeks ago for Sierra Leone to investigate the cause of the malaria in that section, has sent back word that it has been discovered in a particular kind of mosquito which frequents the malarial swamps. The mosquito injects the germ into the human body with its sting.

-The strike of the street-car company's employÈs in Cleveland has assumed the form of a general boycott. Not only are merchants and business men punished if they use the streetcars, but they are warned not to sell to any who do ride under threat of losing the trade of the union men. At New York 2,000 newsboys struck against selling papers because of some grievance. To win them over, one of the leading dailies made them a present of all the papers of a certain edition that they could sell. After the papers were handed to them, with one accord they tore them up and shredded the pieces in front of the office, declaring that to sell them would be a "violation of their principles."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

It is not great learning and wisdom that gives a person knowledge of the Bible, but it is knowledge of God's Word that gives wisdom and understanding.

The Lord makes everything so simple and this is one reason why men do not come to the knowledge of the truth and accept salvation,-it is so simple, and yet infinite. Men know that it must be a mighty thing, and so they think that it cannot be found in simplicity. Yet the least thing that God has made is mighty and shows forth His power. There is no simple thing that does not show the everlasting power and divinity of God just as much as the sun or the planets. In simplest things God reveals His infinite salvation.

The thing which supplies the most news for the columns of the daily papers, and which is a constant subject for editorial comment, is "the Dreyfus Affair." The attention of all the world is directed toward this celebrated case, and many thoughtless and unjust statements have been made about the French people. Now it ought to be known that the French *people* have nothing to do with that piece of evident injustice. It is the army, and the army only, that has to do with it. The military power has acquired the supremacy, and proposes to hold it; and the death of a few innocent persons is not considered as worth taking into account. The same acts of injustice would occur in any other country where militarism prevails. There is nothing more mercilessly cruel than the military spirit. It was the army that ruined ancient Rome, and every nation on earth to-day that is zealous to strengthen its army, will ere long find that it is simply planning for its own destruction.

There are few people who can speak eloquently as the world counts eloquence; but to *live* eloquently is within the reach of all. Jesus spake as never

man spake; but the reason He could do this was because He lived as never man lived. Who does not respect a man, eccentric though he may be, if he lives in his everyday life what he preaches? The reason that so few would be reformers fail to accomplish anything is that they have not first learned to reform themselves. The one that *lives* the Gospel, without a word, preaches sermons a thousand times more effective than the most eloquent discourse from one known to be a hypocrite.

While in prison, John the Baptist, hearing concerning the works of Christ, sent two of his disciples to Him to inquire, "Art Thou He who should come, or do we look for another?" Instead of answering him as we would naturally think he would, He simply replied: "Go, show John again these things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them." In this case it was the works that testified to the true messiahship of the Saviour. So to-day, it is the "works we do and the words we utter" that tell for or against the Gospel. May they all be wrought in Jesus Christ, so that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may do it to the glory of God.

The Lord supplies all our needs. So many people do not believe this. If they would but open their eyes, they might see the illustration of it on every hand. Not very long ago a rat, by accident, got into a cold storage house, and when discovered, had on its tail a thick, heavy coat of hair. Why? Simply to protect it from the cold. There it was, in a cold place, no way to get out, it needed more covering than it had, and so the Lord supplied it. Why do certain birds leave when cold weather approaches? Who tells a young robin six or eight months old that cold weather is coming, and that warm weather is in the south? Now, if God supplies all the needs of the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, why should we, who are of infinitely more value in His sight, worry and be anxious concerning our needs? Let us stop it, and from this time forward believe the Lord.

Sin is so destructive. It comes in the guise of a friend, but proves to be an enemy. It first ministers to the enjoyment, but after leads its victim away in utter bondage. Dr. Taylor tells how once he read in the memoirs of a detective, that having discovered his man, he joined himself to him as a boon companion, went with him to his haunts, seemed his confidence by long friendship, until at length, when all suspicion had been allayed, he got him, as a mere jest to try on a pair of handcuffs, and then trapping the spring that locked them, he took him, all helpless as he was, an easy prisoner. On every hand the devil is handcuffing men and women-not alone those of the world, but even God's professed people. It takes diligence to keep out of his entanglements, and only those can succeed whose "life is hid with Christ in God."

"A Parable" *The Present Truth* 15, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

A Parable .-A locomotive, drawing behind it a loaded train, was speeding along the line, when a large fly came against it with an angry buzz-z-z. The

locomotive paid no attention, but continued on its course. The fly, however, returned to its companions, almost bursting with a sense of its own importance, and said: "I challenged that locomotive, and even attacked it, and it did not dare strike me back, but ran away as fast as it could. It recognises that I am the champion!" But the locomotive did not so much as know of the existence of the fly.

This is the parable, and we will give the interpretation thereof. Some time ago some one sent us a little book attacking the Sabbath of the Lord. We paid no attention to it, because there was nothing in it worth noticing, and the PRESENT TRUTH does not exist for the purpose of advertising error. Now we have received a letter from a friend who has zeal for the Sabbath, asking us to reply to the statements of the book, because the writer of it is stating that the silence of the PRESENT TRUTH concerning it indicates that it is unanswerable. We are not alarmed. "The foundation of God standeth sure." The PRESENT TRUTH has a fixed course to pursue, and cannot turn aside to struggle in profitless controversy. The truth is as unconscious of attacks upon it as the locomotive is of the buzzing of the fly. The truth does not need to be defended, because it is of God. The heathen must defend their gods, but our God is the defence of His people. We would not give anything for faith or religion that needed to be defended by us. Let it be attacked on all sides; if it cannot by its very existence withstand all attacks, it cannot save us. But the truth is not in danger; it will stand for ever, flourishing when all its enemies have perished, and their names are forgotten. Blessed are all they who take it for their shield and buckler.

September 7, 1899

"The Miracle of the Harvest" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

"Whoever plants a seed beneath the sod,
And waits to see it push away the clod,
He trusts in God."

Not consciously, perhaps, but yet he is reckoning on the operation of that Word of which the seed is the embodiment,—"Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs and fruit trees, each "after its kind."

So the labourer who upturns the soil and prepares the earth for the reception of the seed, the farmer who casts the seed upon the ground, is, whether or not he recognises and realises the dignity of his calling, a "labourer together with God."

This he virtually acknowledges when, having cast the seed into the earth, without further thought or care he sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed springs and grows up, "he knoweth not how." He can do nothing, yet he waits in confident expectation of the harvest. Those "laws of nature" which he trusts to multiply the seed and produce the harvest are but the Word of life working out its own fulfillment. Therefore, though he may not know it, he is really relying upon

the Word of God, which not only bids the earth bring forth, but also declares that "while the earth remaineth. . . seed-time and harvest shall not cease."

Of the works of Jesus it has been truly said that "His miracles were parables." Not only did they meet and satisfy the need of those for whose immediate benefit they were wrought, but they were also demonstrations of eternal truth. Thus, in the feeding of the five thousand, we have the demonstration of the truth and the facts that underlie the yearly miracle of the harvest,-the annual multiplication of the bread for the feeding of the multitude.

By doing immediately, before the eyes of the people, what He does constantly by a slower process, through the operations of nature, He taught them and us that it is by His personal working that the seed is multiplied, the yearly harvest given, and the world's hunger satisfied. Yet even in this instance He did not dispense with human co-operation. He took the small store of loaves that the disciples brought to Him, just as He takes and uses the small quantity of seed that the farmer casts into the ground; and when He had multiplied it, the disciples took what He had produced and conveyed it to the people,-which is all that the farmer is doing when he gathers in his crops and disposes of them to the people. "That Thou givest them they gather."

That man needs to be constantly reminded of this fact is seen from the Lord's lament over His people in the first chapter of Isaiah: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib,"-even the animals know the hand that feeds them,-"but My people doth *not consider*." Therefore He says of them again: "She did not know that I gave her corn and wine and oil." Hosea ii. "Stand still, and *consider* the wondrous works God," and learn that He is the One from cometh whom every good and perfect gift cometh down.

But another and deeper lesson, yet so simple and unmistakable, was taught in the feeding of the five thousand, that henceforth men might more clearly discern it, not in the yearly harvest only, but in all that their eyes can see and their hands handle. Whence came the bread that in the hands of Jesus grew before the eyes of the astonished multitude, and conveyed life to their frames? The life in was identical with the life contained in every seed, in every grain, in every loaf made from the grain,-the life of Him who alone is "the Life." He was feeding them with His own life, but no more so on that occasion than in all the all lives before and after.

In order to convey His life to the people, so that they might feed upon Him, Christ clothed it with the visible form of bread. Thus the bread became His body, the life proceeding from Him, which took this shape that could be seen and handled and eaten by the people. Yet

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this bread was no different in this respect from that upon which these same people were accustomed to feed, as proved by the words of Christ when He took the bread at the Passover supper and said of it, "This is My body."

All life proceeds from God, and all the varied forms in the earth are the body with which He has clothed Himself that the life may be manifested and we may see it, and feed upon Him. To His life in all things, God "giveth a body as it hath pleased Him," even as He give "to every every seed own body." Yet how few

"discern the Lord's body," and behold their God in all the things in which He is revealing Himself. Even those whom He fed with His body in the desert did not all discern it; for among them were those who shortly afterwards questioned, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

All through the summer months the personal presence of God, His everlasting power and divinity, has been working in the waving fields of grain, preparing for His life "a body as it hath pleased Him," even as He gave it visible form to feed the people in the desert. Let us then as we partake of that which His bounty has provided, "eat in faith" "discerning the Lord's body." Thus will it be to us indeed "spiritual meat," "the bread of God that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world."

"A Poor Memory and a Good One" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Many people complain, when the Word of God is preached to them, or when they read it, that they have such poor memories that they cannot retain it nor call it to mind. Well, it is a fact that people have by nature very poor memories, but not in the way that they think. Their memories are poor in that they forget things that they ought to remember, and remember very vividly the things that they ought to forget.

The man who says that his memory is so poor that he cannot possibly remember a text of Scripture, nor where it is found, will recall with the utmost minuteness of detail every word and act of somebody whom he thinks has injured or meant to injure him; and he will, even months and years afterward, tell exactly where everything occurred or was said. Is not that in truth a poor memory, which forgets the good things, and remembers only that which is bad? It would really be better to have no memory at all. Such a person needs to cultivate the art of forgetting fully as much as that of remembering.

Now there is a perfect remedy for this kind of memory, and that is to "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." His mind is the mind of the Spirit. If we have that mind, the Spirit Himself will be our memory, bringing to our remembrance all things that the Lord has said. John xiv. 26.

That is good, but it is not all. God says of His people, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. viii. 12. Therefore if we let Him put His mind in us, we shall not remember the evil things that have been said and done against us, or against anybody else. That is a good memory. Get it, and you will find it a continual delight, for the Word of Christ will dwell in you richly in all wisdom, so that you will continually sing with grace in your heart unto the Lord.

"What to Do With Animals" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

What should we do with the cattle if we didn't eat them?" is a question commonly asked when one talks to the people about coming back to the pure, simple diet which God in the beginning prescribed for man. "If we didn't kill and eat them," say the people, "they would overrun the country."

What a frightful prospect! One would suppose that cows and sheep are ferocious beasts, that would eat us all up, if we didn't get the start of them, and eat them up. We may certainly spare our fears in that respect. To show how utterly inconsistent, not to say senseless, such a position is, we have only to call attention to other animals. Dogs, for example, multiply much faster than cattle, bringing forth several at a birth, while cattle usually bring forth but one; yet no one counsels the killing and eating of dogs in order to keep them from overrunning the country, and overpowering the people. In view of this, the idea that gentle, grass-eating cows may crowd us out if we do not eat them, is very laughable.

But what shall we do with them?—Let them enjoy themselves in their own way, the same as the birds, the dogs, and the cats. Or, if that is not sufficient, use them for bearing burdens and drawing loads, just as men do horses and camels.

It is a very gross condition of mind that leads one to think that a thing is useless unless it can be eaten. In the world to come, which will be the world as God created it, and as it ought to be, all animals will be the companions and playmates of men. Even so it will be now, just to the extent that men come back to the beginning—to the perfect manner of living. And the better men become, the better will the lower animals become, and the better adapted for human companionship. Why should men cherish dogs and cats and certain birds as companions, to minister to their enjoyment, and see in the gentle, playful lamb and calf only an object for slaughter.

The Lord is the great Pattern, and His is represented as our Shepherd. We are the sheep of His pasture. How horrible, and unnatural, and inconceivable the thought that he tends us only that He may eat us up! No; the devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour; but God protects us that we may live and be His companions. Let us learn of God, and not of an adversary.

"Temptations in the Wilderness" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Let no one deceive himself with the thought that by getting away from society and association with men, he will be free from temptation. Remember that Jesus met His fiercest temptations alone in the wilderness. Luther in his monk's cell suffered temptations greater than any that ever came to him among his companions. There is no place on earth where one will not be exposed to temptations, and solitude in the monk's cloister or the hermit's cave gives one no immunity from it. God has placed men in the world and it is there that they are to do battle and gain the victory.

This is not saying that solitude is not at times good for Christians; far from it. The secret place of prayer is where the heavenly plant fastens its roots most firmly in the Divine soil. But he who runs away from what is called "the world," in order to avoid temptations, thereby shows himself already conquered; and the weakness exhibited in his running away, will make him an easy prey to the temptations that surely follow him. We are not to run into temptation. We are to

avoid it when we can. But he who cannot overcome in the position where God has placed him, can most certainly not overcome anywhere else.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'All Flesh Is Grass.' Isa. xl. 6-9" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xl. 6-9.)

"The voice of one saying, Cry. And one said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the breath of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the Word of our God shall stand forever.

"O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" R.V.

Ps. ciii. 15-17: "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children."

Ps. xc. 10: "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

James i. 9-11, R.V. "Let the brother of low degree glory in his high estate; and the rich, in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun ariseth with the scorching wind, and withereth the grass; and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth; so also shall the rich man fade away in his goings."

Matt. vi. 28-30: "Why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

Jer. xvii. 5-7: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is."

Rom. vii. 18: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

Gal. v. 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

Ps. xxxiii. 6: "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

1 Peter i. 22-25: "Love one another from the heart fervently; having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth. For,

All flesh is grass,

And all the glory thereof as the flower of grass.

The grass withereth, and the flower falleth;

But the Word of the Lord abideth for ever.

And this is the Word of good tidings which was preached unto you."

Remember that this is part of the message of comfort. God tells us that our iniquity is pardoned, and we accept the comfort. He tells us that our warfare is accomplished, since He has overcome the world, and we rejoice for the consolation. We ought to be equally glad when He goes on with His comforting words, and says that all flesh is grass, that is, that we have no might nor power nor wisdom in ourselves. That is really what is involved in the announcement that our warfare is accomplished, that Jesus has fought the battle for us; for the only reason why He has fought and overcome for us is that we had no power to fight and overcome for ourselves.

The first impulse one has on reading the Lord's words, "All flesh is grass," is to say, "That does not mean actually that all flesh is grass; I know that I am not grass, for I do not resemble grass at all; there is scarcely any likeness between me and grass." The words are of course used in a figurative sense. It is thus that men make of none effect the words of the Lord, and keep themselves from learning anything. When God tells us something which is entirely new to us, and which we do not understand, the wisest thing for us to do is believe it, and then we shall learn the new thing. He who believes nothing but what he already knows and understands, will have a very limited range of knowledge, and his store of knowledge will continually diminish. It is astonishing what a wide field opens up to us when we accept some statements of the Lord's as actual fact, and proceed on that basis. Things that before were obscure, suddenly become plain. In the statement that "all flesh is grass," we have in a nutshell the whole science of botany and of physiology, as well as the first part of the key to salvation.

From Matt. vi. 28-30 we learn that the term "grass" is very comprehensive, including many plants not commonly classed as grass. The lilies of the field are by the Lord called grass. There are, however, very many different kinds of grass, that are so called by botanists. Every species of grain is but a kind of grass. A little thought and observation and comparison will show this fact to any who have not known it before. When this is recognised, it is not difficult to see that all flesh is grass. In fact, the wonder is that anybody should need to be told so simple a thing. Thus, we well know that any animal is composed of what it eats. *Der Mensch ist was er isst*, says the old German proverb. That is, man is what he eats. Now not only all that we eat, but everything that is on the face of the earth, comes from the ground. Most men eat both vegetables and flesh of animals; but the animals which they eat feed only on

vegetables, or grass, so that in every case a man's body is composed only of that which he derives from the vegetable creation. Only in the vegetable world can

man find the elements prepared for the sustenance of his body; the ox makes no change whatever in the food elements which he finds in the grass; so that when a man eats the ox he is simply taking his food second hand, after it has done service in another body. He gets nothing that he would not get in a purer form if he took it direct from the plant. Therefore, it is a literal fact that "all flesh is grass."

The stream can rise no higher than its source. Nothing can be any better than the material out of which it is made. A strong garment cannot be made out of rotten cloth. The whole cannot be any greater than the sum of all its parts. Therefore since a man's body is composed only of grass, or the fruit of grass, it is evident that there is in man no more power or wisdom than there is in the grass. How can there be, when man himself is but grass? He is not the grass of the field, but he is grass, nevertheless.

"Well, this is anything but a comforting doctrine, I must say," I hear somebody exclaim. "If I have no more power or wisdom than the grass, there is no use in my trying to do or be anything; there is no hope for anybody." Not so fast, please. You have not heard the whole of the story, or at least have forgotten a part of it. "The Word of God shall stand for ever." It "liveth and abideth." It is almighty and everlasting. The comfort of the fact that all flesh is grass is based on the accompanying fact that God's Word, which is the life of the grass, lives and abides, all-powerful. Do not separate these two facts. Let them always be as closely united as the Lord has made them.

Nevertheless some one will say, "I know that I have power that grass has not. I can move at will, and I can do many things that are impossible for grass." What is the conclusion?-Oh, simply this, that you will prove that the Bible is not true. There is not enough prospect of gain in that to make it worth while trying. But let us examine your statement. You can move, you say. Well, so can the plant. Some plants can even move from place to place, and every plant has certain movements that may be seen by anybody who will take the trouble to look. Did you ever watch a plant growing in the window? You know how it will turn towards the light. Turn it half-way round, so that it leans away from the window, and you will very soon see that it has turned round, and is reaching out to the light again. Plant a tree half-way between a well and a dry sand-bank, and watch how the roots grow. Instead of reaching out in every direction, the most of them will turn towards the water. The roots of a plant always set toward the place where there is nourishment for it in solution, and they always go right the first time, and they go the most direct way. They lose no time in "prospecting," and they do not miss the way. What is the plant doing? Just what the man does-trying to get into the best possible circumstance for living; and it accomplishes its purpose more successfully than the man does.

Watch the plant, and you will also see that it is capable of bearing a great burden. In the first place, the seed must often exert wonderful power, in order to escape from the shell that encases it. Then think how great a weight of earth the tender shoot must push out of its way before it can reach the surface of the ground. Think how great a weight the growing tree lifts up every year. Then above all, remember that the strength of which you are wont to boast is derived from these same despised plants. You have often been hungry and faint. You

have often felt so weak that you could not think of working any longer, and have had your strength and courage come back to you after eating a bit of bread. Did you not connect your increased strength with the bread that you ate? Of course you did, for you said, "I cannot do anything more until I have had something to eat." Yet for all that you did not think that all the new strength that you received from eating was formerly in that which you ate. If it had not been, how could you have derived any strength from eating it? "Speak well of the bridge that carries you over." Instead of being so much superior in power to the grass of the field, you are absolutely dependent upon it.

Shall we then worship the grass of the field, as being superior to us? By no means, for you were right in a sense, that the grass has no power. It is used as a symbol of weakness and frailty. Today it is and tomorrow it is not. Whence when comes that wonderful power that is manifested in its growth, and which we derive by eating and assimilating it?—From the word of God, which liveth and abideth. "The word of God is living and active." It is force and energy. It is wisdom. Christ upholds all things by the word of His power. Heb. i. 3. His word in the beginning said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," and in obedience to that word the earth brings forth grass to this day. All the life and energy that is manifested in the growing plant is the life of the word that is in it. The everlasting power and Divinity of God are clearly seen in every living plant. Rom. i. 20. The seeds of the grass, which we eat made into bread, are but the means of conveying to us the life and power of God. Only God is great; only He has life, and wisdom and strength. Worship God.

This is the lesson that we are to learn from the statement that all flesh is grass. It is the simple truth, and there is no comfort in anything but the truth. A lie may deceive us, and make us think that all is right, but it can give no real comfort. The man who tells us that there is no danger, when there is danger, is not a comforter. The comforter is the man who points out the danger and the way of escape. Now as the result of not recognising the fact that we are grass, we are all engaged in making gods of ourselves. We imagine that we have power in ourselves. The fact is that power belongs to God. Ps. lxii. 11. Just to the extent that we think that we have any power, do we regard ourselves as God. We propose at the very best to divide honours with God, saying, "I have so little strength," and think that we have made a wonderfully humble confession. In reality we have said, "I am not so great a god as the One in heaven." That is not fearing God, and giving glory to Him. God tells us the plain truth, that we have no strength at all, in order that we may learn to say, "Behold, God is my strength."

"That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts,

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another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the

moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another in glory." 1 Cor. xv. 36-41. Even so there is a difference in plants. Indeed, that is what the text says, for God gives to every seed such a body as pleases Him. All plants have not the same purpose. There is infinite variety in the vegetable world, yet the same life is in all plants. The same life in all brings each to the state of perfection which God designs for it. Even so the same life in the human plant will, if given free course, bring the man to the state of perfection designed for him. Nothing is too hard for the Lord, and nothing is too small to escape His attention. The grass of the field is passive in the hands of God, for Him to do with it as He will, and wonderful things are accomplished. If we will but be as passive in God's hands, He will do infinitely greater things for us, inasmuch as He created us for a higher place. But we cannot reach that higher place by striving to lift up ourselves, any more than the ivy could by its own wisdom and power climb to the top of the tower, or split the walls asunder. "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

"This is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." The Gospel presents God as Creator, as supreme. It presents an Almighty Saviour, who saves by His power to create, inasmuch as He saves by creating us anew. Therefore we must expect that the nearer we approach the end, the plainer will this Gospel be presented. More and more loudly must the cry be uttered, which shows men that they are in themselves absolutely nothing, but that God is everything. In Him is all fullness, and of His fulness have all we received. We are nothing, but He gives us everything in giving us Himself.

The Gospel does not tell us to look at ourselves, but at God. It tells us what we are, and then says, "Behold your God." We are to accept God's statement of what we are, and that is not difficult when we have it so patent to our senses. But knowing that we are nothing, we do not need to waste any time looking at ourselves, for it is certainly a waste of time to look at nothing. Our charge is, "Behold your God!" Where shall we look, in order to see Him? Look at everything that He has made,-at the heavens, the seas, the earth, and all that is in them. When we see ourselves, as we must every day, let it be only to recognise the fact that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Let no flesh glory in man, but instead, "Fear God, and give glory to Him," "and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. xiv. 7.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. The Source of Power. Zech. iv. 1-14" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

In the visions granted to Zechariah, one of which is the subject of the lesson, he was taken behind the scenes and shown the powerful agencies which were at work on behalf of Israel. In the third chapter is the history in brief of the struggle between God's people and their enemies, with its outcome. Satan appears as the real adversary, but in spite of his efforts, the high priest who represents Israel, is cleansed from defilement and clothed with change of raiment. Israel was unconscious of much that was taking place in connection with their experience.

They saw the attacks of their enemies and walked in fear of the machinations of their hostile neighbours, but these things did not by any means complete the picture. The powers of heaven were leagued with them, and while Satan seemed often to triumph to outward appearance, in reality the adversary was compelled to stand by powerless under the Divine rebuke, while God wrought for His people in causing their iniquity to pass from them.

There is a lesson for us in this experience. We are not to fix our attention upon earthly difficulties.

It is true that Satan will find numerous instruments through whom he can work to tempt and harass us, but we may always rejoice in the confidence that his seeming triumph is but a hollow one. Christ is the Captain of our salvation, and He never stands aside from our spiritual conflicts, His strength is available to make us more than conquerors, and our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. As the angels of God, although invisible to human eyes, were yet all the while encamped about Elisha, so in times of apparently overwhelming attack, we may remember that Christ has promised never to leave or forsake us, and that God "always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

Again, in the fourth chapter Zechariah is shown that, while success depends entirely upon the Spirit of God, abundant provision is made for every one to receive this in its fulness. The prophet was shown a candlestick with seven lamps. There was no need for any of the lamps to become extinguished, because a pipe connected each with olive trees, which poured the oil out of themselves through the pipes into the lamps.

The candlestick with seven lamps stood for God's people. In the earthly sanctuary, the lights were to be kept always burning before the veil, showing that Israel was always in the presence and thought of God. "It shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel." Ex. xxvii. 21. When John was shown the sanctuary in heaven, and saw the Saviour in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, it was explained to him that the seven candlesticks were the seven churches. Rev. i. 20. God's people are the light of the world (Matt. v. 14; Phil. ii. 15), and it was solely that the light might shine that the temple was now to be re-built. God's ambition for His people is expressed in the words, "For

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Zion's sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." Isa. lxii. 1.

The two olive trees it was told Zechariah by the angel, were "the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." They are referred to again in the eleventh chapter of Revelation as God's two witnesses, also as two candlesticks. Rev. xi. 3, 4. There are three that bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood, but as these three agree in one (1 John v. 8), we may conclude that the two witnesses certainly refer to the life of Christ, as revealed in the Spirit, which testifies of Him (John xvi. 14), the Word or Water, which is Himself (John i. 1), the

Water of Life, and the Blood, which is the life of Christ. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1 John v. 10. And so also, whatever the two olive trees represented, they poured out of themselves into the lamps.

We see, therefore, that there were infinite possibilities before the children of Israel at this time, and the vision was given that they might know something of the riches of the glory that was bestowed so freely upon them. A great work could be done if they would only learn what was the true nature of God's work, and not get the false idea that spiritual receptivity and success meant much outward display. It is evident that many were as yet labouring under this mistake, for they were despising the day of small things. Their thoughts were altogether upon externals. Had a vast army of workmen been at their command, and a splendid structure in course of rapid erection, they would have felt that things were going prosperously, but because these outward indications were lacking, they set down the whole thing as a comparative failure. They did not know how they might work the works of God, and so the instruction was given. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

With sufficient gold they might have erected a building which would be unsurpassable in architectural splendour, but all the gold in the world could not buy one living stone for the temple which God was building. Every other agency but the Spirit was valueless and powerless for the work. Christian workers need to keep this truth in mind. When God has given success to some effort, it is often felt that if only so many more men could be engaged in the work, so much more good could be accomplished. But this is a fallacy which is based on a mistake. "It is not by might" (or an army, margin). It is not by one man or a multitude that God effects anything. Therefore when we would attain greater success in God's work, we should not seek for more men, but for more of God's Spirit. If we get this, the question of more workers will take care of itself. When the first thought is to get more men with a view to success, the real thing to be desired is partly obscured, and when the increase in men is obtained, it is often discovered that there has been no increase in real efficiency. On the other hand, the obtaining of more of God's Spirit will always ensure greater success.

The same principle applies with respect to every other means by which men think to advance the kingdom of God. The power of numbers, the influence of the press, the lever of wealth and worldly patronage are much sought after, but it is not by these that success comes. Even when the desire for them is satisfied, they bring leanness into the soul. God's Spirit, His own character and power, are the one means by which His work of saving men can be carried forward. And the Spirit is given freely, without measure. Zechariah saw this in the vision of the two olive trees. No promise is more clear or more emphasised than the promise of the Spirit. Christ declared that if earthly fathers knew how to give good gifts to their children, much more would our Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. Luke xi. 13.

Notice the expression, "This is the Word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel," in verse 6. What was the word? Why the very thing it spoke of. God did not say to them, "You can do nothing without My Spirit," and then leave them to hunt for it. The pouring out of the Spirit was the word to Israel that it was the thing they

needed. We may know whenever God tells us that we need anything that we have that very thing in the Word which declares our need. No word of God is given to discourage. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. xv. 4.

Without God's Spirit, as we have seen, numbers and wealth would have availed Israel nothing, for their enemies were stronger than they in both respects. But with God's Spirit working for them, the more opposition they met, the better they would get on. Everything would work together for their good. The difficulties in their way were compared by God Himself to a "great mountain," but that great mountain, by the working of God's Spirit would become a plain before Zerubbabel, and all that would be left of it would simply serve for a headstone for the temple, to be brought forth with shoutings of Grace, grace. Never be afraid of the mountains of difficulty that stand in your path, or sigh for might or power to remove them. God's Spirit is poured into you with an unceasing flow from the Divine reservoir, and by its working the mountain will be brought low. Out of it shall come that which is needed to crown the completed structure of your life. Where the mountain stood will be a plain, and the massive strength and solidity which blocked your path is transferred into your own life, making you an enduring monument of grace.

"Children's Corner. 'Stored with Fire'" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Read, if you have not already done so, the third chapter of the second Epistle of Peter, and see what is his answer to the "scoffers" of whom we were talking this week. You will remember what it is that they say about the coming of the Lord, when His Word shows that it is just at hand: "Where is the promise of His coming?" for "all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

Peter says that those who say this are "willingly ignorant" of something, or "wilfully forget" it, and that is, what it was that formed the heavens and the earth in the beginning, and causes all things to continue.

It was *the Word of God*. "In the beginning was the Word," and God still upholds all things by "the Word of His power." So Peter says: "By the Word of the Lord the heavens were of old and the earth standing out of the water and in the water."

And then he reminds them of something else that they wilfully forgot, that heavens and the earth which God made in the beginning, standing out of the water and in the water, were destroyed by the very Word them brought forth.

In the first chapter of Genesis you will find that it was the Word of God that "divided the waters that were under the firmament from the waters that were under the firmament from the waters that were above the firmament," and that gathered the waters together unto one place, and made the dry land appear. And Peter says that it was by this same Word that "the world that then was being overflowed with water, *perished*."

God's Word in the waters in the firmament, and in the earth; and at the time of the flood, that same Word brought the waters together again. "The fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the floodgates of heaven were opened," and the waters covered the face of the earth, even as they did in the beginning, before they were separated by the Word.

But did the people of that day believe that this flood of destruction was coming? Oh, no; they might have known, for "surely the Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto the prophets." He sent His servant Noah with a warning message to the world which he faithfully delivered for one hundred and twenty years, while he built the ark in which all who believed the Word of the Lord might be saved.

But in those days there were "scoffers" who said that such a thing as Noah talked of could not be. They reacted just as people do to-day, that all things had continued as they were from the beginning of the creation. The laws of nature were so firmly fixed that God Himself could not change them. No drop of water had ever fallen from the sky, the rivers had never overflowed their banks, and the seas had ever kept their decreed place.

But oh, they forgot, they were "willingly ignorant," just as people are now, that these "laws of nature" as they call them, are simply the working of the Word of God, which had gathered the waters, and kept them in their appointed place, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." They did not see in this the hand of Him who "works all things after the counsel of His own will."

So they went on their way, "eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." The Word that was holding back the waters, caused them to rush together, and the earth and its inhabitants were destroyed.

Now another thing Peter tells us. The earth and the heavens before the flood, were, by the Word of God, stored with the water which God used in their destruction. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are *stored with fire* [Revised Version] against the day of judgment."

Since the time of the flood, and as the result of it, fire has been stored in the depths of the earth; for at that time great forests of trees, and all sorts of vegetation, were buried deep in the ground. These have in the course of ages turned to coal, which, as you know, is dug out of the depths of the earth. These coal beds give quantities of oil, and the coal and oil often catch fire and burn deep in the earth, heating great rocks and stones, and causing loud explosions and volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, as we learned a little while ago.

"When the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil," and as the steam must have an outlet, it forces up the surface of the ground. This is how volcanoes or burning mountains are formed.

In all these things we see evidences of the truth of God's word that the earth is "stored with fire against the day of judgment;" while the lightnings which shook from heaven at times remind us of the day when fire from heaven will unite with the fires which will burst forth from

Then "the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" "the earth also; and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which the righteous shall dwell."

Now you see, dear children, that these two things of which we have lately been learning, fire and water, both but different forms of the all-powerful life of God, are used by Him to destroy everything that cannot be brought into perfect harmony with His will. The dreadful curse of sin must be removed and destroyed by His life which swallows up death, and all who will not be "saved by His life," must at last be destroyed by it.

"A Light in a Dark Place" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Are you wondering what is the meaning of the little picture on the opposite page, and what it has to do with the words printed beside it?

Perhaps some of you have already thought of some texts which will explain its meaning. It not, try to do so before you read further.

Here is one: "Thy Word is *a lamp* unto my feet, and *a light* unto my path." But what is it in the lamp that makes the light and keeps it burning? You can see what is being poured into it from the hand above,-the oil.

The Word of God is a lamp, and the holy oil which makes it a light to our path, is the Spirit of God which is in it. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

David, one of these holy prophets, said: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue."

The precious oil, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, came upon them from above, and God spoke through them words which were to give light to His people in all parts of the earth and through all the ages.

So Peter tells us that we "do well to take heed" to these words of the prophets, "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

"God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets," to show His children the things that are coming to pass on the earth. So we none of us need walk in darkness not knowing what is before us, if we will do as the Apostle Peter tells us, "and remember the words which were spoken by the holy prophets."

"This lamp through all the tedious night
Of life shall guide our way,
Till we behold the clearer light
Of an eternal day."

"Life from Life" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

There is nothing in the world that more clearly shows the strength of the life which God has placed in the human body, and its renewing, recuperative power, than the way in which people live in spite of all the poisonous medicines they

swallow. One or two instances that have recently come to our notice, will illustrate this.

An American paper tells of a gentleman who entered a chemist's shop with two prescriptions, one of which the chemist judged to be intended for a person with a cough. The gentleman was coughing severely, and the chemist put up the cough mixture first, and handed it to the customer, with the remark that he might wish to take a dose at once, while he was waiting for the other. "No;" said the gentleman, "I do not wish to take that; it is for my little girl, two years old, who has a cold." The chemist saw at once that a mistake had been made, and, making an excuse, sent his assistant to the physician who had given the prescription, which contained a poison a full dose of which for an adult would have killed the baby. So, as the paper said, the father's cough saved the baby's life.

Another example: In the question department of the *Echo*, the one who answers the medical questions recently gave advice as to the treatment of a young girl with chorea. Here is the substance of it: "Absolute rest in bed and freedom from excitement are essentials. Plenty of fresh air, cold sponging, and good food are also necessary. Underlying conditions, such as anæmia require attention. Arsenic and iron do the most good, the mistake being to give the former in small doses, because it has been found that children, and in particular choreic children, bear large doses well, and in fact arsenic should be 'pushed' till griping indigestion, or signs of conjunctival or nasal irritation be induced." Then follows the prescription.

Just think of that! A man, presumably a physician, deliberately advising the giving of poison to a child, and of "pushing" it until distinct signs of poisoning are produced! These two instances are good illustrations of the fact that the ordinary study of medicine consists largely in the grading of poisons to various ages and temperaments, so that the physician may know how much poison the human system will endure at different stages and under different conditions. Of course the size of the dose is based upon an average of many cases, and when a person is found who is more susceptible to poison than the average man, it is his misfortune, and he must pay for it with his life. No one thinks of blaming the physician who administered the poison, if he prescribed only so much as the generality of people could take and still live.

Does not this suggest to the reader that the taking of poisonous medicines is both senseless and wicked? Think of the inconsistency of taking death in order to get life! of taking as much poison as one can endure without dying, in order to be saved from dying! Common sense should teach a person that one disease is quite enough to endure, without imposing another upon the already weakened body. The fact that many people do get well in some of all this drugging, shows the power of the life which God has given mankind. What glorious results might not one expect to see if people depended only on the life of the Lord, and did not try to get life by taking death.

"Well," somebody may ask, "what has all this to do with the Gospel? What has a religious journal to do with medical questions?" Much every way. The Gospel is the good news of life; it brings life and immortality to light, and therefore it has to do with everything that in any way affects life. God is the Great

Physician; He, and He only, is the One who heals every disease that is healed; and He heals by imparting His own life which, because it is righteousness closeness from sin. So the forgiveness of sin and the healing of disease are designed to go together. Witness the case of healing by the Lord, in which sins were at the same time forgiven. In the new earth "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Isa. xxxiii. 24. The reason why they are not sick is that their sins were forgiven. The Lord says to those who will serve Him perfectly "I will take sickness away from the midst of thee." Ex. xxiii. 25.

God gives His life freely to all men. The record is that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." 1 John v. 11. Most people do not believe it, and many of those who profess to believe it, do not show any appreciation of it. This lack of appreciation is shown most frequently by disdaining the things by which God conveys to us His perfect life and choosing instead those things that tend to death. God's life cannot injure anybody, if it is not perverted, and in that case the life is gone. The life of God taken with conscious, grateful recognition of Him, can give only life and health, joy and blessing. Now when God gives His life so freely and so abundantly, is it not a sin to reject it? and does it not show gross stupidity and lack of appreciation when we take death for our healing, instead of holding fast to God's life, and that alone?

There is a marvellous power in the life of God, for He is the Almighty. The least thing that He has made reveals His everlasting power. As already noted, the wonderful life force which He has placed in men is shown in the fact that so many live in spite of all the poisons they take and of all the other ways in which they fight against life. Who can measure the amount of strength, and the buoyancy of life that would be manifested in a man who would accept only the perfect life of God, and who would not pervert it? The only measure is the power of Jesus Christ. He gave Himself for us; and we may have Him in His fulness now. If we are willing

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to die with Him, His life and power may be manifested in our mortal flesh (2 Cor. iv. 10, 11), and we shall know that godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

"News and Notes" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

- The river Nile was never known to be so low as it is at the present time.
- There is no break in the drought in India, and the suffering grows more intense every day.
- Within the last six years there have been 900 people lynched in the United States, most of them in the southern part.
- The White Star liner *Oceanic*, the largest ship in the world, will sail from Liverpool for New York on her maiden trip, September 6.
- There is a great scarcity of water in Kent, and as a consequence typhoid and scarlet fever have broken out in many parishes, with a high mortality.

-The plague is on the increase in China in spite of all efforts to check it. It has broken out in a fresh place in Russia, and its ravages are being felt at other points where it has appeared.

-For thirteen weeks until the 18th ult., there had been but one wet day in London, and that was July 1. The average heat in the sun has been 106.34; in the shade the average has been 79.19.

-It is the intention of the United States to give Cuba a constitutional government and complete independence at an early date. This is the substance of a declaration to the Cubans just signed by President McKinley.

-A tobacconist was summoned at Ilfracombe for the fifteenth time for Sunday trading. The case was adjourned to allow the solicitor for the defence to join in an agitation throughout the country to appeal to the Home Secretary to repeal the ancient Act against Sunday trading.

-An asylum for the waif children of New York City, located a short distance in the country, was set on fire by an incendiary during the night of August 25th. There were 350 inmates, and it was almost a miracle that they were not all burned. As it was four lost their lives, and twenty were seriously injured.

-In consequence of the great expenditure in behalf of the Philippine war beyond what was expected, the Congress of the United States will be asked to raise additional inland revenue among the suggestions being, taxes on all patent articles and firearms. The United States War Department's expenditures are now \$40,000,000 annually.

-Piracy has become so common on and in the vicinity of the West River, in China, that a gunboat and torpedo boat have been despatched from Canton to capture the pirates or suppress their depredations.

-During the last twenty years the consumption of tea in England has increased over 74,000,000 pounds. According to an eminent authority there was consumed during 1896 in England 231,369,000 pounds of tea.

-On the 28th ult., at the Couchard Mine, at Haute Croix, France, just after sixteen men had stepped into a skip to go down the shaft, the cable broke, and they were precipitated to the bottom. Every one was killed.

-Ninety-three years ago, when the first Bible Society was formed, there were only about 4,000 copies of the Bible in the world. Now there are nearly that number of million copies scattered among the people.

-Tuberculosis is reported to be so common in the workhouses of Liverpool, that the Poor Laws unions in and around the city have appointed a joint committee to deal with the question as it affects the paupers under their care.

-It has been less than seventy-five years since the first railroad was built in the United States. The railway mileage there is now nearly 200,000 miles, and there are 875,000 men employed in various capacities by the different lines.

-As an indication of the zeal manifested by the believers in heathen religions to make converts, it may be stated that from the one town of Poore, India, there are sent out every year 7,000 Hindu missionaries to proclaim the worship of one of the many Hindu gods.

-The whole of the nearly-completed steel framework of the new coliseum in course of erection at Chicago collapsed on the 28th ult. Fully a hundred men,

women and children were inside the building besides a number of workmen. Nearly all of them were either killed or terribly injured.

-The Pope has just held a conference with the General of the Jesuits with reference to latest aspect of the Dreyfus case, which is beginning to cause alarm at the Vatican, where it is feared that if Dreyfus is found guilty, the result will be a violent campaign against the French Catholic religious orders.

-Owing to the recent raising of the price of beef by the Meat Trust in New York the poor in the tenement districts are organising vegetarian societies, the members of which pledged themselves to abstain from meat till the old prices are restored. The members of the organisation are counted by thousands. Many butchers have been driven out of business.

-Between July 1, 1897, and June 30, 1898, according to the official report, there were 184 casualties to vessels belonging to the United Kingdom which resulted in loss of life. In all these cases only 681 lives were lost. This is the lowest record for twenty-one years. Never once before during this time has the number of lives lost fallen below 1,000, and in 1895 there were 2,544 lives lost, of which 1,200 were passengers.

-According to reports just issued, the British and Foreign Bible Society have during the past year supported the colporteurs, who have sold 1,500,000 copies of the Scriptures. Outside of England, Russia has in many respects given the largest facilities and the warmest welcome to the Bible Society, one way being, by allowing their agents free transportation on the State railways. The income of the Society during the year has been ?220,000.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Six hundred lives have been lost by the flooding of a copper mine at Heshikoku, Japan.

The garrison at Key West, U.S.A., has been ordered to leave, on account of the appearance of yellow fever. This gives an idea of how quickly the strongest army may be forced to flee, or destroyed, without noise or discharge of weapons. The destruction of Sennacherib's army is an instance. The powers will sometimes find that the question of disarmament will be settled for them by a highest Power. "There is no king saved by the multitude of an host."

"A Needed Warning" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

At the Sanitary Congress session at Southampton, Mr. Malcolm Morris delivered a lecture on Tuberculosis, and expounded the policy of the National Preventive Association. The existence of such an association was justified by the fact that "tuberculosis at the present time causes one in every eight deaths in the country, that of all deaths occurring in this kingdom between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five nearly one half are due to consumption, and that some 30,000 persons are at this moment suffering from the disease in Great Britain." Dr.

Scarborough said that every fatal case of consumption infected one other person with disease.

But there is hope. It was set forth that "phthisis is preventable by measures which are completely within the range of personal and public hygiene;" and this fact ought to lead everybody who loves life to seek a speedy understanding of those measures, and to adopt them. One very marked indication of how to guard against the consumption plague is given in the fact that it is from cattle that the bulk of tuberculosis is derived. If therefore people would abstain from flesh and milk,-from all animal products,-they would effectually close up one grand avenue for the entrance of consumption. The most of people will pay no attention to this warning; but some will, and their respect for life will be rewarded. Of course it is understood that the mere abstinence from flesh will by no means prevent consumption among men; there must be care to supply the body with all the nourishment it needs, and of the best kind, not only in the way of food and drink, but of fresh air, sunlight, and exercise. Let the pure life of God have free course, and there need be no fear.

"Truth" *The Present Truth* 15, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Jesus said, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John viii. 31, 32.

Truth is not a form of words, but a living thing. One cannot write the truth out in dogmas and creeds; it must be written in the hearts of men. Even the law of God, as the Jews had it, and as it has been transmitted to us in the Bible, although, "the *form* of knowledge and of the truth." Rom. ii. 20. The living Christ-the Word of God-is "the Truth and the Life."

This truth may be known by all. Whoever is willing to do the will of God will know that will. John vii. 17. Christ is the truth; He is the Word of God; and God's Word is truth (John xvii. 17); the word that Jesus speaks is His own life; He breathes into us His own Spirit; He is the wisdom of God (1 Cor. i. 24), and Wisdom says to all who will hear: "I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My words unto you." Prov. i. 23. Therefore it is that whoever hears and accepts and continues in the words of Jesus is His true disciples and *knows* the truth.

The *truth* is that which makes men free. It matters not how many true things a man believes;-if he is not a free man, he does not know the truth; he has not yet learned Christ, and been taught by Him, "as the truth is in Jesus." It is impossible that a man who knows the truth (mark this, he is not merely to have truth, or to know some true things, but to *know the truth*) should be a slave to anything. He must be free, for the truth makes every one free who knows it. There is living power in truth; it delivers from all bondage, and gives victory in every conflict.

Remember also that it is the true disciple of Christ, who knows the truth. Those who continue in His Word, are truly His disciples, and they *know* the *truth*. But the truth makes men free, therefore all the true disciples of Christ are free. If anybody, therefore, says on any occasion, at any time, or under any

circumstances, "I am not free," meaning that somebody or something keeps him back from doing what he ought to do, that is a confession that he is not in very deed a disciple of Christ. His own mouth convicts him.

Many people unconsciously acknowledge themselves to be slaves, and thus not full and unconditional servants of Christ. They say of some habit, "I cannot give that up." Something in their manner of living is pointed out to them as being a snare to them, and they say, "Oh, but I couldn't live without that." Or, some plain duty is set before them from the Bible, and they say, "Well, I never can do that." What are they saying?-Simply this: "I am a slave." It is not pitiful to see a slave so lost to the sense of what liberty is, that he delights in his chains, and loves the lash that drives him to bondage and death?

Who are the servants of the Lord?-"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Rom. vi. 16. Whoever yields himself wholly to the Lord Jesus, is the servant of Christ, and can say, "*O Lord, truly I am Thy servant*;" I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid; *Thou hast loosed My bonds*." Ps. cxvi. 16. Such an one knows the joys of freedom, for in accepting us as His servants, the Lord pledges Himself to make and keep us free from every sort of bondage. Accept His gift, taste the sweets of liberty, and you will never again consent to be a slave.

Confess your own faith as much as you please, but do not attempt to do it for another. There are some people, although they are comparatively few in number, who can tell for certain what they believe; but there is not a person in the world who can truthfully tell what another person believes. Every attempt to set forth another's faith must necessarily be more or less than the exact truth, that is, an untruth. Be content, therefore, with the statement of your own faith when it is necessary, and leave other to tell their own. "Hast thou faith? have it to thy self before God."

September 14, 1899

"Front Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

Why does the earth bring forth fruits and grains so abundantly, as we see in the harvest of this present year? Is it an accident?

Not by any means. It is true, that "the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear;" but this is only after the man has first cast seed into the ground. Mark iv. 26-28. There is no accident about it; it is the working out of law.

Moreover the earth itself does not take the initiative. If there were no seed in the ground, there would never be any more. Now "the seed is the Word of God" (Luke viii. 11), for in the beginning, when the earth was utterly empty, God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth and it was so." Gen. i. 11. God's word is the seed, the source whence every living thing springs.

But does not the Saviour say that "the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself"? He does, and the word that He uses is most striking. The Greek word is "automatic," so that what He really says is that the earth brings forth fruit automatically, or like an automaton. The only other place in the Bible where the word occurs is Acts xii. 10, in the story of Peter's deliverance from prison. As he and the angel came to the iron gate leading to the city, it "opened to them of its own accord," automatically. Now we know that an automaton works only by virtue of power previously applied to it; so the word which the Saviour uses makes most prominent the fact that God Himself is the cause of all growth.

It is God, therefore, who works in the earth both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Some will say, "We knew that before; you did not need to take the trouble to prove that to us." Yes, so we might all say; yet, as a matter of fact, we have not *known* it; we have but assented to what we have heard, taking it for granted

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without knowing the reality of it God would have us "prove all things." Now we can see for ourselves that it is God's Word, continually spoken to the earth, that makes the harvest. Let us then come back to the original creation. Why does the earth bring forth food? That is, Why does the Lord cause it to do so?

The answer is ready in every mouth: the food grows in order that we may be fed, in order that we may live. Right! "He watereth the hills from His chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Thy works, He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that He may bring forth food out of the earth; and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengthneth man's heart." Ps. civ. 13-15. God "giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. vi. 17), our daily bread, in order that day by day we may receive new life.

But why does He desire that we should live?-It is because He hath not pleasure in the death of any. "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his wicked ways, and live?" Eze. xviii. 23. So these daily blessings that contribute to our life, are for our eternal salvation. All blessings, whatever they may be, come to us only through Christ, and He is sent to bless us in turning us away from our iniquities (Acts iii. 26); for only in righteousness is there life. In the food with which God supplies us day by day, He is bringing to us righteousness.

"Surely salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before Him; and shall set us in the way of His steps." Ps. lxxxv. 9-11.

The skies pour down righteousness (Isa. clv. 5), and thus it is that truth springs out of the earth: thus it is that the Lord gives that which is good. He withholdeth no good thing. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." James i. 17. God keeps nothing back that is good. Everything comes down to us. He has reserved nothing for

Himself; He shares everything-Himself, His own life-with His creatures. Thus it is that righteousness goes before Him, to set the way of His steps.

Let us not lightly esteem these daily and annual blessings from the Lord. We sometimes call them "common blessings." That is what they are indeed, for the most common thing for the Lord is to do good to them, and He does it in order that to do good may be the most common thing with us. The ripened grain and the tree bending under the burden of luscious fruit,-the glory of the land,-are evidences that God's salvation is nigh unto us. Shall we not gladly lay hold of it, receiving it even as we receive our daily food from the hands of the great Giver?

"The Devil's Power" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" The power of the devil is in his roar, not in big strength. He comes at people in such a way that they are overawed, almost frightened out of their senses and while in this condition they are his easy victims. The Bible does not say that the devil has come down with great power, but "great *wrath*." And why? "Because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Just as a child, powerless to get what it wants, stamps and kicks and works itself into a perfect rage, so the devil, as he realises that the end is approaching, and the cords are tightening about him, with no power to stay the inevitable result, is in a perfect frenzy.

No one is afraid of a lion's roar when the beast is securely caged; so why should we fear the devil's roar when we know that a stranger than he has bound him and taken away all his armour wherein he trusted? Christ has spoiled principalities and powers, together with their chief, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself.

When the devil came to Jesus in the wilderness and tempted Him, the reply was, "It is written." Then the devil tried Him on another point, and got the same answer-"It is written." And in the last effort, the Saviour replied, "Get thee hence, Satan," and at this the record says, "the devil leaveth Him." So even the weakest saint, has power to say to the devil in the most trying temptation, "Depart,"-and he will go. Remember the promise, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape." And again, "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

"The Joy of True Martyrdom" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

What is a martyr? and what is martyrdom?

Doubtless usually associate martyrdom with torture. They will say that a person is a martyr to rheumatism, or that another suffers martyrdom with neuralgia. The idea is that all that is necessary in order to be a martyr is that one suffers intense pain, either patiently or impatiently; whereas one may suffer extreme torture without being a martyr, and on the other hand many a martyr is

unconscious of any suffering. Recall the cases of men who while being burned at the stake have sung for very joy.

Our word "martyr" is simply the Greek word for "witness." Jesus says that all His disciples, having received the power of the Holy Ghost, are to be His witnesses, or, transfer the Greek term, His martyrs. If a man is not in the fullest sense a martyr continually, he is not a perfect follower of Christ; for Christ's true followers are always witnesses to His power and Divinity. But they are not always in pain, neither do they go about with a feeling that they are depriving themselves of some very desirable thing for Christ's sake, and that there is a great lack in their lives.

The true Christian martyr is a witness to the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His life is the witness, because he experiences in himself the exceeding greatness of the power of God, "according

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to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right, hand in the heavenly places." Eph. i. 19, 20. With this power there must be continual joy even in the midst of hardships and deprivations and persecutions, for by this power one has continual victory, and there is always joy in victory. Thus the joy of the Lord is the Christian's strength, or, which is the same thing, the strength of the Lord is perfect joy. When the Lord is known to us as our strength, He also becomes our song. Isa. xii. 2. Such witnesses, true martyrs, will not go about pitying themselves or calling for pity because of the losses they suffer for the truth's sake. It is perfectly safe to say that whoever does not find sufficient in the gift of Christ's life to more than supply all his need, cannot be called a true martyr.

These thoughts were suggested by the *Vegetarian* a short time ago a statement by the editor, to the effect that vegetarianism involved more or less martyrdom, the idea plainly being, as the context showed, that to live without eating the flesh of animals is a real hardship, and that the one who does it has a continual sense of unsatisfied longing, a feeling that he is being tortured for the sake of a principle. The writer knows many who can see nothing but bodily torture in healthful living; and for the honour of the life of the Lord by whom we live, he would endeavour to dispel the false idea.

Nothing is plainer than that God never designed that any animal should live by eating other animals. Good Doctor Watts wrote,

"Let dogs delight to bark and bite.

For 'tis their nature to;

Let bears and lions growl and fight,

For God has made them so;"

but in writing that he did not take counsel of the Bible. In the world to come, which will be only the world that was in the beginning, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, the cow and the bear shall eat together, their young ones shall lie down together, and the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the young lion and the calf, shall dwell together in peace, and a little child shall lead them. Nowhere will there be any destruction nor any injury to any living creature. Isa. xi. 6-9. Going back to the beginning, and there is where we must come if we are in

Christ, because He is the Beginning, we find that God appointed fruits and seeds as the food of man, and vegetables and green herbs as the food of all beasts and birds and creeping things. Gen. i. 29, 30. In the fruits of the earth we find the life of God in the purest form in which it exists in anything that can be eaten. These things are much less affected by the curse than are other things. Now whatever God designs for us ought to be a pleasure to us, for God does not delight in seeing His creatures suffer.

It is by the life of God that men live. His life is righteousness and joy and peace. It is absolute freedom. There is nothing forced with God. He cannot be forced to do anything against His will, neither does He drive Himself to do anything. All His work is done spontaneously. He gave His life for us willingly and gladly. Therefore in the service of God,-in the doing of anything that is right,-there can be nothing of compulsion, even though it be self-compulsion. There is no virtue in anything that we drive ourselves to do or to endure. The whole life of real right-doing is one of joy. If one finds life a burden, if he must lash himself to any task, or hold himself to any duty with set teeth and the grim determination of one whose pride makes him endure the torture of the rack without crying out, he may know that he is not a true witness for Christ. He is but a slave, whereas all the Lord's servants are freemen.

"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John v. 3. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." Ps. xix. 8. If we do something because we think we ought to do it, but find no pleasure in it, and would really rather not do it if our conscience would leave us in peace, then we may know that we are not keeping the precept of the Lord, even though the thing we are doing is expressly commanded in the Bible. His commandment is life everlasting, and His life is fulness of joy.

It is self-evidence, therefore, that when we live as God would have us, taking such things, and only such things, as He has designed for the support of our life, there will be continual joy in life; every act of life will be a pleasure. Coming back to the question of eating, one who thinks can readily see that the most perfect life cannot be obtained from the flesh of dead animals. Although all creatures get their life from God, that life is more or less perverted in all animals, and moreover, even at the best, degeneration begins to take place as soon as an animal is slain. Therefore it cannot be, and is not, any hardship to abstain from eating dead carcasses; but of course one must be sure to eat the good things which God's bounty has provided, by which He bestows His life upon us. When one lives solely upon the food which God gave man in the beginning, and does not destroy the life in the preparation of it, or in eating, one derives as much pleasure from it as from breathing pure air. Who would think of calling it martyrdom (using the word in its perverted sense) to be obliged to breathe fresh air instead of the foul air of a closed cellar? Oh, it is a grant thing just to be alive, when one is consciously living by the perfect life of his Creator!

This joy of the Lord is what the servant of God is commissioned to proclaim to all. Not only is there joy in the act of eating and drinking, as well as in every other act, when one does all to the glory of God, but there are no depressing or injurious after effects. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich and He addeth no

sorrow with it." Prov. x. 22. "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; (for the Life was manifest, and we have seen it, and bear witness [are martyrs] and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." 1 John i. 1-4. This is the Word by which we are to live. "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!"

There are so many people-nominal Christians-who profess faith in the Word of God, and affirm that they believe its promises; but there are few who really do believe them. Would you be a man of faith? Cultivate that faculty. Put your finger on the passage of Scripture on which your faith rests, and believe it, never wavering. This will give you the constancy of Jacob; and like him you may have your name changed to Israel.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'The Lord God Will Come.' Isa. xl. 9-11" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xl. 9-11.)

"O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

Matt. ii. 6, R.V.: "Thou Bethlehem, land of Judah, art in no wise least among the princes of Judah; for out of these shall come forth a Governor, which shall be shepherd of My people Israel."

John x. 11, 27, 28: "I am the good Shepherd; the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

Rev. xxii. 12: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Matt. xvi. 27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works."

2 Thess. i. 6-8: "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ps. l. 3-5: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me: those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

Hab. iii. 3-13: "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light: He had bright beams coming out of His side [margin]; and there was the hiding of His power. Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet. He stood and measured the earth; He beheld and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; His ways are everlasting. . . The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of Thine arrows they went, and at the shining of Thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy people, even for salvation with Thine anointed."

1 Thess. iv. 16-18: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

1 Cor. xv. 51-53: "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For the corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

Phil. iii. 20, 21: "Our citizenship is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

Isa. xxxv. 3, 4: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you."

Matt. xv. 24: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Eze. xxxiv. 11-13: "For thus saith the Lord God: Behold I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day he is among the sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country."

The preaching of the second coming of Christ, in glory, is as much a part of the preaching of the Gospel-the good news-as is the preaching of the cross of Calvary. In fact, the preaching of the cross is not complete without the preaching of the second advent.

Nothing so awful as the coming of the Lord to judgment has ever taken place on this earth. The earth will quake, and be removed like a cottage, the heavens will depart as a scroll when it is rolled together, every mountain and island will be moved out of their places, and "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman and every freeman" shall hide themselves in the dens and in the caves, and say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 14-17. Yet the announcement of the coming of that great day is part of the message of comfort which God sends to His people. How marvelous is the comfort of God, when even the most terrible judgments are comfort!

The comfort is that Christ is coming to save His people. The prophet Habakkuk, to whom a view of the terrors of the last day were given, said, "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy people." When the hearts of the people grow fearful, and the knees tremble, and the hands hang down, the Lord tell us to strengthen them

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with the words, "Your God will come with vengeance." The coming of Christ is the "blessed hope" of the Gospel. Titus ii. 13. When He shall come, His saints will say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. xxv. 9. The announcement of the coming of the Lord is the same comfort as the announcement of the pardon of sins. Whoever preaches the remission of sins, does it only partially if he does not preach the coming of the Lord in glory. The texts quoted in this lesson shows this.

Jesus Christ is the good Shepherd. He is "the Chief Shepherd." 1 Peter v. 4. He came to earth for the purpose of seeking His lost sheep, and He seeks them out, and saves them by giving His life for theirs. On the cross He suffered all the agonies of the lost. Matt. xxvii. 46. He endured everything that men would have been obliged to endure if He had not come, and that the rejecters of Him will have to endure at the last. He took all on Himself, in order to save men. The terrors of the last day, the day of Judgment, were present in full on Calvary. Even so the blessedness and joy of Calvary will be present at the coming of the Lord the second time, in glory.

It is only by the power of the cross that Jesus will come again. He will be seen coming in the clouds of heaven "with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv. 30), but that will be but the power and glory of the cross. The fire that devours before Him will come from the pierced side. From the side whence flowed the healing stream of life, comes the power to render to the wicked according to their deeds. The power manifested at the coming of the Lord is the power of salvation; it is the power by which Jesus now saves His people from the hand of the enemy.

"His mercy endureth for ever." In wrath He remembers mercy. Hab. iii. 2. The waters that will overflow the hiding place of the wicked, will be the waters of salvation that flow from the wounded side of Jesus. "He will swallow up death in victory," and then those who have made a covenant with death, seeking to hide

in its shadow, must necessarily be swallowed up with it. Isa. xxviii. 16-18. So although the last day will be the most terrible, it will contain nothing but joy for those who have accepted the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Do not the righteous joy in the cross of Christ? Is it not the one thing in which to glory? Yet the crucifixion of Christ was a most terrible event, and all the terrors of the wrath of God raged round the cross where Christ died. But for His death on the cross, the Son of man would not have the power to sit in judgment and to execute judgment on the ungodly.

From Bethlehem comes the Governor that is to be the Shepherd of Israel. He rules His people as a shepherd rules his flock. He feeds them, and the food that He gives them is Himself. He gives Himself for the sheep. When the Lord comes, it will be at a time when the wicked will have gathered to make an end of the righteous ones on the earth. A decree will have gone forth that whosoever will not worship the beast or his image, shall be killed. Rev. xiii. 15. Just at the moment when Satan has stirred up all the forces of evil against the just, and to all human sight it looks as though the righteous were to be cut off from the earth, Christ will appear to save them. It will be but the crowning act in the great drama of the cross. It will be the demonstration to the whole earth that Christ is the Savior. Then those who have rejected Him, and have mocked at His offers of salvation, will be forced to acknowledge that Jesus saves. But the present comfort to the people of God lies in the fact that all that great power to salvation is theirs now. It is all in the cross.

He comes with strong hand, as a Mighty One. "His arm shall rule for Him." But it is that same arm with which He gathers the lambs of the flock. He is gentle, because He is strong. His strength to destroy the wolves and lions that would devour the flock, is His power to feed the flock, and to make the sheep lie down in green pastures. Strange that so many preachers of the Gospel have so little to say about the coming of the Lord, which contains so much comfort for the people of God!

There is in this lesson valuable instruction as to the return of Israel. Jesus is the Shepherd of Israel, and when He comes the second time, "with power and great glory," He comes as a Shepherd. It is then that He will gather together all His people,-the flock that has been scattered and torn,-"and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers." When He was here the first time, He said that He had come to seek and to save that which was lost, and He also declared that He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; they were the ones whom he came to seek and to save. But everybody knows that there has not yet been any gathering of Israel. The lost sheep have not yet been gathered together into their own land. Moreover He Himself tells us that it will be when He comes the second time that He will say, "Gather My saints together unto Me." It is then that He will gather out His sheep from all the lands whither they have been scattered. Compare Eze. xxxiv. and Matt. xxiv. 30. Then there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Eze. xxxiv. 22-31; John x. 16. That fold will be the fold of Israel, for all the saved will constitute the Israel of God.

The Apostle Paul describes the coming of the Lord in glory, when the dead shall be raised, and the living caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, thus ever to be with Him, and says, "Comfort one another with these words." This is comfort for those who mourn departed friends, who have laid in the dark grave. They need not sorrow as those who have no hope, for "the righteous hath hope in his death." But this is not all the comfort that there is in this announcement. It is the same comfort that the Lord in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah tells His servants to give to His people. It is the comfort of the Gospel of salvation from sin. Notice: When Christ comes with the sound of the trump of God, all the saints of God, both sleeping and waking, will be changed. In the twinkling of an eye the change from mortality, from corruptible to incorruptibility, will take place. All will then be given bodies incapable of disease and decay. What a wonderful change that will be! But mark: This change of our bodies is "according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." We are rebellious by nature, and our minds are not subject to the law of God, "neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. But He is able to change our minds, giving us a new mind, and a new nature, so that we shall be subject to Him, and shall delight in the law of the Lord; and His power to do this is according to the power by which He will

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at the last change our bodies from corruption to incorruption. And note that that change will take place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; the Lord is able to do marvellous things in a very short time; therefore we may know that if we are but willing, He can in an instant effect this wonderful change in our natures. Is it not worth while to have a belief in the resurrection of the dead? Is there not great comfort in the knowledge of the coming of the Lord? All this shall take place as surely as the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; therefore, be not afraid.

"The Bible and the Jews" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

The opposition to the Jews is becoming more and more systematic, and is being pursued with zeal in almost every country. Indeed, it may be said that in none of the great nations of the earth, except in England, is a Jew on absolutely equal footing with people of other nationalities. The anti-Jewish feeling in Russia is so well known as to need no comment; in France it is the all absorbing theme; in Germany a conference of Anti-Semites is soon to be held, at which steps are to be taken for more vigorously pursuing the work of opposition to the despised race to which Jesus of Nazareth belonged; and news comes that two Jewish cadets have recently been obliged to leave the Military Academy, at West Point, U.S.A., on account of the persistent persecution to which they were subjected. The unreasoning prejudice is said to have been carried so far that life in the Academy was made unbearable for another young man, not a Jew, because he found his Jewish mess mate a pleasant companion, and liked his society.

Unjust and unreasonable as all this is, we can see in it some evidences of the fulfilment of the wish expressed by the leaders of the Jews when at the trial of Christ before Pilate they cried out, "His blood be on us and on our children!" We

do not mean by this that God is vindictively punishing that people for the act of their forefathers. God is not vindictive. The curse causeless does not come. Every curse that comes upon men or nations is the direct consequence, the natural result, of some cause. We are not concerned now to trace this cause and effect in the case of the Jews; it is sufficient to call attention to the fact.

The anti Jewish crusade in Germany is taking a turn quite to be expected, and which will doubtless extend to other countries. One of their leaders proposes agitating against the use of the Old Testament as a religious book in the schools. "He considers that it is a book written by Jews for Jews and he maintains that the history of the Jewish patriarchs, kings, and prophets, forms no part of Christian religious instruction." From what we know of the position taken by many professed Christians, with regard to at least a portion of the Old Testament, we are sure that this new movement will find the way prepared for its quite general acceptance, and the results will be most disastrous to those accepting it.

In the first place it ought to be understood that the Old Testament is no more a Jewish book than is the New. All the writers of the New Testament, with the possible exception of Luke, were Jews, so that whoever would throw away the Old Testament on the ground of its being a Jewish book must in consistency throw away the New Testament also; and this will be the inevitable result in so far as the proposed movement finds acceptance.

Not only was the New Testament written by Jews, but it was written *for* the Jews just as much as the Old Testament was. The Epistle of James is addressed "to the Twelve Tribes scattered abroad." Peter was the Apostle of Circumcision, and Paul declared that the Gospel which he preached-the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth-was "to the Jew first." Rom. i. 16. On the other hand, we find that Jeremiah, who wrote the longest book of the Old Testament, was specially chosen and ordained by the Lord as the prophet to the Gentiles. Jer. i. 5. The word "nations" in this verse is the same as Gentiles; but even without this explanation, the word "nations" shows that his mission was not limited to any one people.

Christ was "born of the seed of David according to the flesh." Rom. i. 3. He Himself declared that "salvation is of the Jews." John iv. 22. Whoever therefore throws away the Old Testament because it is Jewish, must on the same ground throw away Christ and His salvation. Indeed, this necessarily follows, whether one intends it or not; for Christ said, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; for He wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" John v. 46, 47.

In the early centuries of the Christian era there was great opposition to the Jews, on the part of professed Christians. This race prejudice led to many changes in the church. It was one great cause for the exchanging of the Jewish Passover festival for the Pagan Easter, and celebrating it always upon Sunday instead of on the fourteenth day of the Jewish month, regardless of the day of the week, as was the original order. This of course was part of the movement which substituted Sunday for the Sabbath, the remark of Constantine, "Let us have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd," showing the real ground of that change. Of course the Sabbath is not Jewish, any more than the Bible is;

but prejudice never takes facts into account. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," and is for all men just as much as is the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." The rejection of the Old Testament means really the rejection of God Himself.

In this connection it should be noted that "Judaism" is a thing entirely distinct from the religion of the Old Testament. The Apostle Paul said that he had before his conversion to Christianity made advancement "in the Jews religion" beyond others of his own age, and this advancement was due to the fact that he was "more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers." Gal. i. 14. These traditions were not drawn from the Bible, but on the contrary made the commandment of God of none effect. Matt. xv. 3-9. "In vain do they worship Me," said the Lord, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." The Jews in the time of Christ did not believe the Bible, and it is exceedingly rare to find one now who does. "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their hearts." 2 Cor. iii. 15. This, however is no more true of the Jews than it is of the most of those who are for statistical purposes, grouped under the name Christians.

"When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" It will be a rare commodity, yet it will be found, for faith, hope, and love abide for ever, and just before the Lord comes, and at the time of His appearing, there will be found people of whom the Lord Himself can say, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. xiv. 12. There will be great faith manifested by a few, and wherever it is found there will be perfect obedience to the commandments of God, with a total disregard of the traditions of men.

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The spirit that is shown in the persecution of the Jews to-day is identical with that manifested by the Jews themselves in the persecution of Christ nearly nineteen hundred years ago, and the results will be the same.

"Children's Corner. The Burning Bush" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

Autumn, the richest and most beautiful season of the year, has come. The shortening days and falling leaves remind us that it is getting late in the year, and Winter, the time for Nature's rest and sleep, is hastening on.

Spring is the bright sunrise of the year, and, like the dawn of summer days, it comes in with a burst of song and of beauty. But even more beautiful is Autumn, the year's sunset.

You have seen, when the sun is setting in the evening, the clouds take up and reflect his departing glory in all shades of lovely rose and amber tints. In the same way now, as he is preparing to leave us for a season, all nature seems to be doing him honour, bursting forth into a blaze of richest colour, revealing the glory which has been gathered from his own bright rays all through the summer sunshine.

What, dear children, do you see in all this glory and beauty? Is it to you only a wonderful and beautiful sight, or do you see and worship God, of whom it is all the revelation?

Once when Moses was leading his flock in a quiet country place, he saw a great sight,"-a burning bush, which though it was in a full blaze, was "not consumed." He thought this very strange, and turned aside to wonder and admire.

Moses did not at first see God in the burning bush, but as he gazed and considered, he heard a voice, the voice of God, speaking to him out of the midst of the bush, and saying: "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Oh, what a different place that spot became to Moses at that instant. His eyes were opened. In that burning bush he now saw the glory of the Lord, and he worshipped Him, while God talked with him.

Did you ever think it a strange thing that God should reveal Himself to Moses and talk with him out of a common bush? Well, in this He was not doing anything different from what He is doing all the time to those who can see and hear Him for "every common bush is afire with God."

In the glorious glowing colours now to be seen in the blossoms and leaves, the fruit and berries, on the bushes and plants and trees, we are looking upon just the same glory that Moses saw when "the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush." For remember that all colour is the reflected light of the sun, and this is the glory of Jesus, the Light of the world.

But many do not even see the glory; they pass all these beautiful "burning bushes" by unheeded. Others, like Moses turn aside to see and admire the sight, so beautiful, so wonderful; but they do not see God in it, so they do not know that the place is holy, and they do not "take off their shoes,"-that is, they do not worship the One whose glory they are beholding.

But to those who have "ears to hear" as well as eyes to see, out of the midst every bush and tree and plant comes the voice of God saying, "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground," for the presence and glory of the Lord are here.

Then, when He has taught us to see His glory and to hear His voice in all the things, He can talk with us, as He did with Moses, "out of the midst of the bush." In all His works His voice will speak us, teaching us day by day just the lessons that He sees we are needing, and telling us those secrets of His love which He wants us to know.

"News and Notes" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

-Post cards in England are to be increased in size on November 1.

-Thirteen men were severely injured at Salford by the explosion of an iron furnace.

-Yellow fever has broken out at Key West, eighteen cases being reported in one day.

-The Russian squadron in the Pacific has just been increased by two iron-clads and one gun-boat.

-A world's exhibition in Rome is proposed for 1910, and plans are being laid to carry it into effect.

-A copious rain fell in the interior of India on the 2nd inst. that has greatly relieved the drouth situation there.

-Swarms of locusts, similar to those which do so much damage in Algeria, have made their appearance at Friburg.

-An Egyptian railway company has just ordered 400 steel freight cars of a firm of builders in the United States.

-A new type of inflammable shell, said to be of a most destructive discription, is being tested by the French Mediterranean Fleet.

-Wireless telegraphy is now being successfully employed by the Americans in the Philippines, messages being exchanged between the advanced posts and Manila.

-Count Tolstoi has little faith in the Czar's peace manifesto, for in his own words, he regards it as merely a part of the "vast deception practised by all governments."

-A bicycle thief was captured recently in France, who confessed to stealing 250 bicycles in eight days. He sent them to London where they were disposed of by an accomplice.

-A packet endorsed "Dried Fruits" was recently received by the Bishop of Nardo, Rome, which when opened was found to contain eight deadly vipers, which sprang out, and were with difficulty killed.

-Owing to the numerous complaints of trans-atlantic travellers as to the scandalous conduct of the United States Custom offices, President McKinley has appointed a commission to revise the Custom's rules.

-The annual report of the Board of Trade has been issued, in which it is stated that during 1898 there were 7,538 bankruptcies in England with liabilities of over ?10,000,000, of which over ?8,000,000 was a loss to the creditors.

-In England this year there is an area of 51,843 acres devoted to the cultivation of hops, the product of which is almost wholly used in the manufacture of beer. How much better for the people it would be if this area were devoted to fruit culture.

-Dr. Manley read a paper at the recent Congress at Southampton, in which he stated that many cases of typhoid fever had been directly traced to the use of ice cream and ices sold on the streets of the cities and at local fairs. The safest way is never to eat them since they are unfit, as ordinarily made, to go into a human stomach, even though free from bacteria.

-Forty thousand deaths are reported to have lately taken place on the East Coast of Africa, owing to the terrible famine.

-During the third week of August, according to the report of a Local Government Board, there were, within the metropolitan area, 98,987 paupers who were in receipt of relief.

-A Conservative statistician has just published a report to the effect that in the United States there is an "average of 200 divorces granted each day, and the number is increasing at an alarming rate."

-Commissioner Poge, of the Paris Exposition, has conferred with the gold miners of Cripple Creek, and has secured a pledge of a million dollars' worth of gold bullion in the shape of a pyramid for the Paris Exposition.

-At Cleveland, U.S.A., the scene of the recent street railway car strike, an explosive was placed on the track, and a car completely demolished. Of the six passengers aboard, five, including three women, had their legs broken.

-A railway has been planned to connect Philadelphia (U.S.A.) with Atlantic City, to be run by electricity "at a speed of more than 100 miles per hour." The company has been organised with \$1,200,000 capital, and the right of some of the way has been secured.

-The *City of Rome* on her last trip to New York, collided with an iceberg in mid-ocean. Luckily she was steaming at only two knots an hour, or the results might have been most disastrous. As it was she was badly shaken up, and there was almost a panic among the passengers.

-Owing to "conflict between Great Britain and Russia on political grounds," it is found necessary, in order "to study this perpetual adversary," to "increase the number of Russians conversant with the English language," and hence, "the teaching of English should be in the programme of all the colleges." Such is the announcement made in connection with a late report of the Russian Minister of Public Instruction.

-Mrs. Mary Eddy, the "Discoverer of Christian Science," lies dying of consumption in Boston U.S.A. The theory of Christian Scientists is that all the sickness anyone has is in his mind, and that all a sick one has to do to get well is to believe that he is well, and he will be so. The leading Christian Scientists of the United States have been summoned to the bedside of Mrs. Eddy "to make a supreme test of their faith in their endeavour to save her."

-For some time past, there have been in Kent numerous prosecutions against small tradesmen under an Act of Charles I. for Sunday trading. The magistrates have, however, imposed but small fines of 8d. each, and disallowed police costs, as a mark of disfavour of the action taken. As a consequence, heavy legal expenses have been paid out of the rates. The standing joint committee have instructed the chief constables not to issue any more summonses, and to leave the prosecutions to private individuals.

-A strange complaint has lately prostrated large numbers of Parisians, due, according to medical men, to salts of lead in their morning rolls, deposited on the floors and walls of the oven from old timber which is largely used for fuel in France. The Paris Council of Hygiene has issued an edict forbidding the employment of bakers of wood from old houses, disused railway sleepers or wooden paving blocks for their furnaces. Such timber is usually impregnated with sulphate of copper or creosote, and poisonous volatile salts are liable to rise from it when heated.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

Do not murmur at God's providences. When He shuts one door, it is because He has another standing open before us.

God has shown His unselfishness by freely giving for the benefit of others, every atom of His universe, from the kernel of wheat the life of which is given for ours, to that of His Son, who died that we might live. The more we become like God, the easier it will be to give all we have for the benefit of others. We are not to give that we may become more like God, but to be transformed that it may be to give.

Every day we live, we are more and more convinced that it is not creed, or dogma, or any set form of worship, or worldly eloquence that wins men to Christ, but rather His *life* revealed in His followers. God could not reveal Himself to the world except through the life of Christ, and Christ can be made known to the world only through His disciples. "And I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all unto Me." The drawing power is in His life, nowhere else.

During the visit of the English fleet to Livorno, Italy, five hundred Catholic sailors from the marched through the street on Sunday to mass, which caused the *Osservatore Romano* to remark that "Protestant England sends its Catholic soldiers and sailors to mass, while Italy deprives its soldiers of chaplains and of any trace of religious worship." But the *Catholic Times* much concludes from this fact "that England very much less Protestant and Italy very much less Catholic than the *Osservatore* fancies."

In keeping with the delusion so fondly cherished by everybody, that "we are better than our neighbours," it has always been held that so barbarous an institution as the bull-fight, which flourishes in Spain and southern France, could not exist in England, -that it would perish for lack of support. But when we read that at a recent bull-fight at Boulogne a thousand English men and women were present, and applauded the dexterous cruelty of the torturers, we may believe that the game would not lack patronage on this soil. We learned that a special excursion from Brighton was advertised for "the third and final bull-fight," to take place last Sunday. Has the world as a whole made any real advancement since the days of the C?sars?

At an inquest on the body of a little five-year-old girl at Huxton the other day, it was found that she was well until the day before, when her mother gave her a meal of stewed eels' meat pie, and kippers, followed by raw monkey nuts. Death was said to be due to "exhaustion from diarrh?a and vomiting." There are tens of thousands of parents to feed their children, just as they do themselves, as though the digestive organs of the human body were cast iron machinery, capable of grinding up and disposing of all sorts of material that may be thrown in.

In the report of the first year's work of the hospital at Assouan, constructed for the benefit of the army of work men engaged in certain work on the Nile, there is an interesting item on sunstroke. Of the 128 "in-patients," thirty-three were sufferers from sunstroke, and all these but one were Europeans. The chief doctor of the hospital states that "in almost every serious case the patient was found to

have drunk to excess, whiskey and beer being the source of harm with Englishmen." The report adds that there is no doubt that provided a man be temperant, and take proper precautions, there is not much risk of sunstroke. Indeed there is not. If one does not drink alcoholic liquor of any kind, and does not manufacture alcohol and other poisons in his own body by wretched food or overeating, there is no danger of sunstroke or apoplexy. The word of the Lord is sure, "The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." Ps. cxxi. 5, 6. This will be literally fulfilled to every one who does not take himself out of the Lord's keeping, taking poisons instead of the pure life from God.

"Fault-finding and Fault-repairing" *The Present Truth* 15, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

The devil is charged with being "the accuser of the brethren." It is the easiest thing in the world to find fault, they impugn motives, and sow seeds of discord and distrust where peace and union should be cultivated. It is not strange that this spirit is manifested in the world, among men whose only object in life is to build up self at the expense of some one else; but in the church, among God's people, it is inexcusable.

It is not that there is no occasion to find fault, for opportunities exist on every hand. No one is perfect. It was the ministry of Christ to help, not to condemn. The command is, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." So hereafter, when we see something going wrong, instead of going about and telling everyone we meet out differently we would do it, let us go to the one bearing the burden, and give him a friendly hand-if need be lend a helping hand. It is wonderfully stimulating to the one carrying the load, and such an one can be called "the repair of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in."

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." The Lord said to Israel, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." And why? Because there was so much cross, and the furnace is a purifier. When the three Hebrews were cast into the fiery furnace, their bands were loosened, and they were set free. So always it has been with those who would do God's will. But when we are in the furnace, we mustn't begin to shrink from the fire. The "peaceable fruits of righteousness" are given only to those "who are exercised thereby."

Jesus passed in and out among the people,-He was one of them. He went about doing good. He was a physician as well as a teacher. He knew how to minister to the people just what was needed, and at just the right time. Never was a sorrowing heart or a burdened soul turned empty away who looked to him for sympathy and help. He ministered to all alike. It was the one deepest in sin and the one who had spent all her living to be cured of her infirmity, that He for gave and healed the most readily. It was their very helplessness that most appeal to Him. And then when the people saw all of His wonderful works, the record says,

"they gave glory to God." That was Jesus Christ, and to His followers he says,
"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."

September 21, 1899

"The Mighty God." Isa. xl. 12-24" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xl. 12-24.)

12. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow
of His hand;
And hath meted out the heavens by His span.
And hath comprehended the dust of the earth
in a tierce;
And hath weighed in the scales the mountains
and the hills in a balance?

13. Who hath directed the Spirit of Jehovah;
And, as one of His council, hath informed
Him?

14. Whom hath He consulted, that he should
instruct Him,
And teach Him the path of judgment;
That he should impart to Him science,
And inform Him in the way of understand-
ing?

15. Behold, the nations are as a drop from the
bucket;
As the small dust of the balance shall they be
accounted;
Behold, the islands He taketh up as an atom.

16. And Lebanon is not sufficient for the fire;
Nor his beasts sufficient for the burnt offering.

17. All the nations are as nothing before Him;
They are esteemed by Him as less than naught,
and vanity.

18. To whom therefore will ye liken God?
And what is the model of resemblance that ye
will prepare for Him?

19. The workman casteth an image:
And the smith overlayeth it with plates of
gold;
And forgeth for it chains of silver.

20. He that cannot afford a costly oblation,
chooseth a piece of wood that will not
rot;

He procureth a skilful artist,
To erect an image, which shall not be moved.

21. Will ye not know? will ye not hear?
Hath it not been declared to you from the beginning?
Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22. It is He, that sitteth on the circle of the earth;
And the inhabitants are to Him as grasshoppers;
He extendeth the heavens as a thin veil;
And spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in;

23. That reduceth princes to nothing;
That maketh the judges of the earth a mere vanity.

24. Yea, they shall not leave a plant behind them,
they shall not be sown,
Their trunk shall not spread its root in the ground;
If He but blow upon them, they instantly wither;

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And the whirlwind shall bear them away like stubble.

The psalmist sang, "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Ps. cxxiv. 8. In contrast with the gods of the heathen, that cannot see nor hear nor smell nor talk nor walk, and must needs be borne, is our God, who is in the heavens, who "hath done whatsoever He hath pleased." Ps. cxv. 3. King Jehoshaphat said, when he sought help from the Lord in a time of great danger, "Art not Thou God in heaven? and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in Thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand Thee?" 2 Chron. xx. 6. This was his comfort. God is in the heavens, above all, the Creator and upholder of all. It is this fact that gives us strong confidence in coming to Him for help in time of need. In this lesson we have the utter nothingness and helplessness of man, and the infinite greatness and power of God emphasised. This is the special message for the last days. Man is nothing; God is everything.

He "hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand." Think of all the waters on the face of the earth, and under the earth, as well as the oceans of waters in the sky,-all held in the hollow of God's hand. In reading this verse we almost always think only of the oceans and seas on this earth. Well, it is a great thing that God holds them in his hand; but when we think of the expanse of waters in the heavens, we shall get a still more comprehensive idea of His power. A rain cloud capable of sending a shower of water to the depth of an inch over the surface of London, would weigh about one million tons. What an inconceivable mass and weight of water is therefore constantly floating about

overhead, waiting God's command to fall upon the earth! "He bindeth up the waters in His thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them." Job xxvi. 8. All these are gathered in the hollow of His hand. With this in mind, what comfort there is in reading the words of Christ, who comes as a shepherd, gathering the lambs with his arm, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, which hath given them unto Me, is greater than all; and no one shall snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and My Father are One." John x. 27-30. With what confidence God's people may rest in that mighty hand!

"That hand which bears creation up,
Shall guard His children well."

He has also meted out the heavens with His span. Take this in connection with His holding the waters in the hollow of His hand. Were you ever on the ocean in a storm, when the great steamship, the mightiest creation of man's skill and power, is but the plaything of the waves? If you are ever in such a place, and feel any sensation of fear, then comfort yourself by gathering up all the water you can hold in the hollow of your hand, and seeing what an insignificant little drop it is. You can move your hand, and thus agitate the surface of the water, but the movement is but trifling. Well, that represents the size of the ocean, and the extent of the storm in the sight of God. No, it does not represent the size of the ocean, either, for you are on only a small part of the waters which He measures in the hollow of His hand. That thought will give you comfort and peace. And then, even if He should allow the ship with all on board to go to the bottom, you would still be in the hollow of His hand. Nothing can snatch you out of that secure hiding place.

What striking questions are asked in verses 13 and 14. Who is there who could act as counsellor to the Lord? With whom could He consult in making the earth and heavens? When we consider the heavens of God, the moon and stars which His fingers have made, we can only say, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" Ps. viii. 3, 4. They are not large enough to make any account of, in comparison with the great works of God's hands, much less to be consulted in the making of them. Surely, it would be very becoming in man to be still before the Lord, and listen when He speaks.

But proud man is not willing to do this. On the contrary, he wishes to be heard, and that on the very things of which God has spoken. How many there are who presume to teach God science. "The Bible," say they, "is not an authority in science; its sphere is religion." But religion is the sum of all science. The Gospel includes all the sciences, and only in it can we learn the exact truth of science. Thus: To know God is the sum of all wisdom. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom," but only in that he understands and knows God. Jer. ix. 23, 24. If he does not know God, he has nothing in which to glory, for "the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. 1 Cor. iii. 20. Now eternal life, salvation, is but the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. John xvii. 3. So we see that all science is in eternal life. The Bible is pre-eminently a book of science. To be sure it does not deal in all the unpronounceable names and

endless classifications with which so-called scientists delight to puzzle the uninitiated; but it gives the reason and the origin of all things. It takes man into a realm of fact concerning things of which the boasted man of science can only fancy. It gives positive knowledge where books of human science give only theory. Let it be set down as a fact that God's Word is true from the beginning. He has not mingled eternal truths with errors which puny man is to rectify.

In one of our previous lessons we read, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Isa. ii. 22. To get a proper idea of the littleness of a man, go to the well or stream and let down a bucket for water. Fill it full, and then draw it up as carefully as you can. Do not spill any. You will notice, however, with all your care, that some drops fall from the bucket as it rises. But what of them? The bucket is full, and no one takes any account of the few drops that dripped from the sides as it came up. Now only one of those unconsidered drops represents, not one man merely, but "the nations"! "All the nations are as nothing before Him; they are esteemed by Him as less than naught, and vanity." What presumption it is for one of these men to think to correct his Maker on a matter of science! Does not the very fact that man can be so presumptuous, show that he is very deficient in true science? that he has no adequate sense of the greatness of the creation of God, and consequently of the greatness of God's wisdom? And how can a man pose as a scientific man if he does not know anything about creation?

Men are wont to speak lightly of the learning of the ancients, especially as regards what is known as "science," although

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the word "science," really embraces all learning, since it means knowledge. The reason why the learning of the ancients is so lightly esteemed, is that many of their theories concerning nature are now known to have been but nonsense. But men forget that the same thing may be said concerning the theories which scientists held but a few years ago. The theories which men hold today, are only theories, and none know better than the men themselves that in a few years these theories will give place to others. Therefore in that respect the men of old were as well off as are the men of today. But in all matters of practical science, the ancients were the equals, if not the superiors, of the men of the present generation. They were masters in the art of building. In the "fine arts" and in literature, their works serve as models for students today. Thus we see that in keenness of perception, and in range of intellect they were the equals of any. Yet these same men made idols of wood and metal. They well know that these things were not God, but they were made as likenesses of God. Think of the folly of making an image of wood as a likeness of the God who is so great that the forests of Lebanon and all the beasts are not sufficient to make a burnt offering to Him. The princes of the earth are as nothing to Him, and all the wisdom of the judges of earth is but the mutterings of an idiot, compared with the wisdom of God. If He but blows upon them they instantly wither, and the wind will bear them away as the chaff of the summer threshing floor, so that no place is found for them. See Dan. ii. 35.

Why does the Lord tell us all these things? Is it to humiliate us, to taunt us with our own littleness in comparison with Him? Not by any means. He does not wish us to become despondent. But these are facts, and cannot be other than they are. Remember that God is not like a man who is puffed up with an undue sense of his own importance, and who looks with contempt on those whom he imagines to be inferior to himself. Far from it. The Lord is great, and cannot be any other than what He is. The relation which is here set forth as existing between God and man is that which actually is, and it cannot be different. He is infinitely greater than man, yet He does not despise man on that account. "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly." Ps. cxxxviii. 6. So much does He regard man, that He gave Himself to redeem him. He gave Himself for us, not for what we are, but for what He is able to make of us. Suppose we are but nothing; God is able to make that which is not bring to naught that which is. 1 Cor. i. 28. He tells us these things that we may know how easily He can do what He will with us. And this is for our comfort. Who is a God like unto our God?

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Joy in God's House. Ps. cxxii" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together;
Whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the
Lord,
For a testimony unto Israel,
To give thanks unto the name of the Lord.
For there are set thrones of judgment,
The thrones of the house of David.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
And prosperity within thy palaces.
For my brethren and companions' sakes,
I will now say, Peace be within thee.
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek thy good."

One great mistake that many make in reading the Scriptures is that of supposing that the writers of the Bible were as ignorant of Divine things as are the majority of people in these days. People do not put it in just that way, but that is what they think, nevertheless. They do not seem to think that the patriarchs and prophets saw anything above or beyond their immediate surroundings, and what their eyes could see. And that is why so few learn what they ought to from the Bible. They do not realise that the holy men of old spake as they were moved

by the Holy Ghost, and that by the Spirit they say things that are hidden from the natural vision. These writings are designed to open our eyes, to give us spiritual sight, so that we may see what those men saw-the reality of things.

Since the fall of Adam nothing on this earth has been as it should be, nor as it will be when righteousness shall have wrought restoration. "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. iv. 18. Now the Bible deals with eternal things, with things that are real. Through the veil that is spread over the face of all the earth, the prophets of old saw the world to come, even as we should. So all their calculations were made with reference to eternity, and not with reference to a few short years. The changing seasons were, as they should be to us, only evidences of the power of God, by which He will change this earth and all of its inhabitants who are willing to be changed into His image. Now we see through a glass, darkly. This earth, with all that pertains to it, is but a shadow of real things. But if we walk in the light as God is in the light, we shall have fellowship with Him, and shall see the inheritance of the saints in light.

The tabernacle built by Moses, as well as the temple afterwards built in Jerusalem by Solomon, was only a feeble representation of real things in heaven. From between the cherubim upon the ark of the covenant, the glory of God was revealed, and from there He spoke unto the children of Israel. Ex. xxv. 22. But "the Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven." Ps. xi. 4. The true sanctuary is one built without hands, "which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. viii. 2. "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." Jer. xvii. 12. It was to this place that God designed to lead the children of Israel immediately

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on their deliverance from Egypt. In the song of Moses after the crossing of the Red Sea, we read, "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established." Ex. xv. 17. But Israel did not believe, and would not trust the Lord. In their hearts they turned back to Egypt, so that they never gained what the Lord had designed for them. Instead of coming to the reality, they had only the shadow. Instead of coming to the real sanctuary, they had all their lives only a pattern of it, and one in which they were not permitted to enter at all. Instead of being a kingdom of priests, every one of them entitled to minister before the Lord in the secret places of the Most High, only one family of one tribe were permitted to serve as priests even in the typical sanctuary.

Yet there were always some who saw beyond the shadow, and who lived in the joy of the reality. Such were the prophets and holy men of God. They well knew that the temple in which they worshipped was altogether too small to be a real house of God, who "dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool; what house will ye build Me saith the Lord; or what is the place of My rest?" Acts vii. 48, 49. See Isa. lxvi. 1; 1 Kings viii. 27. Consequently when they spoke of the temple of the Lord, they had in mind the final temple and not the mere shadow which their natural eyes saw.

Not only so, but they saw a new Jerusalem. Old Jerusalem was never large enough to hold the new temple of the Lord. That temple contains more angels waiting for the commands of the Lord, than there were ever inhabitants in Jerusalem. Rev. x. 11. So when the prophets spoke of Jerusalem, and praised its beauty, it was the Jerusalem restored and made new, that they had before their sanctified vision. True, there was a promise from the Lord, that if the people would serve Him in truth, keeping His Sabbath, city should stand for ever (Jer. xvii. 24, 25); but that very promise carried with it the promise of restoration; for no city built by man could stand for ever. It was a part of the promise made to Abraham, to which we "look for new and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter iii. 13. It was with this in view that the psalmist wrote: "But Thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. For Thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth Thy glory. when the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory." Ps. cii. 12-16. The stones in which the servants of the Lord take pleasure are not the old, moss-covered stones of the old Jerusalem, but "all manner of precious stones," with which the real city is garnished. Rev. xxi. 19. Isaiah had a vision of this restored and beautified city, when he wrote:-

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear; and from terror; for it shall not come nigh thee." Isa. liv. 11-14.

This is the city, and these are the stones, in which the servants of the Lord take pleasure. It is this city, and not the Old Jerusalem, some remnants of which are still standing, that the psalmist always had reference to when he broke forth in transports over its beauty. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Ps. xlviii. 1-3.

This city is the home of God's people. "Our citizenship is in heaven." Phil. iii. 21. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God;" therefore they "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, and heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. xi. 10, 13-16.

The city is already prepared, and only waits for the preparation of its inhabitants. To it all the faithful now come and worship. For "ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the

first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. xii. 22-24. Toward this city and sanctuary we are to turn our eyes when we pray. We are to "lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens" (Lam. iii. 41), even as David, when he said, "I lift up my hands toward Thy holy oracle." Ps. xxviii. 2.

It is to this city that the tribes go up; for on the twelve gates are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Rev. xxi. 12. In it there is perfect unity; for where in our version we read that "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together," the Jewish translation by Rabbi Leeser has it, "Jerusalem, which are built as a city wherein all associate together."

In this city, this real dwelling-place of God, there is joy. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee." "For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Ps. lxxxiv. 4, 19, a margin. "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." Ps. xcii. 13, 14.

Then come to the house of the Lord. There we may abide, not merely for a day, nor occasionally, but from now throughout eternity. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Ps. xci. 1.

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Here there is safety. Here also there is joy "fulness of joy," and "pleasures for evermore." Ps. xvi. 11. Peace is within its walls, and prosperity within its palaces, so that we may be rich and happy even though we are poor and afflicted. Faith makes us inhabitants of that glorious city even now, although our bodies are confined to this sin-cursed earth; but soon the Lord will come, to take us to Himself, and then, our bodies made spiritual, we shall with our eyes see that which these natural eyes are not able to look upon. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before Thy face. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

"Ministering the Spirit" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go way; for if I go not a way, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John xvi. 7, 8. To whom is the Spirit of God given? To the believer. What work is wrought when the Spirit is given to the believer? The world is reprov'd, or convinced, or convicted of sin. How? Not simply because the one who received the Spirit goes and tells people that they are sinners, but because in that power of life, the Spirit which is given, the works

of God are so manifested in the individual, that His life is a reproof to those who walk contrary to God's Word. It is not necessary that one should stand in a public place and declare to people that they are sinners, in order that the world should be reproofed of sin, although words spoken in the power and demonstration of the Spirit will convict,-but the individual who has within him the Spirit of Christ will be as a witness, whose life without a word will convict of sin. So it can be stated as fact that all success in working for God in the extension of His kingdom, is based upon a person's own individual experience, and his work is simply to minister to others the experience that God has given him. What else can he do? "Such as I have give I unto you." What else can we give?

"Walk in the Light" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

It is said that when Galileo discovered with a telescope of very moderate magnifying power four of the five moons of Jupiter, and announced the fact to his friends, they were very sceptical. Some said the moons must be in the telescope, for they were not in the sky, while others refused even to look through the telescope lest they should be convinced.

The attitude of these last especially, is so like that assumed by many toward God's truth. They refuse to investigate for fear they will find that their way is not God's way. They argue, "Father and mother believed this way; they were good people, and will be saved. If I live up to the light they had, I shall be saved. Why need I change?" This is a trick of the devil. The path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Truth is light, but a ray rejected is a ray lost, and to just that extent is the light dimmed. Truth does not stand still. It is progressive. The command is, "Walk [keep moving] while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." There was a time when God winked at that the ignorance of the people, but now He commands all men everywhere to repent,-accept all the light that shines on their pathway.

But why assume this attitude when it is the truth and the truth only that can save any man? Why deceive ourselves? Strange as it seems, there is a reason for it. In us there is no good thing, and though we know it, yet we dislike to acknowledge it, especially when the "hidden works of darkness" are to be brought to light. We know we are bad, but we dislike to have other people know how bad we are, and so think to keep our wickedness hid by refusing the light. But this the Saviour says is our condemnation-"that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Oh, why will man be so blinded to their best interests? What if they have sinned? That has all been made right long ago. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people. . . . and cry unto her that her iniquity is pardoned." All that remains is for the sinner to accept the pardon, and the Lord says, He will "cast all their sins into the depths of the sea," and "remember them no more forever." Christ is the way, the life, and the truth. The truth makes a man free, and whom the Son maketh free is free indeed.

"How to Change a Bad Law" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

By a bad law we do not mean a law that some people do not like, but a law that requires something that is wrong. Many people dislike that which is good; and human nature is ever inclined to make itself the standard of goodness, and to say that whatever is opposed to its desires is bad; but our tastes and inclinations are not to be taken into account at all; there is one standard of right, and that is the law of God-God's own life. Whatever is contrary to God's Word-the Word of life-is bad, and should be shunned as one would shun the plague. To obey a bad law is identical with breaking a good law.

Now there are laws that are bad. They are found to a greater or lesser extent in every nation. Such are the laws that are directly opposed to the law of God, although they may be in harmony with the sentiments of the majority of the people. In every nation there are also to be found men who are sorely distressed over the existence of such laws, and to exert themselves in various ways to have them repealed. This opposition usually takes the form of political agitation, of the same nature as that by which the laws were enacted, sometimes going even to the extent of armed rebellion and revolution. In some instances the opposition is apparently successful, but in most it is an open failure, and in no case is the success real and lasting.

At the present time in this country the burning question is that of ritualism in the Church. Inasmuch as the Established Church is in reality a State institution, so long as it remains an established church, dissenters as a rule feel that they have as much interest in the controversy as have Churchmen. Accordingly both Protestant and Catholic journals discuss the question freely, but there is a great difference of opinion among anti-ritualists as to how the swelling flood of sacerdotalism in the Church is to be checked.

In the *Contemporary Review*, Dr. Guinness Rogers has an article on "The Archbishops and the Ritualists," in which he says, "I do not believe in coercive legislation, even in the interests of Protestantism." To this statement the *Methodist Times* takes exception. It should be stated that Dr. Rogers declares that "we shall resist all efforts to Romanise the Establishment-that is, we shall do our utmost to prevent the present compromise from being altered in a sacerdotal direction."

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Whereupon the *Methodist Times* responds thus:-

But how does he propose to resist the Romanisers except by "coercive legislation"? At every period of history the only kind of suasion that has any effective influence over clerical extremists is legal suasion. In the last resort, as in the days of the Reformation, the House of Commons, representing the laity, must compel lawless priests to obey or resign.

It is not our purpose to enter into the controversy; but it is a duty to point out that since State legislation-politics in the Church-brought about the present state of things, State legislation, even though it be called into requisition for the purpose of reformation, can only perpetuate the existing evil, possibly under another form.

How then can any reform ever be effected? This is what we propose to show; and since nothing is so convincing as a case already worked out, we shall content ourselves with referring to an instance where a bad law was effectually changed.

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, the greatest king that the world ever saw, made a great image of gold, ninety feet high, and set it up in the plain of Dura, and then gathered the chief men from all parts of the world to come and fall down before it. Under threat of the most terrible death if they disobeyed, all were commanded to fall down and worship the image at a given signal.

Here was a law directly contrary to God's law, which says: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." It was therefore a bad law, although the most of the people had nothing against it. At least they obeyed it without question.

But there were three men who knew the law to be bad, and who knew that to obey it would be to sin against God; so while the others fell down and worshipped, they stood upright. We all know the story well. The king was very gracious toward them, and though they had not heeded his law, he was willing to give them another chance. But they gave him to understand that they were fully decided, and did not need any time to think over the matter. They said, "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

This was not disobedience but obedience. They were not law-breakers, but lawkeepers. The true law was, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve;" the king's law was in itself an act of despite to the law, so that when the three men refused to regard it, they were only showing their faithfulness to law.

Let it be noted, however, that these men were not rebellious. They did not attempt to raise any insurrection. They did not harangue the people about the injustice of the law, and the wickedness of the threatened punishment. They made no appeal for sympathy, but simply proclaimed the power of their God. They were not there to oppose the king, nor to defend themselves, but to honour God. So they refused to be disobedient to their Creator, and willingly allowed themselves to be bound and cast into the burning furnace.

Everybody knows the result. They fell down in the furnace, bound hand and foot, but immediately stood up again, for the fire destroyed their bonds, and set them free. Rather, it demonstrated their freedom. It had no power over them. They walked about in the fire, with the Lord by their side, as comfortably as though they were promenading in the cool of a summer evening.

Then the king called them out, and bore witness before all the assembled rulers that these three men had changed the law. "Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word." Dan. iii. 28. There is no doubt but that the law was changed, abolished, for nobody was again commanded to worship the golden image.

Nebuchadnezzar himself recognised God as the only One to be worshipped, and declared that these three captive Jews had changed his decree. Surely this was a wonderful deed.

How did they do it? As we have seen; they made no stir, they did not appeal to the people, they circulated no petitions, they did not plead, and they did not threaten. They used no coercive legislation, nor any other kind. How then did they succeed in getting the law changed? King Nebuchadnezzar himself tells us. He said, "They have changed the king's word, *and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.*"

This confirms what we have said. They were not disobedient, but obedient. They were not rebellious, but yielding. They changed the laws by yielding their bodies to death, rather than do wrong. That was all, but was sufficient, for there is almighty power in righteousness.

Those three men, in yielding their bodies, did exactly what we are exhorted to do: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Rom. vi. 12, 13.

We are to resist the devil, and he will flee from us; but we resist the devil only by yielding to God. When we yield our bodies as instruments of righteousness unto God, we have in our bodies the power of the living God. Against that power nothing can stand. If all the people in England, who know of the Bible, and who have read in it the will of God, would simply yield themselves wholly to the Lord, they would find that bad laws, whether in Church or State, would soon be as though they had not been. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord at hosts." Zech. iv. 6. Who would reign as a king with God, having power greater than all the kings of earth combined?-let him yield himself, soul and body, to the Lord, and the power that renews all things, even the face of the sin-cursed earth, is his.

It is said that once a Chinaman came to a missionary and asked to be baptized. Being a stranger, the missionary replied if he had ever heard the Gospel. He replied, "No, I have never heard the Gospel, but I have *seen* it." Yes, it is the fruits of the Spirit-the life of Christ manifest-that convinces an unbelieving world of the genuineness of Christianity, and leads them to Christ. In every professed Christian's life there ought to be seen so much genuine Christianity, that a stranger seeing his good works, though ignorant of the faith he professes, will be led to inquire, "Lord, what wilt Thou have *me* to do?"

Jesus breathed upon His disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The reception of the Holy Spirit is not for our own pleasure, but is a preparation for service. The flesh that Christ bore is the same that we bear, but "the flesh profiteth nothing." It was not in the flesh to do the work God would have done in earth; it must be by the power of His own life; so Christ took His place with us, and was an example to us of what God can do

by His own power in just such flesh as we bear, when opportunity is given for Him to have His way. When we think of Jesus, we must not put Him so far away

from us as we are wont to do, because what God wrought through Jesus Christ in His ministry, He will do through us by the same power. So if we would receive the greatest benefit, we must take His experience as a real one, offered to us, and which we may have if we will but accept it.

"Little Folks. The Work of the Leaven" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

Now the green leaves for whose first appearance we watched so eagerly in the Spring, are already falling from the trees; and making a soft rustling carpet over the ground. Some that are still upon the trees show by their bright garments that they are preparing to leave. Their work, which can only be done in their green dresses, is now over, and they put on their holiday clothing for a little while before they leave us altogether.

Have you ever wondered why the leaves fall off as they do in the Autumn, and the trees are left standing so bare all through the Winter? It is because the work of the trees is over for the year; they do not work at all in the Winter, but go to sleep and rest all through the cold weather.

As most of the work of the tree is done by the leaves, these busy little hands are not needed any more. When the work is over, they dropped away, and helped to nourish the ground and prepare it for another Summer's work.

Perhaps you never thought of the leaves as the *hands* of the tree. In a beautiful figure of speech which the prophet Isaiah uses, he says, "All the trees of the field shall clap their hands;" and in this he seems to refer to the movement and the sound that the leaves make when they are stirred by the breeze.

But what about the work that these little hands have to do? You did not know they are so busy, for their work is done so quietly; and yet every green thing upon the earth, even every little blade of grass, is busily working all through the sunny day.

One very important work that the leaves do is to prepare the food that the tree or plant needs. The raw food is sucked up from the earth by the roots, and carried by the sap into the leaves, and until it is there prepared and changed and cooked at the sun fire, it cannot be used by the plant for food to build itself up, and store in grain or fruit, according to the nature of the plant.

For besides its own growth, there is something else for the plant to do before its year's work is over, and for this it is preparing all the time. Even the beautiful blossoms which have pleased us so much during the summer, are only a part of this preparation. It must *multiply* in obedience to the command of God.

Every plant must obey the Word which said: "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb *yielding seed*, and fruit tree bearing fruit after its kind, *wherein is the seed thereof*."

The seed, as you know, is formed in the flower, but the flower depends upon the green leaf to prepare all the food it needs to produce the tiny baby plant, and store the seed with nourishment which will last until it can put forth green leaves of its own to do this work for it.

Remember now what God said to man about these plants bearing seed and fruit, which He commanded the earth to bring forth, "To you it shall be for meat."

For whom, then, are the green leaves working? Not for the plants on which to grow only, but for *you*, to prepare a store of food for you which shall last until another season brings a fresh supply. This is what the green leaves of the fruit trees, the nut trees, and the waving fields of green corn, have been busy doing all through the Summer. And all this is the fulfilling of the Word of God, the working out of what was in His mind when He created every green thing upon the earth.

Not only for us, but the whole animal creation, the plants prepare the food that is needed, and there is no other source of supply for any living creature. For to the animals God said, "I have given you every green herb for meat."

The insects feed upon the flowers, the little squirrels and monkeys upon nuts, the rabbits upon lettuce leaves and other vegetables, the birds upon fruit and seeds, the elephants upon rice and other grains. Think of all the animals that you know, and the food that God has provided and prepared for them in the plants. Even those which feed upon other animals only get second-hand the food which the animals they eat got from the plants.

How important, then, is the work of the leaves! Will you not look with more interest and love at these fellow creatures of ours, and think of the kind work that God is so lovingly doing for us and all His creatures by them? Next week we hope to tell you more about this work.

"The Lily's Clothing" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

How is the lily clothed? It has a beautiful garment of white and green and various other colours. Solomon in all his glory, arrayed in his royal apparel, must have been a wonderful sight. The Queen of Sheba came a long way to see the glory of Solomon, and when she saw it her heart fainted. "The half was not told me," she said, "and I could not believe what I did hear."

Who would not go a long way to see one of the kings of the earth, although he might not be arrayed as gloriously as Solomon was? and in order to see this sight one would trample underfoot a score of the lilies without noticing them. If one should place before him a stalk of modest lilies, he would consider them very plain.

"See the glory and all the magnificent array of Solomon!" Yes, but Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these lilies, for the royal apparel of Solomon was something that could be put on and taken off; and when he took it off, nobody would know, to look at him, that he was any different from other men. But the clothing of the lily is the life of the lily. It is not something that is put on, but something that comes from within; it is the inner life that the lily draws from God's great storehouse in the air and in the earth, manifested in the beautiful green, the delicate white, and all the variegated colours-the manifestation of life in its freshness and brightness,-that is the clothing of the lily. It is God's own clothing, such as God Himself wears,-His own life shining forth in making this

beautiful garment. Now what does He say? "If God so clothe the grass of the field, shall He not much more clothe you?"

"The Castor-oil Plant" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

From the natural history column of an exchange we clip the following concerning the castor-oil plant:-

The castor-oil plant is so universally detested by the whole of the animal world that no bird, beast, or creeping thing will touch one. It seems to be a rank poison to all kinds of animals; even a goat will starve before biting off a leaf, and a horse will sniff at it and turn up his upper lip as if it had the most detestable odour on the face of the earth. Army worms and the locust pass it by, though they will eat every other green thing in sight, and there is no surer way to drive moles away from a lawn than to plant a few castor beans here and there. Even the tobacco worm will refuse to be fed on its leaves. The castor-oil plant varies in size in different countries, being seldom seen in this country more than 3ft. or 4ft. in height, while in India it grows to be a good-sized tree. Clusins mentioned it in Spain as measuring from 2ft. to 4ft. in circumference.

Yet the oil of this same plant is given to people, and especially to children, all over the world-in civilised countries. No doubt the writer of the preceding paragraph thinking that he was sinning against the helpless one. "Man's inhumanity to man" must be a cause of mourning among the angels in heaven. When will people learn that dosing themselves with poisonous or nauseating-substances is not the way of life.

"Pain" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

Pain is the cry of some organ that needs attention. If a child were crying because of hunger, you might take it by the throat, and hold it a while, and stop its crying, but it would be bad for the child. So when you administer a drug that throttles the pain, it has the same result. Pain is the cry of some organ for help; the drug relieves the pain, but it has made the case worse.

"News and Notes" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

-An outbreak of typhoid fever is reported from Bridgend, Wales, with high mortality.

-Thirty excursionists were injured in a railway collision at Manchester on the 11th instant.

-Up to this date there have been nearly 200 cases of yellow fever at Key West, about twenty of which have proved fatal.

-The Admiralty have just placed orders with private firms for the construction of twelve now torpedo boat-destroyers for the Royal Navy.

-Gold has been discovered in the Isle of Man in sufficient quantities to warrant its being mined, and a company has been formed for this purpose.

-Over 12,000 manufacturers have refused to pay the new taxes imposed at Barcelona, and many landowners have decided to follow their example.

-A world's council on missions is to be held in New York City, twelve days, beginning April 21, 1900. Three thousand delegates are expected to be present, from every nation on earth.

-The year 1900, being the jubilee year of the re-establishment of the Hierarchy of England, plans have been laid for the formation of a federation of Catholic Associations and the inauguration of a periodical Catholic Congress.

-Over 20,000 persons are said to have fled from Oporto on account of the plague. The business houses still remain closed, and the trade of the city is paralysed. There seem to be signs of an abatement of the disease, as the number of fresh cases has largely decreased.

-Trusts in America car tines to multiply. The interest is a silk ribbon trust, and a printing press trust, with about \$6,000,009 capital each. One of those times a religious trust will be formed in the world, and then only those who conform to its dictates will be permitted to buy or sell. Rev. xiii. 16, 17.

-As an indication of what it costs an enterprising newspaper for its telegraphic reports, it may be stated that one Australian journal paid \$208 for sending the report of the ending of the Dreyfus case from Rennes.

-According to the first Secretary to Cardinal Rampolia, in an interview with the Central News Agency, the Pope is as anxious for an amicable settlement of the difficulties in the Transvaal that he is willing to act as arbitrator if England desires it.

-Chicago has taken steps to abolish horse-car funerals, and install automobile hearses and carriages instead. Many of the largest undertaking firms in the United States have completed arrangements to change their entire plant to motor-driven vehicles.

-On the 9th inst., soon after noon, a violent rain-storm burst over London, an inch of water falling in half an hour. The lightning and thunder were unusually severe, and much damage was done to property. This was a fitting conclusion for the hottest summer on record.

-The Royal Gun Factories at Woolwich have just turned out a gun with a range so much in excess of any previous ordnance that the Government butts at Shoeburyness have been found insufficient to ascertain its maximum. It is believed to have a range of fifteen miles.

-Captain Dreyfus, after a trial lasting twenty nine days, has been found guilty by five judges to two, and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. The case has been appealed. The verdict is universally condemned by the European and American press, and there is a strong movement already inaugurated in many countries to withdraw their representation at the forthcoming Paris Exposition, as an indication of their disapproval of the verdict.

-A new law has lately gone into effect in Japan, placing all sects, pagan or Christian, under the absolute control of a local governor. His consent must be had before any religious propagators can begin work, before churches can be built, before ministers can be changed, or their number increased. Although this

appears on the face of it very restrictive, yet the representatives of the empire say its object is only to keep a record of the various sects and their work.

-In an interesting communication from Mr. Jasper More, M.P., to the Cancer Society in London, published in the *Chronicle*, he states that he has found by investigation that cancer is more prevalent than tuberculosis among cattle in England, and that such diseased cattle are usually sold for food. He argues that the eating of cancerous meat is a cause of cancer in human beings just the same as tuberculosis in cattle produces the same disease in people. While it is estimated that fully one-third of them are suffering from tuberculosis, and more are cancerous than tuberculosis, is it not pretty nearly time to discard the use of beef as an article of food?

-The report of the Postmaster-General for the British Isles has just been issued, and contains many interesting items. There are in all 21,569 post-offices in the Kingdom. During the year the postal matter delivered (letters, postcards, parcels, etc.) amounted to 8,600,000,000 pieces. There were over 8,000,000 pieces of mail that for want of proper address could not be delivered, and of this number 666,000 could not even be returned to the senders. In the letters opened at the Returned Letter Offices there was found property to the amount of ? 720,000, one letter having in it an uncrossed cheque for ?600, payable to bearer. During the year, ?87,000,000 telegraphic messages were sent, and over ? 60,000,000 were handled in post and money orders. Four in every eighteen of the inhabitants of England have deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank, averaging a little over ?16 each depositor.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

"Chains of habit that are generally so small as not to be felt until there are too strong to be broken."

Twenty doctors and thirty trained nurses, all of whom have been subjected to a rigid examination, are just being sent out from England by the India Office to fight the bubonic plague in Bombay.

It is the spirit of unselfish labour for others, no matter whether it is appreciated or not, that brings out the true qualities of a Christian. It gives stability and loveliness to the character, and enables him to grow in grace.

As an indication of the alarming tendency to suicide and murder in these times, it may be stated that a London physician recently announced the fact that he knew a poison that would produce instant death, and yet was painless in its operation. He refused to tell its name. This doctor stated under oath that in two weeks' time from his announcement he received three thousand letters from men and women begging the name of the poison.

Here is a statement by Cardinal Manning, that is as true as anything that ever was said, and it is true not only of those who are called creatures, but of everybody; for every real Christian is a preacher:-

It is *what we are* that preaches; and *we are*, not only what we know, but what *we feel*, what we realise, what by experience has become a part of ourselves.

Every man speaks readily of that which chiefly fills his mind. If we lived more for God, with God, and in God, we should have little difficulty in speaking about Him.

A barber in Merthyr was fined last week, under a statute of Charles II., for pursuing his ordinary calling on Sunday. The prosecution, however, was not due to any respect for the Sunday, but was undertaken by the Hair Dressers' Association because the barber in question was not a member. The Magistrate expressed his regret at the action, but had no option as to the imposing of the fine. The mediæval machinery for persecution lies at all ready to the hand of any who wish to give vent to their spite or fanaticism.

It is said that the Hausa language, spoken by one of the finest of the African peoples, is already the language of one per cent. of the population of the globe, and there is a committee in this country, upon which are the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, the main object of which is to further the scientific study of the language. A Hausa-English dictionary is soon to be published by the Cambridge University press. The author, Mr. Charles Avery Robinson, thinks that the Hausa language will be the language of the future in Tropical Africa.

"Increase of Crime" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

The Rev. J. W. Horsley, who as chaplain for a long time of one of the largest prisons of England, has had an opportunity of learning much about the criminal population of the country, in an interview published in *The Young Man* says: "The habitual woman prisoners are increasing at a higher rate than the men. It is an alarming state of things. Last year, while there were 3,830 convictions of men who had been convicted over twenty times (some of them hundreds), there were 6,762 such cases among women." "And the number of women who had been convicted eleven times and upwards was also largely in excess of the number of men. This class of women 'habituals' has increased from 5,000 cases in 1878, and 7,000 in 1881, to nearly 12,000 at the present time. The chief cause of this growth of habitual crime amongst women is undoubtedly intemperance. Drunkenness amongst women is growing very largely."

"Double Scavengers" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

Last year considerable stir was made by leading medical men over the spread of typhoid fever by oysters, whose food, as all know, is sewage. An endeavour is now being made in the interest of trade, of course, to allay any fears that may have arisen, and the House of Lords has issued a Blue Book, the object of which is to assure the people that they can eat the sea-scavenger with impunity. The *Daily Chronicle* thinks that their Lordships have been altogether too feeble in their defence of the oyster. It says: "Sewage does no harm to the oyster, so long as the oyster digests it and there is plenty of salt or brackish water to keep him clean." Indeed, it would seem that filth is an absolute necessity to the creature, for the *Chronicle* says: "In the wide expanse of Falmouth Harbour there are oyster beds on the east shore public, that is to say corporate, property, which

never gets sewage, yet which are unwholesome until they have been relaid on the west shore, where they get sewage."

This is one of the strongest indictments of the oyster that we have yet heard, and should for ever banish the filthy creature from the tables and stomachs of all decent, self-respecting persons. Every animal is composed of that which it feeds, and when people eat oysters they are actually feeding upon their own excretions. The thing is too horrible to think about. After this, let no one who continues to eat oysters ever venture to exclaimed against the filthy habits of the savage. Think how such people are preparing their bodies to be a prey to any epidemic or plague that may come along.

"War a Crime" *The Present Truth* 15, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

It is well that amidst all the excited talk about war between this country and the Transvaal Republic, there are some voices heard counselling peace. Amongst the most prominent of these is that of Mr. John Morley. Near the close of his recent speech in Manchester, in speaking of the things that would make for the influence of England, he said:-

The sword won't help you. I ask myself very often whether the man with the sword blundering in and slashing at the knots that statesmen ought to have untied, is not responsible for half the worst catastrophes in the political history of Europe. You may carry fire and sword into the midst of peace and industry, but such a war of the strongest Government in the world against this weak little Republic, and the strongest Government in the world with untold wealth and inexhaustible resources, will bring you no glory. It will bring you no profit, but mischief will be wrought. You may make thousands of women widows and thousands of children fatherless. It will be wrong. You may add a new province to your Empire. It will still be wrong. You may give greater buoyancy to the South African Stock and Share Market. You may create South African booms. You may send the price of Mr. Rhodes chartered up to a point beyond the dream of avarice. Yes, even then it will be wrong.

It is well for the people to be reminded that improvement in trade does not sanctify nor justify the slaughter of human beings.

September 28, 1899

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Strength for the Helpless. Isa. xl. 25-31" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xl. 25-31.)

25. To whom then will ye liken Me?
And to whom shall I be equaled? saith the
Holy One.

26. Lift up your eyes on high;
And see, who hath created these.
He draweth forth their armies by number;
He calleth them all by name;
Through the greatness of His strength, and
the mightiness of His power,
Not one of them faileth to appear.

27. Wherefore sayest thou then, O Jacob,
And why speakest thou thus, O Israel,
My way is hidden from Jehovah,
And my cause passest unregarded by my God.

28. Hast thou not know, hast thou not heard,
That Jehovah is the everlasting God,
The Creator of the bounds of the earth?
That He neither fainteth, nor is wearied;
And that His understanding is unsearchable?

29. He giveth strength to the faint,
And to the infirm He multiplieth force.

30. The young men shall faint and be wearied;
And the chosen youths shall stumble and fall;

31. But they that trust in Jehovah shall gather
new strength:
They shall put forth fresh feathers like the
moulting eagle;
They shall run, and not be wearied;
They shall march onward, and shall not faint.

In the verses just preceding, in this chapter, we have a vivid presentation of the weakness and insignificance of man. As compared with God, he is less than nothing, and vanity. He is only emptiness. All nations together are but as the fine dust of the balance, which makes no perceptible difference in the weight of any article, and which cannot be seen, to be brushed off. A breath from God would blow away the whole race; and yet these very men presume to make gods for themselves, that is, they presume to make a likeness of the God of heaven. But whatever a man makes must be less than himself; therefore his gods are nothing.

Who can make a likeness of the true God? God manifested Himself to the children of Israel as He never did to any other people (Deut. iv. 7), but Moses, speaking of the time when the Lord spoke to them from Sinai, said, "Ye heard the voice of the words, but ye saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice." "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire." Verses 12, 15. Nobody has ever seen God, so that he could make a likeness of His form; whatever image anyone makes, therefore, professing to be a likeness of God, is but his conception of the power and attributes of God. But if men would but use the reason that God has given them, and learn the very first and simplest lesson from creation, they would at once see how impossible it is to make any

representation of the living God. How can such a thing be done, when He is in all things? He fills heaven and earth. Every created thing reveals His everlasting power and Divinity; every tint of rose or rainbow exhibits a little of the loveliness of His face. In order to get a representation of God, one would need to bring together every separate phrase of strength and beauty in the entire universe; and even then he would not have a representation of God, because what he would have would be dead, and God is life itself. No one can make an image of life. Therefore there can be no likeness of God. God is, and that is the sum of the matter. Beside Him there is nothing.

"But men need something to keep God in mind," say some, as an excuse for the making of images of the Lord; "something to aid their devotion." Very true; and since that is so, God has provided for it. Do you think that God needed to depend on man to make something as a memento to Himself? Was God so thoughtless that He forgot an important need of mankind? What a libel upon God all such "aids to devotion" are! No; lift up your eyes to the heavens, and see the work of God's fingers, the moon and stars which

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He has ordained, and there you can always have an aid to devotion. Some one has said that "an undevout astronomer is mad." Why so? Because a man who is continually turning his eyes to the heavens, and exploring their depths, and gazing on their wondrous beauty, beholding the glory of God, which they declare, and yet does not worship their Creator, must be devoid of reason. So it is indeed with anyone who does not worship the God of heaven. Whoever does not recognise and worship the true God, has less sense than his ox or his ass. Isa. i. 2, 3. Moreover, God has given us the Sabbath, in which the works of His hands are specially to be remembered. God's created works are the reminders of His power and goodness, and the Sabbath, the last day of every week, is for contemplation of the works of creation, so that none need forget God. Plenty of aids to devotion has God provided. If all kept the Sabbath of the Lord in truth, the knowledge of the glory of God would cover the earth.

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! who hast set Thy glory upon the heavens." Ps. viii. 1. He "bringeth out their host by number." "He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names." Ps. cxlvii. 4. How many are there of them? Only God knows. Look up on a clear starry night, and you become lost as you try to count them; yet you see only a few of them. Visit an observatory, and the attendant will turn the huge telescope to some part of the heavens where your eye can discern nothing. Now look, and you will see swarms of suns blazing where it seemed as though there were only empty space. But you have not yet exhausted the possibilities, although such a thought as trying to count them would make you wild. We can see nothing more with the telescope, and now we resort to photography. We make the stars tell their own story. The sensitive plate is exposed for hours, and the light which is too faint, on account of infinite distance, to be taken into account even with the aid of the telescope, gradually accumulates until it makes a tiny speck. Now we have a photograph of that space which appeared to be vacant even when viewed through the most powerful telescope, and lo, there are thousands of spots, each

one indicating the presence of a star. The same thing done from any part of the sky would give a similar result.

Thus we see that the stars within man's reach so to speak; that is, the stars of which he is able to detect the existence, are many thousand times more in number than what can be seen with the naked eye. But we have not yet reached the end. We have no more reason for supposing that the limit has been reached by our telescope and camera than the child has for saying that there is nothing beyond the horizon-that his eyes take in the bounds of the universe. The more powerful the instrument through which we look into the heavens, the greater the suggestion of infinite depths beyond. So we may be sure that if we could transport our telescope and photographic apparatus to the farthest star that has yet sent us a glimpse of itself, and should gaze on in the same direction, we should but have the same experience, and so on indefinitely. We are utterly lost in the contemplation of such infinite creation, and can only say, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all."

Now we have some sort of appreciation of the expression, "The host of heaven." "He draweth forth their armies by number; He calleth them all by name." It is said that C?sar knew the names of all the men under his command. That, if true, was a most wonderful accomplishment; few men could retain in memory the names of so many men. Yet there were only a few tens of thousands, whereas God's host is tens of thousands of myriads. We can liken it to a vast flock, of which God is the Shepherd. As the Eastern shepherd, who spends all his life with his flock, becomes so well acquainted with them that he knows each one, so God knows the name of every one of His star flock. And as the shepherd by his faithful watchfulness and his power against the wild beasts, keeps every one of his sheep safe, so God, by His power and wisdom, guards His starry host so that not one of them is ever lacking. Man thinks of his work as great, yet it is at the greatest but a very small part of this earth that it has to do with. Compared with what we can see on this earth, man's work is puny; but what shall we say when we consider the heavens? What an inconceivably vast work God has on His hands!

And God has this work literally on His hands. He metes out the heavens with His span. They are the work of His fingers. What is it that keeps all these vast bodies in their proper places so that there is never any clashing, although all of them are constantly in motion? "Gravitation," they tell us. Take our solar system, for instance. Men leave God out of the question, and speak as though the force exerted was inherent in the heavenly bodies themselves. The sun, say they, keeps the planets in their orbits. Very good, we know that since God's everlasting power and Divinity are seen in everything that He has made, there is force in the sun and all other bodies; but let us think long enough to make sure that it is only God's power. See the earth revolving round the sun. Now it is flying with marvellous rapidity directly away from the sun. The attraction of the other planets is drawing it, they tell us. Very well, why does it not keep on? Why does it stop in its career, and turn back towards the sun? "Oh, the sun draws it!" Yes, but why did not the sun keep it from going? It had just as much power when the earth was flying away from it, as it had when it turned to go back. Why then did it allow it to

go so far away? There is no other answer to this question, but the statement-that the hand of God is on the things that He has made. God's own personal presence sustains and controls His works. The fact that astronomers can calculate the relative power manifested through the various heavenly bodies, so that they can tell when to expect any given planet or star at any given place, does not at all destroy the fact that it is God who is personally working. There is no such thing as blind force. There is intelligence directing all power. God has not gone away and left His works to take care of themselves; there would soon be chaos if He should. No, He Himself stays by, "upholding all things by the Word of His power."

What therefore is the conclusion? Is it the common complaint that God has too much to attend to, to be mindful of our little cares? O foolish and blind unbelief! Why will men persistently put comfort away from themselves? "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed away from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding." If you have not heard it, then consider the heavens, and learn it. "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Certainly not

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God, who warns man against such foolishness. Just because God is so great, He is able to keep the most accurate account of your case. Not a detail escapes His notice or His care. He who numbers the stars, also numbers the very hairs of your head. Matt x. 30. Suppose there is here a great mathematician. He can make the most abstruse calculations. The largest numbers are handled by him with ease. Someone asks, "Can he count? Does he know that two and two are four?" What foolish questions! Of course he can. "Well, I thought that he dealt in such great matters that he would not be able to bother with such small affairs." Know then that the greater includes the less. The power to do great things implies the power to do that which is least. How surprised we are to find a great man of earth to be ignorant of some simple thing. "Is it possible you do not know that?" we exclaim in wonder. But no one can ask any such question concerning God. There is no searching of His understanding. Nobody can ever get to the bounds of it, so as to find something that He does not know. He inhabits eternity, so that infinity, whether it be the infinitely large or the infinitely small, is in Him. All power and wisdom are His, for He is the Creator of all.

"He giveth power to the faint." All this contemplation of the wondrous power of God, as manifested in the heavens, is but a part of the comfort which God says must be proclaimed to His people. A little while ago we read about God's telling the number of the stars, and calling all them by name. Let us now read the connection, and see why that fact is stated. "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem; He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power; His understanding is infinite." Ps. cxlvii. 2-5. So all this power, that is manifested in numbering and naming and upholding the innumerable stars, is the power with which God binds

up the wounds of His people, and heals the brokenhearted. His gentleness in dealing with the wounded is equal to His power in upholding the universe.

The pagan proverb has it that "God helps those who help themselves." That is the way the devil tries to discourage people. All men are helpless, and there are times in every man's life when he feels himself to be absolutely without strength. God would have everybody to feel that way all the time. But when men find themselves in that condition, they think of that heathen proverb, and lose heart. Now the truth is that God helps those who cannot help themselves. "When ye were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. v. 6. His "strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. xii. 9. He makes men strong out of their weakness. Heb. xi. 34. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." He multiplies force to them that are powerless. This He does by giving them Himself. "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Think of that! The very same power that is manifested in the heavens, guiding all the planets and stars in their courses, is the power that works in us! All the power that is revealed in the heavens is for us. This is shown by the fact that "He gave Himself for us." He pledged Himself for our salvation. But on Him rests the entire universe. The power that is seen in all creation is His power; it is He Himself at work. Therefore when He gave us Himself, He gave us all the power in the universe. Is it not worthwhile to look up? Do you want an "aid to devotion," and something to put heart into you? Then look up.

Youth is the synonym for strength and endurance. Yet "the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." There is a limit to the endurance of youth. Besides, age comes even to youth, and with age comes weakness and debility. "But they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." Mark the implied contrast between youth and age. Youths may fail, but they that wait on the Lord, no matter how old they may be, shall renew their strength. God gives to all who trust in Him eternal life; that is, those who trust in Him get the benefit of it; and the characteristic of eternal life is youth. It renews itself. "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him." Ps. xcii. 13-15. There is in this the miracle of life. Those who wait on the Lord, acknowledge Him in all their ways, depending on Him, receive fresh supplies at His hands daily. He shows them the path of life, and directs them in it. He shows them how to live,-how to eat and drink in the right way to renew life. "Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8. There are wonderful possibilities in the Christian life, which no man in this generation has yet fathomed. Who will allow God to demonstrate in their bodies what He can do with them that trust Him?

"Death in the Pot" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

"And Elisha came again to Gilgal; and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage; for they knew them not. So they pound out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the that they may eat. And there was harm in the pot." 2 Kings iv.38-41.

In comparing this instance of death in the pot with others of the present time, it is worth while to note that as soon as it was discovered that there was danger, steps were taken to avert it; such however is not always the case to-day.

It is a sad fact that the blessings of God are by man largely turned into curses. God gives us food, that we may enjoy the blessing of life; but instead of using food as a means of life, most people make it a means of shortening life. The most of the diseases from which people suffer are due to improper food and wrong habits of eating. It is safe to say that nine-tenths of all sickness originates more or less directly from the stomach, and could be avoided as well as not. Proof of the fact that the stomach is the seat of so much trouble is seen in the multitudes of advertisements that disfigure the pages even of religious journals, of nostrums designed as aids to digestion, or to make the victim unconscious of his suffering.

Quite recently a noted firm was fined \$50 for using fermented fruit in preparation of jam. In such cases the evil is very quickly seen and easily remedied. If fruit is diseased it is immediately apparent, and can be discarded, but the flesh of animals may be impregnated with death without the disease being detected except by a critical examination. It is of this alarming danger, and of the indifference manifested by most people to the presence of death in their daily food that we write.

Quite recently there was a little correspondence in the *Daily Chronicle* upon the subject of cancer and tuberculosis in cattle. First Mr. Jasper More, M.P., wrote to the Secretary of the Cancer Society, stating that as a result of his investigations he had found that cancer is far more common than tuberculosis among cattle, and that the meat of cattle suffering from it is generally sold for food.

To this a veterinary surgeon replied, stating that there was no just ground for any such statement, since the information had all been obtained from men not competent to determine whether an animal has cancer or not. This is doubtless the case, and it is probably not correct to say that cancer is more common than tuberculosis. Yet cancer is nevertheless often caused by the eating of the flesh of animals. But the striking point in the reply of the veterinary surgeon, who ridiculed the idea that cancer is more prevalent than tuberculosis, is his admission that "fully thirty per cent. of the cattle of this country are affected with tuberculosis." Surely this should give meat-eaters pause.

And now comes forward another veterinary surgeon, Mr. Archibald Hodder, M.R.C.V.S., and joins the discussion. He agrees with his colleague, that cancer is not so prevalent as tuberculosis, but does not help the case for the flesh-eaters, he says:-

"The majority of farmers are as likely to refer to any tumours on a beast as cancer, as to call it anything else. For instance, when practising in Norfolk, I was often called in to cases of actinomycosis in cattle. This disease is characterised by a tumefied condition of the jaw-bones, cheeks, and tongue. Many of my clients would term these cases cancer of the tongue. I have heard farmers refer to fibrous tumours as cancers, in fact, wens, cysts, bursal enlargements, and all kinds of tumours and abnormal swellings are apt to be classified under the common name of cancer by persons unacquainted with their true nature. Then again it is not easy to diagnose the existence of carcinomata, apart from a microscopical examination of the affected part. For these reasons it is difficult to accept the statement that cancer is far more common amongst cattle than tuberculosis."

It is true that many morbid growths not only on cattle, but also on human beings are called cancer, when they are not cancerous at all; as many "cancer doctors" reap a rich harvest from the popular error, by removing cancers that never existed. Still it is a fact that any tumour is an evidence of an unhealthy condition. A perfectly healthy person or animal does not have tumours or abnormal enlargements. It is therefore very cold comfort that is given to a man when the veterinary surgeon says to him, in effect, "Don't be alarmed, my dear sir, that tumour that you are eating is not cancerous. It is only a wen, or some other abnormal enlargement."

People should understand, what the doctors will know, that the diseased condition is not confined to the tumour, whether it be cancerous or not. Even if there be no malignant disease, the presence of tumours of any kind is evidence of a low state of vitality. What shall be said, then, of the way in which the writer last mentioned reassures his readers? Immediately after the remarks just quoted, he says:-

"Even did such a state of things exist (namely, if cancer were more common than tuberculosis), the danger of eating the meat of affected animals would probably be small, since, owing to the unsalable appearance of diseased meat, such things as tumours are usually removed by the butchers before the carcass is offered for sale."

That is to say, the *evidence* of the disease is removed before the purchaser sees it, so that he need not know that he is eating diseased flesh. We have heard of the coloured waiter at a restaurant, who, when a guest ordered soft-boiled eggs, said, "You'd better hab dem eggs scrambled, for de fac' is, boss, dam eggs ain't very fresh, and dey looks better scrambled." We used to think that was a manufactured joke, but now we see no reason for disbelieving it. People seem to think that nothing that they eat can possibly injure them, provided they don't see anything wrong about it. It is the child's game, "Shut your eyes, and open your mouth." Instead of cutting off the tumours, why would it not do as well to have the customers blindfolded? What the doctors and others are trying to do it in very

fact, is to shut the eyes of the people to the fact that they are daily consuming disease and death. Even the man who sounds the alarm about the prevalence of cancer, has nothing to suggest except that meat should be thoroughly cooked.

Another testimony comes to hand from a man who was for several years a superintendent in one of the great meat-packing establishments in America. The statement was sworn to, and is, in part, as follows:-

I have seen cattle come into a stockyard so weak and exhausted that they expired in the corrals, where they lay for an hour or two dead, until they were afterwards hauled in, opened

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and put on the market for beef, or into the canning department for cans. It was the custom to make a pretence of killing in such cases. The coagulated blood in their veins was too sluggish to flow, and instead of getting five gallons of blood, which is the amount commonly taken from a healthy steer, a mere dark red clot would form at the wound.

In cases where tuberculosis became evident to the men who were skinning the cattle, it was their duty, on instruction, to remove the tubercles, and cast them into a trap-door provided for that purpose. The order went out to dispose of all evidence of disease, whenever these evidences manifested themselves to the naked eye. I have seen hundreds and thousands of cattle pass inspection, that should have been consigned to the tube. I have witnessed men tearing off with their naked hands large tubercles growing along the ribs, intestines, lungs, and vital parts of the slaughtered steers.

I have seen as much as forty pounds of flesh affected with gangrene cut from the carcass of a beef, in order that the rest of the animal might be utilised in trade. It was at that time, and is still, regarded as wasteful to discard any portion of a steer that can possibly be used.

This seems too fearful to be true, yet it is not at all incredible. It must not be supposed that the men who do these things are wilful plotters against the lives of their fellow-men; for they and their families eat that same meat. It is simply an evidence of the growing indifference to life, and that which may have a tendency to destroy it. The writer himself recalls an instance where a farmer was slaughtering swine for his own table. On the liver of one of the hogs there was a very large, disgusting ulcer. The writer called the attention of one of the men to it, supposing that the whole liver would be thrown away; but the farmer merely took his knife and coolly removed the ulcer, sending the remaining portion of the liver into the house to be prepared for eating. When men show so little care in that which concerns only themselves, what can be expected of those who are working for the general public?

The question may be asked, "If disease is so prevalent among cattle, and so much diseased meat is eaten, why is there not more disease, and a greater death-rate, among the people?" The answer is two-fold. In the first place, disease is alarmingly prevalent, the increase of consumption alone in the last few years being so great as to startle those who take heed to it; and in the second place, the evils arising from eating flesh meat at all are so great that the added affections are rising from eating markedly diseased meat are not so noticeable.

The best meat that is eaten is more or less corrupt, so that it is only a question of degree, and the degeneration is so gradual that people overlook it. Disease in the system doesn't always show itself at once. Many a person is carried off suddenly by consumption or some other disease, the seeds of which he had been caring about with him, unnoticed, for years. In a time of an epidemic it is made apparent who had been storing up disease, and who have lived healthfully.

There is nothing that affects mankind that the Gospel is not concerned about. The Gospel promises life, and offers it to all who will accept it. This life is not simply life in some future state, but life-fulness of life-here and now. But when people manifest such stolid indifference to a matter which affects their daily life, how can it be expected that they will be moved by appeals to accept life in the world to come? Many become so accustomed to death, not only by slaughtering animals, but by subsisting on the carcasses of dead animals, that they are indifferent as to their own lives. Is it not time for a loud cry to be raised that will startle some from their lethargy, and hold them awake long enough to get them to thinking? There is death in the pot, but there is life for those who will have it.

"Is Boycotting Ever Justifiable?" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

In these days the one hand the weapon which is in almost universal demand is the boycott. Everybody knows what it means, so we need not take time to tell how the term originated. The thing is known in all lands. In all sorts of cases, religious, political, and commercial, whenever any man or company pursues a course disapproved of by the rest, at the first cry is, "Boycott him!" and the cry is taken up by the mob in broadcloth as well as by the mob in corduroy. Without any reference to the justice or injustice of any case in which it is used or proposed, we ask, Is it ever right? Can Christians ever engage in it under any circumstances? We say, No, most emphatically, and say so because we have the word of the Author of Christianity.

Unchangeable as the throne of God is the commandment: "All things whatsoever ye would that man should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is all law and the prophets." Matt. vii. 12. Men laud this very highly in their talk, as the "golden rule," but very few follow it in practice, and it is wholly ignored and trampled under foot by every one who engages in boycotting. Nobody wishes to be ostracised, and to have his livelihood taken away from him; therefore nobody can rightly do the same to anybody else. This one rule is sufficient to settle the question.

Our feelings of indignation-"righteous" we'd love to call it-have nothing to do with the matter. God has not set us to be judges and executioners against others. "The wrath of man worketh not to the righteousness of God." James i. 20. We may seek to save our consciences by calling our wrath "righteous;" no matter for that; it is wrath nevertheless, and those sort of human wrath can work the righteousness of God, and since it cannot work the righteousness of God, it works unrighteousness. Boycotting is the devil's weapon, and is wholly a devilish,

no matter by whom or against whom it is used, nor in what case. It can never serve a good cause.

The case is so simple, the evil boycotting is so apparent on the face of it, that it ought not to be necessary to ward Christians against being led into it; yet there is a great necessity, for it is now the professed Christians who are foremost in resorting to it. Not long since *The Christian* raised the question, "Is it a Christian act to boycott?" and immediately quoted the following from the *British weekly* as a good answer:-

Boycotting in the right sense is one-half of Christianity. "Touch not, taste not, handled not." "Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good."

When boycotting is not only endorsed by such influential religious leaders, but is actually recommended as being one-half of Christianity, it is not at all to be wondered at if many Christians thoughtlessly follow their leadership; and therefore we would sound a warning.

Consider the text first quoted to sustain boycotting. "Touch not, taste not, handle not." Even if we take it just as it stands, torn from its connection, it does not sanction boycotting. The most that can be made of it is a personal exhortation to each individual to abstain from evil. But it is not necessary for me to kill every heathen, in order to show that I am a worshipper of

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the true God. I can abstain from liquor, without making war on the man who drinks it.

But let us read the whole text, it is Col. ii. 20-22: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as those living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" The words, "touch not; taste not; handle not;" are not a command, but are simply thrown in as an example of the ordinances "after the commandments and doctrines of men," to which we are not to be subject. And so the text most emphatically condemns boycotting, or anything else that comes from man and not from God. There are few text that are more abuse than this one.

Again, "Abhor that which is evil." Good; but you are not to abhor the evil man. Cause wrath is revealed from heaven, not against and godly men but against the and godliness of men. Rom. i. 18. Christ receiveth sinners. The Pharisees believed in boycotting those who did not do as they did; but their zeal was often only a cloak to cover up their own sinfulness; and that is what the most of the outcry against others usually is. But Christ did not countenance any such methods. "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just on the unjust." Matt. v. 44, 45. This is vastly different from trying to injure them, and to ruin their business.

So we say, yet not we, but the Lord, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him a drink; for in so doing ye shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not to overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom. xii. 20, 21. He who

follows this counsel will never engage in anything like the boycott, no matter how many men who occupy the place of Christian leaders tell him that it is right.

"Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Satan has no power over any one of us except as we give it to him. He is a conquered foe. If we yield to his enticements, we are to blame. "Get behind me Satan," will drive the arch enemy from us just as it did from the Saviour. The reason so many of us are overcome is, that in time of temptation, we parley with the devil, and this invariably means defeat. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

"Vanderbilt on Money" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, head of the millionaire family, died at New York on the 12th instant, of paralysis, at the age of fifty-four, really just in the prime of life. His wealth is estimated at \$25,000,000. He was a railway king, and like other magnates, "played the game that built up wealth at the expense of less fortunate capitalists. He was a man of an iron will, and sought to have his own way in everything. He had his full share of domestic unhappiness, and in 1896 disinherited his favourite son because he married against his wishes. Of his wealth he once said, "Such wealth as mine is too heavy a burden for any man to bear. The weight of it is crushing me. I have no pleasure in it, and no use for it." At another time he said, "In what respect am I better off than my neighbour who has not wealth. He commands more readily than I can all the true happiness of life, he is healthier than I, because he has less anxiety; he will probably live longer than I shall; and above all he can trust his friends." Wealth is a snare to those who do not use it aright, and the "love of money is the root of all evil."

"For Little Ones. The Work of the Leaves" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

We were talking last week of the wonderful work of the green leaves,-how in them the food that the roots draw up out of the earth is cooked by the sun and prepared for the use of the plants. But the plants and trees need other food besides what they get out of the earth, and this the busy little leaves gather and prepare for them.

You will wonder perhaps what this food can be, for you do not see them feeding, nor anything for them to feed upon. Yet the leaves are covered with tiny little mouths, which are generally open all day when the weather is favourable, and through them they take in a supply of food *out of the air*.

Plants cannot take "solid food," it has to be all dissolved for them. What the roots take from the earth is dissolved in water, and passes through them in what we call the sap; what the leaves take from the air is also dissolved, and is in the form of gas or vapour.

You have learned about the poisonous carbonic acid gas which we breathe out into the air. The oxygen that is in the pure air when it is taken into our bodies, passes into our blood, and burns up the carbon that a great deal of our food is

made up of. The carbon uniting in this way with the oxygen, makes what is called carbonic acid gas, which passes out of our bodies through our lungs into the air.

If we had to breathe this gas over and over, and could not get a fresh supply of pure air, we should die. But see how wonderfully and beautifully God is working to purify the air and prepare more food for us.

This gas which is so poisonous to us, is the very thing that the plants need for their food. It is drawn through the little mouths that we spoke of, and by the help of the sunlight the carbon and oxygen are separated again. The oxygen is given out into the air for us to breathe, and the plants keep the carbon and form it into food for us again.

Some plants make the food that they take from earth and air into grains for our use,-corn, rice, oats, barley; others into beans and peas; some into vegetables such as potatoes and turnips; some into fruits and nuts. Some build it into hard wood that is so useful for making our houses and furniture and fuel. And perhaps you know that coal,-so necessary to those who live, in cold climates like this to in the winter,-is *pure carbon*, which the leaves of the tree have taken from the air in the way that we told you of.

Think of other useful things that we get from the plants,-oil, cork, India-rubber, cotton and flax for making our clothing, and many other things.

At night the green leaves shut their little mouths and sleep as you do. The plants do not feed at night, but even then they are not quite idle. Like you they breathe and grow, using up the food that they have gathered and prepared during the day.

Remember whose breath it is that the plants breathe,-the same breath that is breathed into you, the breath of God. And the life that they have is just the same life as yours,-the life of Jesus. It is He who is doing all these wonderful things for us through the plants which He has commanded the earth to bring forth. It is His wisdom working in them that guides them in all their work, and His love which in them is ministering to the needs of all His creatures.

Are you wondering how we are going to get pure air through the winter months when the fields and trees are bare? God has thought of this too, and provided for it. He blows the poisoned air away from us to places where there are many plants needing it to feed on, and He blows back to us the air that they have purified. Think of this when the strong, cold winds of winter are blowing about you,-how through them God is providing you with sweet, pure, life-giving air, and carrying away what would be harmful to you.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

Now as never before, the Lord demands *heart* service. He is calling upon His people to forsake *all* and follow Him.

That the Filipinos are not all savages is made evident by an article by one of them in the *North American Review*, in the course of which he amply meets the assertion that the Filipinos cannot govern themselves, by saying:-

A little over a hundred years ago it was extremely questionable, when you, also, were rebels against the English Government, if you could govern yourselves. . . . The moral of all this is obvious. Give us the chance; that was exactly as you demanded to be treated at the hands of England.

Some letters of Cardinal Newman have recently been published, in one of which occurs the following statement:-

A large society such as the Church, is necessarily a political power, and to touch politics is to touch pitch.

Very true; and to touch pitch is to be deified. The conclusion is obvious. It is not necessary for any Christian nor for any body of Christians to be defiled; that is self-evident. They can and should let politics and all political methods alone.

"Science Falsely So-called" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

From the *Daily Mail* of the 18th we take the following:-

How is the age of the earth to be guessed? Sir Archibald Geikie did his best at Dover on Saturday to show to the geological section of the British Association how approximate guesses might be hazarded. We may note the geological and biological changes that have taken, and are still taking place, and by comparing the results may arrive at some reasonable estimate.

In most the most ancient of the sedimentary registers of the earth's history there is no evidence of colossal floods, tides, or denudation, but on the contrary, incontrovertible proof of continuous orderly deposition, such as may be seen to-day in any part of the globe. One hundred millions of years, Sir Archibald thought, would suffice for that small portion of the earth's history which is registered in the stratified rocks of the crust.

The honourable savant is very liberal, however. Although he thinks that one hundred million years is time enough for the history of the earth hitherto, yet according to the *Chronicle's* report, if the palæontologists find such a period too narrow for their requirements, he saw a reason from the geological side why they should not be at liberty to enlarge it as far as they may find it needful for the evolution of organised existence on the globe.

And nobody laughed, so far as we can learn. These guesses and this liberal distribution of time of which he had no knowledge, and over which he had no control, were all "science," and so must be received with becoming gravity. Anything rather than accept the Word of God. So they go on saying, "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," willingly ignorant of the Word of the Lord which, if they would devote half the energy in studying it that they spend in profitless and foolish guessing, would make them wise not only in the things that have been, but in the things that are to come.

"Honour to Whom Honour" *The Present Truth* 15, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

"After these things did King Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the

princes that were with him. And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence." Esther iii. 1, 2.

Here we have a picture of human greatness and of human sycophancy. How much greater was Haman after the king had set his seat above all the other princes than he was before?—Not a whit greater. His soul was just as mean, and his capacity which was just as small, as before. And how much more did the king's servants esteem him?—Not a bit. They bowed to the title, to the gorgeous raiment, and to the high chair. Before he was elevated, no one would do him honour; after his elevation all, except one, sought his favour; and as soon as he got into disfavour with the king, the very ones who bowed so low to him were the first to suggest that he be hanged.

If a man really has authority, he has it in himself, the measure of the gift of Christ in him, just as much as if clothed in rags as if clothed in the king's uniform. What the man *is*, determines his real authority; what the man wears, and what he is called, determines the amount of honour given him by men. For very few people in this world care for real authority, because the majority have cast off allegiance to God. So they worship a sham.

An instance of how human authority, military authority, may be put on and off with one's clothes, recently came under the writer's notice. He was riding in a military train on the Continent, at a time when the soldiers of the country were gathering for the annual manoeuvres. By his side sat a petty officer in citizen's dress, going home to get his uniform, so as to appear in camp next day. A number of soldiers came into the carriage, and the officer, pointing to one of them, said, "There is one of my men; he doesn't know me now; but to-morrow, when I have my uniform on, he will recognise me." But it would be the uniform, not the man, that the soldier would recognise. This is not saying that the officer did not really have authority in himself; but the point is, the world is given to idolatry, and people for the most part reverence and worship the imaginary rather than the real. That which man has devised is honoured above what God is made.

Are we not, then, to show respect to those whom men have placed in positions of authority?—Most certainly; that is a Christian duty. The Bible enjoins us to honour kings and all that are in authority, and not to speak evil of them, even though they be as wicked as Nero was. It was under his reign that the apostle wrote, "Honour the king." But it must not be forgotten that this injunction is preceded by the command, "Honour all men." Thus: "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God, Honour the king." 1 Peter ii. 17. Thus we see that the homage and respect that is to be shown to the king is that which is to be shown to all men. We are to "speak evil of no man." Sycophancy and flunkeyism have no place in Christianity. The spirit that will lead a person to take off his hat to one man because he has wealth or high position, and can bestow favours, but which will treat a poor labouring man, or even a beggar, with rudeness, is the spirit of Satan. He who is kind and respectful to the poorest and most insignificant person, will never be found wanting in the respect and homage due to the king; while he who can be rude to the poor stranger in rags, dishonours the king by the show of reverence which his false heart leads him to put on.

October 5, 1899

"Saved!" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

What a thrill of joy that word brings to anxious hearts when it announces that one whom death had seemed to claim as its sure prey, has been snatched from its jaws.

A crowd of eager, excited people stand looking up to a window of a burning house, where the face of a friend and relative appears. A brave fireman mounts a ladder, clammers along seemingly inaccessible places, and brings down the imprisoned victim. What a meaning there is in the shout that goes up from the throng, "Saved!" Nobody needs to have it explained.

A man falls overboard from the deck of a steamship, and has disappeared beneath the waves. He comes up, and is making frantic but vain struggles for life. But a sailor has seen him, and plunged in after him. The rescuer reaches the drowning man, and succeeds in supporting him until the ship's boat reaches them, and

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strong arms draw them both on board. They are saved! How gladly the word is passed along, and how sweet it sounds!

Meet any one of those persons a few days afterward, when the incident of which he was a witness, or in which he may have participated, has already partially faded from his memory, and say to him, "My dear friend, are you saved?" and he will very likely say, "What do you mean?" "I mean what I say, Are you saved?" you reply. If he does not get angry with you for asking what he deems an impertinent question, he may say, "I don't know what I need to be saved from; I am in no danger."

Strange, is it not, that the word "saved," or "salvation," when used in connection with Jesus as the Saviour, is regarded by most people as having an altogether different meaning from what it does when used in connection with some disease or impending danger? The reason is that people have been educated to think that Jesus has nothing to do with ordinary affairs of everyday life, and His work, as well as His person, is really regarded by them as more or less mythical. "Spiritual," is the name by which it is commonly designated; but with most the word "spiritual" is considered equivalent to "mythical" or "visionary," and not as indicating anything real. The fact is, however, that while the work of Jesus, the Saviour, like Himself, is wholly spiritual, it is the most real thing in the world, and touches human life and experience at every point.

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins," were the words of the angel Gabriel to Joseph. Who that has the least knowledge of the Bible is not familiar with them? Yes, people are familiar with the *sound* of them; but to too many professed Christians they are little more than a distant echo. So they go about, dimly conscious that *in* some sort of way they need salvation, yet not comprehending the reality of their need, nor the greatness nor

the reality of the salvation which is right at their side, yea, even within them waiting their acceptance. Salvation from sin seems altogether an abstract thing to the majority of mankind, including many who pass as Christians.

If men would read the life of Christ in the Gospels until He becomes to them a real, living being, going about doing good, healing the sick, relieving the oppressed, comforting the mourners, and feeding the hungry, and would just believe that He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," as really present with us now as He was in Judea centuries ago, and for the very same purpose, they would take more satisfaction in hearing about His salvation. They would see that it is something that has to do with every detail of everyday life, and they would find the way of salvation. For there is as real joy in the salvation which Jesus brings as in the rescuing of a loved one from imminent death; for that is just what He does; and, moreover, that joy is not a momentary thrill, but a constant, and ever-deepening experience.

Suppose, my friend, you let the phrase, "salvation from sin," which to you has only a technical meaning, drop out of your mind for a moment. Now think of some trouble, some difficulty, some habit that annoys and hinders you, from which you would like to be saved, to be kept. You can understand that, can you not. You are very nervous, starting at every sudden sound or a jar, trembling at any sudden announcement; or you are timid, easily alarmed, and frightened even by things which your good sense tells you are not to be feared; yet you have no control of yourself. You would like to be saved from that condition, would you not? Of course. Listen to the brief statement of an experience that has been repeated in thousands of cases. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Ps. xxxiv. 4. What would you not give for such salvation as that? Well, that is precisely the salvation which the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear." 1 John iv. 18. Jesus Christ sweetly sleeping while the winds shrieked and the waves tossed themselves, or standing calm, unmoved, without a tremor, while the angry, howling mob, gnashed on Him, and yelled, "Crucify Him," is an example of the perfect peace that is the possession of every one who fully accepts His salvation.

"This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." Ps. xxxiv. 6. Mind, it does not say that the Lord saved him from having trouble, but that He saved him out of them all. What difference does it make how much trouble we have, if we are only saved from it, so that it does not crush or control us? "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John xvi. 33. Is not that practical?

Some one will say, "But I know many Christians, and they are just as timid as other people, just as easily frightened out of their wits, and they have just as many troubles as others, and are cast down and overcome by them, too. They have just as many sicknesses, and, moreover, are very nervous and irritable, sometimes because of their weakened physical condition." Very likely, but that does not prove anything against the reality of Christ's salvation. It only shows that these people have not yet learned Christ as they ought to when they profess to follow Him. They are in the school of Christ, but have not made much

advancement yet. The Gospel of Christ is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth; and the word salvation is unlimited. The power that saves from sin, saved from everything that is in any sense a drawback to the individual. It saves us from sin just by touching us and filling at every point and in every detail of human experience. Learn to recognise Jesus as He reveals His power in all creation, accept Him as the Saviour from the most petty thing that mars your peace, and you will soon be saying, "O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed [happy] is the man that trusteth in Him; O fear the Lord, ye His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him," and then "sin shall not have dominion over you."

The world is full of sin; everybody and everything is faulty; therefore it is not any art, and requires no great skill, to find fault. Anybody can do that. But to find the good, to seek out and develop it, that is a marvellous faculty, and must be learned from God Himself. His Divine skill and power are shown in finding and developing perfection where a critic would find nothing but faults, and would turn away in disgust.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Great Case in Court" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

Rev. xiv. 6: "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and fountains of waters."

Isa. xli. 1: "Keep silence before Me, O islands; and let the peoples renew their strength; let them come near; then let them speak; let us come near together to Judgment."

Isa. xli. 21-23: "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob: Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen; let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show us the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together."

Isa. xliii. 9-12: "Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled; who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say, it is truth. Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know, and believe Me, and understand that I am He; before Me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord, and beside Me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you; therefore ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God."

Ps. li. 3, 4: "I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight; that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest."

Rom. iii. 4: "Let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged."

Isa. xli. 28: "I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word."

Rom. iii. 19: "Now we know that whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

Isa. i. 18: "Come now, and let us reason [literally, "go into court"] together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

1 John i. 9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Isa. xlii. 21: "The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable."

Isa. xliii. 25, 26: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put Me in remembrance; let us plead together; declare thou, that thou mayest be justified."

Isa. xlv. 22-25: "Look unto Me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

Rom. xiv. 10, 11: "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why doest thou set at naught thy brother? for we shall all stand before the Judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

Before proceeding in our consecutive study of the book of Isaiah, it is necessary to take a general view of the main features of the chapters that follow, since they are so closely connected, and so devoted to one main thought, that we shall not get the full force of them if we go on studying small sections of them without first getting the greater theme in mind.

The whole book of Isaiah is devoted to one great purpose, namely, that of showing who God is. Recall the opening words of the prophecy, where God contrasts His people with the brutes, who know their lord, while His people do not know Him. Since the prophet is sent to those who, through lack of consideration, do not know the Lord, it is self-evident that he must be commissioned to make God known to them in the clearest possible manner, and to bring forward the most striking evidences of His existence and character. Let the student take special notice of the frequent occurrence of the statement, "I am God," and the continual contrasts between the true God and the gods of the heathen.

The book of Isaiah, more than any other in the Bible, is based on the idea of a case in court. When one has learned the fact that the whole universe is a great court, in which a case is continually being tried, and God, the angels both good and bad, and all mankind, are concerned in it, the prophecy of Isaiah, and indeed

the whole Bible, can be read with a great deal more pleasure and profit than before.

By most persons the Judgment is doubtless regarded as the time when the Lord determines who are, and who are not, worthy to enter heaven. They imagine all the people of earth gathered about the throne, where an examination is held, and the characters of all men are passed upon. But such an idea as that does very slight justice to the omniscience of God. He does not need to study character in order to discern one's disposition. It is not necessary for Him to study anything. He does not need to make enquiry into a case, and to examine witnesses, as men do, in order to know the facts. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Prov. xv. 3. "The word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and

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quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. iv. 12. When Jesus was here on earth, "He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man." John ii. 24, 25. The Lord, therefore, does not need, as man does, a time in which to cast up His accounts; for with Him the account is always kept. The exact status of every person living, and every act and every thought of every person who has at any time lived on this earth, could at any moment be set forth by the Lord, who inhabits eternity, and who fills heaven and earth. Therefore it is evident that the Judgment of the last day is not for the purpose of helping God to a decision as to the worthiness or unworthiness of any person. It will not reveal to the Lord a single thing that He did not know before. Indeed, it will be the Lord Himself who will reveal the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart.

Instead of being for the purpose of revealing all the details of the lives of men to God, as so many seem to suppose, the Judgment is for the purpose of revealing to men their own selves, and to make known to them the details of the life of God. Two texts that are quoted in the beginning of this lesson will help to make this appear. Compare Ps. li. 3, 4 with Rom. iii. 4. In the first instance it is stated that God will be justified when He speaks, and be clear when He judges. In the second, which is a citation of the first, it is stated that He will be justified in His sayings, and will overcome when He is judged. Since the last is but a repetition of the first, and that too by the Spirit, we may be sure that both texts mean exactly the same thing. Therefore we learn that when God judges He Himself is judged. The result will be that He will win the case and be justified.

That last word, "justified," turns our attention to the points in the case. From the very beginning the character of God has been called in question. Satan and his followers have sought to justify their rebellion against God by charging Him with injustice, indifference to the welfare of His subjects, cruelty, and harsh despotism. We see all this set forth in the temptation with which Satan induced Eve to take the forbidden fruit. The Hebrew of the words rendered in Gen. iii. 1, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" is not by any means fully expressed by that rendering. The serpent's question is accompanied by a covert sneer, a contemptuous sniff, as he says, "Is it so, that God has said,

Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" The tempter affects to doubt that even God should be capable of doing so mean a thing as that, thus artfully implanting in the mind of Eve the idea that she has been unjustly dealt with. Then when she repeats the prohibition, the serpent comes out boldly, and says, "Ye shall not surely die; for God knoweth that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be like God, knowing good and evil." He made her believe that God had deceived them in telling them that they should die if they ate of that tree, and that He had told them that story merely to frighten them away from it, because He knew that if they should eat from it they would be equal to Himself, and thus He would lose His prestige and authority over them. By insinuating that God was exalting Himself at their expense, the adversary caused her to feel that she was abused, and to imagine that she had found in the serpent a friend who would help her to secure her rights. From that day to this God has been maligned and willfully misunderstood. Satan's charge of injustice has been repeated by men, and his insinuations have sunk so deeply into the minds of the world, that it does not seem so fearful a thing even for professed followers of the Lord to question His dealings with them. Every doubt is but the echo of the words with which Satan tempted our first parents to sin.

Who has not heard God charged with all the sin and misery in the world? Because God is all-powerful, men say that He is responsible for all the wretchedness; or else, if it be claimed that He is not responsible for it, they say that then He is weak; and in any case they make the presence of sins and misery the fault of God. The spirit of Satan, the prince of the power of the air, works in the children of disobedience (Eph. ii. 2), and it is one of the most difficult things in the world to convince anybody that God is love. Absolute trust in God as a tender, loving Father, is a very rare thing, so much so that those who trust Him fully in every detail of life are accounted mildly insane, and unfitted for practical life.

The character of God is therefore on trial. God calls upon men to come into court and prove their charges against Him, and His only defense is the revelation of Himself to them, - the setting forth of His whole life before them. In Isa. i. 18, where we have, "Come now, and let us reason together," the Hebrew literally rendered is, "Come now, and let us go into court together, saith the Lord." He has been charged with unrighteousness, and His people take up this charge as an excuse for turning away from Him; but God rests His case upon the fact that He forgives sin, and cleanses from all unrighteousness. He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and this He will do though they be as scarlet. "He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." 1 John iii. 5. He never committed a sin, and is not responsible for sin, yet He takes it upon Himself in order that it and all its consequences may for ever be removed. The Judgment is for the purpose of making this clear before every being in the universe; and when that is done, every mouth will be stopped.

The trial is now progressing; the Judgment will be merely the summing up. The Judgment will reveal no new feature that all men may not learn now, or else it would then appear that all men had not had a fair chance. In this present time, while the case is before the jury, which is composed of all creatures, God makes

a perfect and complete revelation of Himself and His character, manifesting Himself in all the things that He has made for the benefit of mankind, but chiefly in Jesus Christ whom He has sent. There is no need for anybody to be ignorant of the true character of God. Even the most degraded heathen are "without excuse." Rom. i. 18-20. When in the Judgment men are made to see that to which they have so long willfully shut their eyes; when everything that has been done by men, and by God for men, since the creation, and even God's tender provision for men before the creation of the world, and also the underlying motive of all the acts that have been committed, are set forth before the universe, there will not be found a soul, no matter how malicious and hateful, who can open his mouth to say another word against the love and justice of the Creator and Redeemer. Every one will be compelled by evidence that cannot be evaded, to confess to God, and to bow the knee in token of His right to rule. Even Satan himself will at last be forced by the power of love to acknowledge that "the

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Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works." Ps. cxlv. 17.

Some one will here ask, "Will everybody then be saved?" Not at all; the confession of the wicked will come too late to be counted to them for righteousness. Those who then for the first time confess the love and righteousness of God will not be moved by faith. Although they will acknowledge that God is good, they will have no love for Him. If their probation were continued, they would still go on in the same course of sin. They love sin more than God, or else they would yield to the tender mercy of God while it is now revealed in Christ. Their confession will be only to the effect that the punishment about to be inflicted upon them is just, and but the natural fruit of their own deeds; that they are but receiving the wages for which they have worked all their lives.

We have read that in the Judgment God will be justified in His sayings, that is, in the sentence which He announces. Every word and act of His life will be justified. But we must remember that this Judgment is preceded by a trial, in which there are witnesses. God calls upon all men to be witnesses for Him, and He has a just claim upon their testimony. But Satan is active with his bribes, and he steals away many of God's witnesses. All the world are now taking sides either for or against the Lord. "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad." Matt. xii. 30. Men are now identifying themselves either with the Lord or with the great adversary. It is evident, therefore, that so surely as God is justified will all those be justified who have cast in their lot with Him, and those who have rejected Him, and have challenged His right to rule, declaring that He should not rule over them, must necessarily take themselves out of His dominions when the controversy is ended. But since "His kingdom ruleth over all," it follows that for those who reject God no place in the universe will be found.

This is the time for the friends of God to declare themselves. It is true that in some things appearances are against the Lord, but that is only because of our short and distorted vision. We are not wise enough to understand all the workings of God, and we have not exercised ourselves in divine things

sufficiently to have our minds toned up to their proper capacity; but enough is made plain to us to enable us to form an opinion. If we declare ourselves on the side of the Lord, even though we cannot explain everything, we are truly His friends. Enemies may fling their accusations against Him, but we will say, "I do not know all the circumstances, and therefore I cannot give you an explanation of this transaction, but this one thing I do know, that God is just and good, and that if we knew all about this thing of which you accuse Him, you yourself would be compelled to acknowledge that it reveals only the tenderest love and goodness." Such a friend is appreciated by the Lord, and will be acknowledged by Him before the world and angels, at the last day; while those who are ready to doubt the goodness of God at every step, eagerly seizing upon every insinuation which the devil whispers in their ears, thereby shut themselves off from all connection with Him. Character will not be formed, but only declared, in the Judgment.

This is but a brief outline of the case. In the lessons that follow we shall see other features set forth. This court trial is the greatest affair in the universe, and the attention of the student will be called to it in every lesson henceforward. If we all can but realise that we are involved in this case that is now being tried, it would transform our lives. If we but place ourselves close to the throne of grace and view the case as it progresses, it will make clear to us every question that vexes the world.

"A Birthmark" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Catholic Times and Catholic Opinion* gives an account of the first of a course of Catholic Evidence lectures at the Central Hall, Acton, by Monsignore Vaughn, on the relation of the Catholic Church to the Bible, and says:-

In the course of a splendid address he showed that while Protestants rely upon the Bible and the Bible only, they did not stick up to it, and gave several instances of their inconsistency, including their keeping the Sunday as their Sabbath instead of Saturday.

It will be hard for the most of professed Protestants to repel this charge. The keeping of Sunday instead of the Sabbath of the Bible is the thing which marks the most of the churches of Protestantism as true daughters of the Roman Catholic Church.

"Children's Corner. Some 'Carnivorous Plants'" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

How is it that the birds, the insects, the fish, many animals, and even many people, now feed upon other living creatures, instead of only upon the plants which God said should be their food? Perhaps what we told you last week about the plants has brought this question into your minds.

It is because the curse that came upon the earth through man's sin has had an effect upon the whole creation, and changed and perverted the nature that God gave to His creatures in the beginning.

It is still the life of God that is seen in all things. This is shown in the wisdom and skill that the animals have, in their tender love for their little ones and often in their kindness to one another when in difficulty or trouble.

But God's will is not now "done on earth as it is in heaven," and as it will be when God makes the earth new and fills it with new creatures. For then, He says, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My Holy Mountain."

But we are not now going to talk about the animals. We want to tell you about some *plants* that have such an unnatural and perverted appetite that they are not content with the good food that God has provided in the earth for their roots to suck up, and in the air for their leaves to absorb in the way we told you of last week. These are called "carnivorous plants" just as the animals that feed upon the flesh of others are called "carnivorous animals."

Here is a picture of one of them, which, is called "Venus's Fly-trap." I need not tell you why it is called a fly-trap, for you will see how the cruel prickly leaves fold over the poor little unsuspecting fly that has alighted on it. Crushing it to death, the leaves suck in the juices from its body, and then open again and seeming innocence for another victim.

There is also the sundew, which grows in this country in soft, marshy places. Its leaves are covered with stiff hairs, at the end of which are little drops of sweet moisture that attract insects to come and feed. But like the fly-trap this is only a snare, for the insect soon becomes entangled in the hairs, of the leaves which fold over and feed upon it.

These plants do not use these things for their food, any more than we ourselves need to feed upon animals; for God has provided abundant nourishment for them in just the way that He meant them to take it, which we may be sure is the very best way for them. They thrive when they are not able to get any of the living food that they crave, for they can draw up food from the earth just as other plants can.

You may have heard too of the "pitcher plant." The end of each of its long green leaves is shaped like a pitcher and filled with sweet, intoxicating juice. Ants, flies and all kinds of insects come to this plant attracted by the contents of the pitcher. But, like people who drink intoxicating liquors, they soon lose their senses, and become the prey of the deceitful plant that has lured them to their death only that it may feast upon their bodies.

The article following this one will tell you of a much larger plant than any of these, which will feed not only on birds and animals, but even on human flesh when it gets the opportunity.

When man sinned, God said to him, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." Since the ground itself is cursed, every thing that comes from it, which includes everything that lives on it, bears more or less of the curse. It is much more plainly seen in some things than in others, but it rests upon all, and all things must be redeemed and made new before the plan and purpose of God can be carried out in the earth.

In the beginning God said to man, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." But now there are many trees and plants which bring death instead of

life to those who eat of them or even breathe their deadly odours. Perhaps we will tell you about some of these another time.

The promise we spoke of, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My Holy Mountain," takes in not only men and animals, but the plants also. Then they will again give out nothing but life; their murderous tendencies will be taken sway, and only God's pure, unperverted life of love will be seen in all things.

"Suicide Made Easy" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

Some time ago we had the curiosity to read one of the quack medicine advertisements that are so regularly thrown in at the door. Two or three sentences in it were so striking that we repeat them here, omitting the name of the vaunted remedy, because we do not wish in the remotest way to assist in advertising such stuff. The reader can put in the name of almost any medicine he sees advertised, and it will fit. This particular medicine was lauded as a foe to indigestion. The advertiser said:-

"No, thank you, I'll take no cheese. I like it, but it does not like me." How often we hear people talk so about some article of food or another! Things that please the palate do not suit the stomach, and to eat them means the pain and distress of a sharp indigestion. . . . They are afraid to eat. Instead of being the best of friends, as Nature intended, food has become an enemy. Now, eating is not only a necessity, but should also be one of our chief pleasures. The use of-- makes it so. A moderate dose taken *immediately after* eating will enable you to digest almost anything you relish; and being digested, your food will do you good and strengthen you. As you get confidence in the power of-- to prevent and overcome indigestion, you will enjoy your meals and no longer feel afraid of them. You can eat the things you like.

That the medicine is designed especially for the purpose of enabling people to gratify their appetites without *feeling* any ill-effects therefrom, is evident not only from the foregoing, but from the following two paragraphs:-

-- Pills prevent ill effects from excess in eating or drinking. A good dose at bedtime renders a person fit for business or labour in the morning.

The wisest and most cautious of us are sometimes tempted to eat and drink too much, and sit up too late at night. When we have been guilty of this indiscretion there is nothing in the world like -- to speedily correct the unlucky results and to send us off to business next morning with a clear head and elastic step.

There is no question that a medicine thus advertised will find many purchasers; for almost all the ills that people suffer arise from errors and excesses in eating; and since most people love to eat so well, merely for the pleasure of eating, that even pain will not deter them from gratifying their appetites, it follows that the promise of unlimited self-gratification without accompanying or following pain, will prove an unfailing attraction.

The Apostle Paul tells about men "having their conscience seared with a hot iron," and there are very many who have got into that sad condition. Most of us

know what it is to have our fingers seared with a hot iron. The skin is not blistered, so that it comes off, but hardened, so that it has no feeling. Fingers in that condition cannot distinguish between soft and rough substances; all things have the same feeling. It is not at all pleasant.

There are many, however, who seek just such a condition for their consciences. They sometimes feel condemned for their evil practices, and they wish to be free from the *feeling* of condemnation, but have no notion of leaving off their evil ways. Now everybody must know that such a condition is the very worst thing that can come to any person. Sin is sin, whether a man is conscious of it or not; and "sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." So long as the conscience makes one uncomfortable over sins committed, there is hope of repentance and salvation; but when the conscience is dead, and one can commit crimes and still feel perfectly easy, the case is about hopeless.

What would you say now, if somebody should advertise a means by which sinners could be relieved of all compunctions of conscience, while still pursuing their sinful ways, "fulfilling the desires of the flesh?" Would you not say that he was in a most accursed business? But that is in reality what these patent medicine vendors are doing. A man sins against his own body, and therefore against God, because the body is the temple of God; as a result he suffers pain. This pain is the physical conscience, or remorse. It is not the sin, but is the evidence that sin has been committed. Now comes along a man who says: "I can give you something that will deaden that pain, and benumb your nerves, so that you can eat any sort of indigestible matter without consciousness of it." The injury to the system is just the same whether one feels it or not; the pain that follows the eating of improper substances is calculated to deter the misdoer from repeating the act; but when one promises to take away the pain, so that the harmful things can be eaten and enjoyed, it is nothing else than promising an easy and pleasant way of committing suicide. Such people are enemies of the human race. We need not advise any action being taken against them, but we can shun their evil counsel.

Let the reader be assured this fact, that perfect food can never injure the system when taken at proper times and in proper quantities. Even when these precautions are not heeded, it is not the food itself, but the abuse of it, that does the injury. Food which the Lord has created to be eaten with thanksgiving, if taken as God designs that it should be, can never do any injury and will never produce pain. It does only good, and produces nothing but pleasure, not only during the act of eating, but afterwards.

Further, let it be accepted as a fixed fact, that no amount of medicine of any kind whatever can do away with or in any degree modify the evil effects of errors in diet. The taking of medicine for indigestion is as useless and as senseless as learning and saying prayers, or wearing a hairshirt to cleanse the soul from sin. Both are most pernicious, because they lead a person to think that he can continue in sin with impunity.

What everybody ought to know is that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Sin, of whatever kind or degree, will do injury, and will involve the penalty, so long as it exists, no matter what the sinner does. In the matter of

eating and drinking, as well as in every other act of life, this rule applies: "Put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." Let no man deceive you with vain words, and do not listen to anybody who says that you can safely sin. If you sin, "be sure your sin will find you out." There is only one way to avoid the wages of sin, and that is to get rid, entirely rid of it.

"God has arranged every nerve and sinew and muscle in the body, and He undertakes to keep that body in order if the human agent will work in harmony with Him."

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

-London enjoys a greater area of open spaces than any other capital in the world.

-Dr. Lange, of Munich, Germany, has invented an instrument for taking a picture of the inside of a living person's stomach.

-On account of the strained relations existing in the government, the entire Austrian Cabinet resigned in a body on the 24th ult.

-More than 200 persons perished by a recent earthquake in the villayet of Aidin, Asia Minor. In connection with the earthquake, steams of sulphurous water sprang out of the ground.

-A Lecture Bureau of the United States has made Captain Dreyfus a *bona fide* offer of \$20,000 for one hundred lectures to be delivered in that country during the coming autumn and winter.

-Mr. Thomas Beck, who entered the service of the London and North-Western Railway Company in 1848, has just retired on a good-service allowance at the age of seventy-four years. He has run over 3,000,000 miles.

-During the past week, the deaths from the plague in the Bombay Presidency have amounted to 4,505, while in Bombay City and Poona, the numbers that have succumbed amount to ninety-four and 501 respectively.

-Damage to the amount of nearly \$1,000,000 at the same time was done to the Union Stock Yards, Chicago, on the 23rd ult. by fire. The 1,500 horses on the premises were terrified by the flames, and stampeded, injuring many people in their wild runs through the streets.

-At Guildhall, a boy twelve years old, applied for a place as errand boy, secured it, and in less than two hours stole \$25 from the safe and disappeared. It was, as afterwards learned when the youngster was caught, a deliberately planned affair, inspired by reading "penny dreadfuls."

-San Francisco, U.S.A., has passed an ordinance, prohibiting expectoration in street-cars or public places, the violators to be punished by fine and imprisonment. A millionaire of the city claimed the right to do as he pleased, but was promptly dealt with, for the last offence being sentenced for twenty-four hours in the county gaol. Spitting in public places is one of the most fruitful sources of consumption, and should be prohibited by law.

-During the recent earthquake in Alaska, the spectators saw a tidal wave, apparently thirty feet high, approaching the town of Yakutat. Before it reached the

shore, however, the bottom of the harbour opened and the wave spent its force in the chasm.

-There have been constant rumours that the world's supply of rubber is about to give out under the constant demand of the tyre makers. News is just at hand of the invention of a substitute for rubber, called oxaline. Its cost is only one-tenth that of rubber, and it is said to be just as serviceable.

-There is a genuine steel famine in America. Builders are not able to meet their contracts, railway companies cannot complete new lines on time, and it is feared that the construction of new boats for the navy will be delayed on this account. It is the result of the operation of the huge steel and iron trusts in that country.

-The White Star liner *Germanic*, from New York, brings the intelligence that on the 6th ult. she spoke the whaler *Era* flying signals of distress, and on sending a boat to her, found that for two years and three months she had been frozen in the sea near Hudson Bay. The crew were about out of provisions, which were supplied.

-A typhoid fever epidemic be broken out in Tring, Herts, and although three weeks have elapsed since the first case occurred, there is no abatement of the disease. In one small area of the town there are sixty cases. Fortunately the mortality is not great. The cause is attributed to the pollution of the wells from the recent heavy rains.

-General Otis, Military Governor of the Philippines, applied the Exclusion Act of the United States to the landing of Chinese on the islands. His action has caused much comment, calling forth an emphatic protest from China's Minister at Washington, and the U.S. Cabinet has just decided that in the act he had exceeded his authority.

-At Darjeeling, India, during the evening of the 26th inst., there was a succession of earthquake shocks, accompanied with very heavy rainfall and terrible landslips. Twenty inches of rain fell in twenty-four hours, immense damage to property, and the killing of hundreds of people were the result. At one place a bazaar was completely overwhelmed, and two hundred persons were killed.

-Admiral Dewey reached New York on the battleship *Olympia*, Sept. 26th, from the Philippines, and was received with a demonstration such as was never accorded a naval commander in the United States before. Among other presents received was the largest silver loving cup in the world. And all this because he annihilated the Spanish naval fleet at Cavite last year, destroying at the same time over 2,000 lives.

-What promises to be the greatest wheat "corner" in the history of America reported to be in progress now in Chicago, backed by the multi-millionaire Armour, who has elevators at his command for holding 50,000,000 bushels. Grain gambling is proving the ruination of thousands of people in America, and these "corners" always prove disastrous in the end, not only to the producer but the consumer as well.

-An effort is being made in Canada to induce the Government to purchase and slaughter every tuberculous cow or steer in that country. At a late meeting of

the Canadian Medical Association, the statement was made that the disease is so prevalent in Great Britain that its eradication was not only impracticable but impossible; but on account of the rareness of the disease in Canadian cattle, if those that were affected were thus disposed of, it would be very beneficial to Canadian breeders, as the rest of the world would then have to buy of them, in order to get healthy animals.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

The satisfactory conclusion of the negotiations between Germany and France for the establishment of telephonic communication between Paris and Berlin, is regarded as an event of considerable political as well as commercial importance. For those two cities to be on speaking terms is significant beyond the fact that they are nearly eight hundred miles apart.

Commenting on the Pope's exhortation to the Catholics of Brazil, both priests and laymen, to make their influence felt in politics, the *Catholic Times* says that his words "should be taken to heart by Catholics not merely in Brazil, but throughout the world," and adds these significant words: "The future for us will be what we shall make it. If we act with public spirit, and in a broadminded way, our right to utter a dominant note will be admitted." Domination is what the Papacy is seeking in every land. It would not be the Papacy if it were otherwise.

There is nothing like war, or something or somebody that is suggestive of war, to stir up the people of these "Christian nations," in "this enlightened age" to the wildest pitch of enthusiasm. Just now the city of New York and a good share of the United States is in a delirium of excitement over a man whose sole act by which he has acquired fame is that under cover of darkness he stole into a harbour with his war ships, and at his leisure shot to pieces and sunk a lot of ships that were at anchor, and incapable of resistance. Still "'twas a famous victory." It is fast getting to be the case that if a man has only, with all "the pomp and circumstance of war" destroyed a lot of lives and property, he is regarded as a hero.

At the recent Health Congress at Blackpool, a paper was read by Dr. Adler, Chief Rabbi of London, on the antiquity of sanitation, reference of course being made to the regulations found in the books of Moses. Those rules were given by the Lord Himself, and, when followed, produced the healthiest people that ever lived. Let it be noted, however, that inoculation was not included in the list of preventives of disease. Perfect cleanliness within as well as without the body, is the sum of the whole matter. Clean food, pure water, fresh air, plenty of sunlight, regular, muscular exercise, and a clean conscience, will ward off any plague known. It may be said that vaccination and inoculation have saved many lives. No doubt they have served a purpose, and will yet do so among people who find that course easier than keeping themselves thoroughly clean; but to fill one's body with death, as a means of warding off death, is unscriptural and unscientific.

A prominent religious journal finds fault with the Speaker's Commentary for the following note found in it:-

Untruth has been held by all moralists to be justifiable towards a public enemy. Where we have a right to kill, much more have we a right to deceive by stratagem.

Why not? If men may set aside the sixth commandment, may he not also ignore the eighth? As a matter of fact, it would be absolutely impossible for any military operations to be "successful" if the leaders adhered strictly to the truth. Lying is inseparably connected with killing. The error of the commentary lies in the assumption that it is right to kill. As a general thing, the code of "moralists" is entirely different from that of the Bible. Too much of the "morality" of this age consists in the justification of one evil because of the existence of another.

A case of what the *Daily Chronicle* aptly calls "tragic justice" has just occurred at Eastbourne. A doctor mixed some medicine for a patient, who, after taking a portion of it in water, complained that it made her ill, and stated that she believed it had poisoned her. The doctor was nettled at the suggestion, and to convince the patient that the medicine was harmless, he took a large dose himself, with the result that he could scarcely reach home, and died shortly afterwards. The medicine, on analysis, was found to contain a large quantity of strychnine. If nobody would ever take any medicine until the doctor had first given it a thorough trial on himself, there would be much less taken, and the death rate would be materially diminished.

"What of the Night?" *The Present Truth* 15, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

"Watchman, what of the night?" is the question asked in the prophecy. The answer is, "The morning cometh, and also the night." What the darkness of that night will yet be before the morning dawns, may be gathered from the following items, taken respectively from the *London Morning Herald* and the *Manchester City News*. The first is concerning the class of songs that are picked up by the children at the cheap music halls and sung even by Sunday-school children returning from a day in the country, in spite of the efforts of teachers to stop them:-

They glorify the basest passions of men, they deride honour and purity; elevate drunkenness to a grace of life, profligacy to a virtue. The "patriotic" songs-senseless, cowardly, selfish, an insult to every foreigner that may be present-are a by-word among us. There is no wit, no humour, grace, daintiness, poetry, or even mere prettiness of sentiment, to be found in any of these effusions.

But they are sung in the streets-they are the only songs the children of London seem to know. What notions they put into childish heads; what sordid principles; what mean and miserable ideals! The children of London know no songs that they ought to sing; they pick up the ignoble, despicable views of life that float around them, and who can estimate the affect of these views, taken in conjunction with their environment, upon thousands of children whose homes are in the slums, the miserable back-streets of our city?

The next shows another phase of city life, which is but too common:-

A little lad, with pinched face and poorly clad, came out of a public-house in London with rum "for his mother" in a teacup. Within a yard he drank some, and in another twenty yards tasted again, and gave a little girl some. The writer prevented two other children from having a taste, and no doubt the mother would have thanked him, not perhaps for preventing young children from drinking raw spirits, but for safeguarding her rum.

If this case may be taken as a fair sample of what is occurring in thousands of instances every day, it shows the existence of a most powerful agency for the production of the love of drink and habit of drinking at an early age. The boy said that he was nine years old and the girl five, though they both looked younger, as the city slum children often do. The conditions of life in the slums are not conducive to a vigorous childhood, and, if they are supplemented by spirit-drinking, the prospect of seeing a healthy city population grow up is not bright.

It is very easy to see how "darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people;" yet we have the assurance that in the midst of this pitchy darkness "the glory of the Lord" will be seen upon some people, making a light to which those who love light rather than darkness may come. Who will be bearer's of a glory of the Lord, and thus help to usher in the glorious morning?

October 12, 1899

"Our Dwelling Place" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

"Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." Ps. xc. 1-4.

One of the most minute compositions ever penned, combining the loftiest and sublimest thought with language in the most simple and easily understood. Its rhythm makes it most easy to commit to memory, for it fastens itself in the mind without effort. It is not, however, as a literary production that we are to consider it, but as a comforting uplifting truth.

One thought that is vividly set forth in this passage is the fact that God is the Great Father of all;—not simply of all men, but of all things. This thought is expressed in the words, "Before the mountains were *brought forth*." All know that the words "bring forth" are the equivalent of "bear" as applied to the bringing of young into the world, and are very frequent in the Scripture. The Hebrew word in this place is the word meaning "to bear, to bring forth," and several translations have the clause very literally and correctly rendered, "Before the mountains of were born." The French of Segond, which is easy of access for verification, has it, "Avant que les montagnes fussent nées."

The thought is still further carried out in the remainder of the clause, "or ever formed the earth and the world," although here it is necessarily obscured in the

translation. The word rendered "formed" is a Hebrew word meaning "to twist, to turn around," and hence "to writhe, to be in pain," and so "to travail, to bring forth," or, in the passive, "to be born." In the following text, the words are from this Italicised same Hebrew word as the word "formed" in the text just quoted: "Look unto Abraham your father and the Sara that *bare* you."

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Isa. li. 2. "When there were no depths, I was *brought forth*; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I *brought forth*." Prov. viii. 24, 25. "Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou *made* before the hills?" Job xv. 7. These last two texts indicate that the act is the same for both men and mountains. Among other instances of the same word, are Isa. liv. 1; lxvi. 7, 8; Ps. xxix. 9; li. 5.

In the second verse we have the terms "the earth" and "the world," the first referring to the planet on which we dwell, and the second to the habitable earth-the population. It is so used in Ps. ix. 9; xcvi. 13; xcvi. 9. The verse might therefore with strict propriety be rendered thus: "Before the mountains were born, or ever Thou hadst brought forth the earth and its people, even from eternity to eternity Thou art God." This little study of words is certainly not so technical as to disturb anybody in his reading, and it is surely calculated to bring us consciously nearer to God, and to make His presence more real.

Jesus Christ is "*the firstborn of all creation*." Col. i. 15, R.V. This again shows the one common origin of all things animate and inanimate. Jesus was begotten of the Father before there was anything. See Prov. viii. 22-26. "He is before all things." He is the Only-begotten Son, without whom nothing was made. John i. 3. "For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist," or "hold together." Col. i. 16, 17, R.V. Christ is "the everlasting Father" (Isa. ix. 6) of all creation, visible and invisible. There is but one family in heaven and earth, and all its members are named from Him. Eph. iii. 14, 15. Even the inhabitants of this fallen world "are His offspring," although they are prodigal sons, wandering sheep; "for both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. ii. 11. We are allied to the angels in heaven, yet we are in the closest family relation to the earth on which we tread, for we are but dust. "Out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. iii. 19. So while on the one hand we may have the highest aspirations and the most confident hopes, on the other hand we have no more reason to be proud than the clod that is crushed by the ploughman's boot. A proper appreciation of our origin would give to us the greatness of true humility.

God is. That is His name. He is the self-existent One. He is pure life, the Spirit of life. The Word was in the beginning with God, and was God, and "by the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." Christ as the everlasting Word, is "I AM." In Him is life, for He is "the life." In Him were all things created; from Him, from His very being, His life, all things came. That is why we have redemption through His blood-His life. In giving

Himself for us, He gives the life of the universe. Thus He renews our life, and we are born again. "What a wonderful Saviour!"

That is our origin. What a broad and deep meaning this reveals in the words, "Our Father." God is more really our Father than is the man whose earthly name we bear. The relation between God and the whole human race, and to all creation as well, infinitely closer than that of earthly parents to their children. So the Lord says, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Isa. lxvi. 13); but His parental comfort is as much greater than that of any human mother, as He is greater than any human being. Earthly relationships, at their best, are not merely illustrations, but revelations, of the relation and love of God to mankind.

But we have not yet fathomed the depth of this scripture. Indeed, we have but just begun to explore it. We are bound to God by ties closer than that of any child to its mother. The love of a mother for her child is the highest known among men, but God's is infinitely greater. "Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Isa. xlix. 15. The child is formed of the very substance of the mother, and draws its life from her being; yet even for all that, the mother may forget and even hate her child; but God will not. Why not?

Because "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28. He is our dwelling place the child, once born, can live independent of its mother, but we can never live apart from God. The mother may die the moment the child draws its first breath, and the child may still live the full term of life; but our life depends on God's life every moment. He is our life, and the length of our days. Deut. xxx. 20. In Him we live. The relation of men to God, even down to grey hairs and throughout eternity, is that of the unborn child to its mother. From the very nature of things the mother cannot forget the creature that she carries beneath her heart, and which she nourishes with her own heart's blood. Its presence day and night is a constant claim upon her thought. Moreover compassion is wrapped up in the thought, for the Hebrew word for "womb" means "compassion, mercy, pity." There are unnatural parents, it is true. He is the Parent of the whole human race, and every moment He carries us in His bosom. The only begotten Son "is in the bosom of the Father" (John i. 16), and we are in Him. What a safe and quiet dwelling place! How close and tender is our relation to the everlasting Father!

It is very easy for us to imagine that we have an existence apart from and independent of God, because we move about freely at our pleasure, and do not see any connection between us and God. That is because we have not our eyes open. But the closest scrutiny does not in the least shake the statement that our relation to God is that of the unborn babe to its mother,-we are carried in His bosom, and nourished by His life. The child in embryo has a circulation of its own, as distinct as that of any living creature. The blood of the mother does not circulate through the child; it simply draws the life-giving property from the blood of the mother. So although we have a complete circulation of blood in our bodies, we nevertheless draw all our life sustenance from the life-the blood-of the Lord. His heart is the heart of the universe. From Him flows the stream of life which keeps all creation in existence. The life is the blood; and by whatever means the

life is conveyed to us, whether by the air, the sunlight, food, or drink, it is all some manifestation of the blood of Christ, which not only gives life, but which cleanses from sin.

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Yes, God is our dwelling-place; never can we be separated from His being without being blotted from existence. So we may read with new wonder and fresh comfort the promise of God, "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Isa. xxxiii. 18. How comforting to know that this sure dwelling place is "from everlasting to everlasting." When we read that a thousand years are to Him not merely as one day, but as a day gone by, and that we are but as nothing in comparison with His eternal greatness, it is not to belittle us, but to exalt Him, and to give us confidence. Happy the people who can say with the confidence of experience, "God is our refuge and strength."

"In heavenly love abiding,
No change my heart can fear;
And safe is such confiding.
For nothing changes here.
The storm may roar without me,
My heart may low be laid;
But God is round about me;
And can I be dismayed?"

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Summons to the Trial. Isa. xli. 1-13" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xli. 1-13.)

"Keep silence before Me, O islands; and let the peoples renew their strength; let them come near; then let them speak; let us come near together to Judgment. Who hath raised up one from the east, whom He calleth in righteousness to His foot? He giveth nations before Him, and maketh Him rule over kings; He giveth them as dust to His sword, and as the driven stubble to his bow. He pursueth them, and passeth on safely; even by a way that He had not gone with His feet. Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last, I am He. The isles saw, and feared; the ends of the earth trembled; they drew near, and came. They helped every one his neighbour, and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smiteth the anvil, saying of the soldering, It is good; and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved.

"But thou, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham My friend; thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art My servant, I have chosen thee and not cast thee away; fear thou not, for I am with

thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness. Behold, all they that are incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded; they that strive with thee shall be as nothing, and shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contend with thee; they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of naught. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee."

ALWAYS COMFORT

In studying this chapter and all the chapters that follow, do not forget that we are studying the message of comfort which God sends to His people. These last chapters of Isaiah form one connected whole. Right here, in passing, we might notice a fact which may make it more clear to many that this message applies to us in these days. No one who reads these chapters can fail to notice the words of comfort that appear. Promises of God are strewn as thickly as blossoms in spring. These promises have been the support of many Christians, and have helped to bring many sinners to repentance. No believer hesitates to appropriate them to himself. But it is very plain that if this prophecy was given to the Jewish people alone, and applies only to them, then we have no right to the promises that it contains. That is to say, whoever rejects the reproofs which God sends, and the requirements of His law, must also forego the blessings of the Gospel of forgiveness. Men unconsciously appropriate the promises and put aside the law, forgetting that the reproofs of God are comfort. All God's precepts are promises of fulfilment. He gives all that He asks of us. Whenever the law makes sin to abound, it is only for the purpose of driving us to Christ, in whom "the law of the Spirit of Life" super-abounds as grace.

THE WHOLE WORLD SUMMONED

At every step in our study we shall be reminded of the great trial now on, which was outlined last week. That lesson should be learned so thoroughly that it will be continually in mind without any effort. Those who are using these studies in their Sabbath study should keep the scriptures and the facts set forth in them before them as they study each succeeding lesson. We cannot become too familiar with the fact that a great trial is now taking place, for we have a part in it, and we need to know just what it is. In this chapter we are called to court. The summons is issued to all the world, "the isles," including the utmost bounds of the earth. The heavens are also called upon in this case. Call to mind the opening words of this prophecy (Isa. i. 2), and read also Ps. l. 3, 4: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people." The whole universe is enlisted in this case. It must be so, because the case concerns God Himself, and He upholds the universe.

KEEP SILENCE!

"Silence in the Court!" The case is now being tried, and silence is fitting. What is the case? It is to find out who is God. Men have persuaded themselves that they are gods, and better able to manage the affairs of this world than is the God of the Bible. Now God says, "Be still!" What for? "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth." Ps. xlv. 10. If men would only keep still, and not put forth so much of merely

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human speculation, they would have no difficulty in recognising God. Being still before the Lord means more than merely refraining from talking. It means to keep silence in the heart, to let our own thoughts be held in abeyance, that they may be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. "The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him." Hab. ii. 20. "The Lord's throne is in heaven," and as long as He is able to maintain His place there He has a right to command the silence of all mankind.

In verses 2 and 3 we have undoubted reference to Christ, whom God has raised up, and to whom He has given all power and authority, setting Him over kings. "Also I will make Him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." Ps. lxxxix. 27. "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps. ii. 8, 9. He is the righteous One, whom God has called in righteousness to do His will.

Some versions of the Bible insert in the margin, as an explanation of verse 2, the word, "Cyrus," meaning that he is the righteous one whom God has called. It is true that later on Cyrus is called by name, and that in his case the foreknowledge of God is displayed, "calling the generations from the beginning," but the text here is sufficient to show that Christ is the One referred to. He is the One upon whom the responsibility of this case rests, for He is the One who declares God to man. God's character is in His keeping. Cyrus was called by name before his birth, but Christ "was foreordained before the foundation of the world." 1 Peter i. 20.

PREPARING THEIR CASE

In response to the call the peoples gather. Remember that this case was not called yesterday, but from the very beginning. Every nation under heaven has recognised the fact that a call has been issued to determine who is God, and all have set about the work of making the proof. How do they proceed? They make idols. In the gods that are found in some form in every nation and every tribe on earth, or that has ever existed, there is found proof of the fact that men know that there must be a God, and these idols are their attempts to show who He is. How foolish is their work! The very thing that they depend upon for proof ought to convince them of their folly. They seek to encourage one another, and the carpenter speaks hopefully to the goldsmith, and the founder assures the smith that their work is good and well fastened together. Then to make everything sure,

the idol is fastened with nails, so that it may not fall down and be broken to pieces. Note the connection of verses 6 and 7 with verses 18-20 of the preceding chapter.

SELF-JUSTIFICATION IS HEATHENISM

The counterpart of this picture is found in the case of every man who seeks to justify himself. The man who will not confess that he is a sinner is putting himself against God. God has said that all men have sinned; and it is certain that there is not a man who is not out of harmony with God. The characters of men are by nature unlike that of God. If therefore men be right, if any man on earth be not a sinner, then it must follow that God is in the wrong. Everybody, therefore, who claims that he has not done wrong in any particular wherein God says that he is a sinner, affirms that God is not the true God, but that he himself is. He is making a god of the works of his own hands. The one who maintains that his course is right, and who is therefore willing to rest his hope on what he himself has done, is in reality just as surely a heathen as is the one who makes images of wood and stone or gold and silver, and worships them. In this picture of the gathering of nations, and their mutual encouragement in their efforts to maintain their cause against the Lord, see a parallel to Ps. ii. 1-3.

But now God presents His side of the case. He addresses Himself to Israel. Who is Israel? For an answer turn to Gen. xxxii. 24-28. Jacob wrestled with the Lord, and prevailed when in his helplessness he cast himself on the Lord and asked His blessing. Israel is one who overcomes by faith. Israel represents all who trust the Lord. Israel is the seed of Abraham, who is "the father of all them that believe," and therefore Israel means all who believe.

GOD'S CASE

To Israel, that is, to all who will listen to Him, God says, "I have taken thee from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof; I have chosen thee, and have not rejected thee." The Lord tells us that He is looking about, seeking to save. The devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour, while God is searching the world over to find men who will let Him save them. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Instead of being indifferent to the wants of mankind, God is doing nothing else every moment but watching for chances to save men from the results of their own folly. Go back to the last verses of chapter xl. There is no reason for any to say that God has forgotten them, or that He does not care for their affliction and sorrow. Their way is not hid from the Lord, and their judgment has not passed away from Him. Instead of casting anybody off, God has chosen them, and has gone hunting for them. The Lord says, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you. John xv. 16. The Apostle Paul addressed the Galatians, who had been rescued from heathenism, as those who had known God, and then he corrected himself by saying that they had rather been known of God.

They did not find God by searching, but He revealed Himself to them. "For the Lord will not cast off for ever." Lam. iii. 31.

FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

Abraham is called by God Himself His friend. Just as surely as Abraham was God's friend, God was Abraham's friend. How proud men are to be able to say, "My friend the Duke of _____," or "My friend Lord So-and-So." They feel that a distinction is conferred on them in being acquainted with men of high degree, although those men may be in reality a lie; yet how few esteem it an honour to have God for a friend. Ask a man if he knows Lord This, or Colonel That, and he will be grateful for the compliment, even if he knows nothing of them except their names. He feels honoured to know that you think it possible that he moves in such society. Ask the same man if he knows the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, and nine chances to one he will be offended. Is it not strange?

Just think what a high honour it is to have God say to any man, "My friend." That is what He said of Abraham, and it is what He says of everybody who has the faith of Abraham. Abraham showed his implicit trust in God when he proceeded to offer Isaac on the altar. In that act of

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faith the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; and he was called "the friend of God."

VALUE OF GOD'S FRIENDSHIP

The Hebrew word rendered "friend" in this scripture before us, is from the verb meaning, to love. It is stronger than the ordinary word for friend or companion. It is used of those who are very intimate, as lovers. When God contracts friendship with men, it is of no ordinary kind. Perfect friendship means the perfection of mutual confidence. Such a thing is really unknown among men, for in the closest intimacies there is always some bar to the complete disclosure of one's self to the other. A feeling that our friend could not understand some things in our own lives, because he has never had any similar experience, and his friendship for us might lessen if he knew of some things in our lives, wherein he himself may never have been tried, causes us to withhold a part of our life from him. We instinctively shrink from making known the secrets of our hearts to anybody, no matter how intimate. But with God the most perfect friendship is possible, for He has experienced everything. He has been tempted in all things like as we are, and so He never despises anybody who has been tempted, but is able to help. If we make Him our confidant, telling Him everything about ourselves, that is confessing our sins and weaknesses, He will in turn show us all of Himself, revealing Himself not merely to us, but in us, so that we may have righteousness and strength instead of sin and weakness. More than this, He will prove Himself a true friend, and will never betray our confidence. This is the value of confessing to Him. It is not that we tell Him anything about ourselves that He does not already know; but in confessing our sins, we accept His

righteousness to cover them. If we do not confess them, then in the Judgment they will be set forth before the whole world; but when we confess them, He takes them away, so that they can never more be found, for they will no more exist, and He Himself will forget them. He will hide the fact that we have sinned from all creation. He will do this by taking away from us every trace of sin. Is not such a friend worth having?

THE COMFORT OF HIS PRESENCE

"Fear not," God says to the people whom he has chosen, that is, to all who believe and trust Him. Why not fear?—"For I am with thee." He is greater than all, so that none need fear. Read Ps. xxvii. 1-3 and xlvii. and Isa. xii. 2. Read in Matt. xiv. 22-32 and John vi. 16-21 the account of the storm on the sea, when Jesus came to the disciples, walking on the water. When they were afraid, He called out, "I am; be not afraid." It was the same Jesus who said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Because He is, there is no cause for fear; for He is everywhere, and is all things that anyone needs. So as soon as the disciples received Him into the boat, immediately they were at the place where they were going. In Him there is the fulfilment of all that we need. Because He is with us, we need not fear though war should rise up and an host encamp against us. In His presence there is fulness of joy. He says that His presence shall go with us, and give us rest. His rod and His staff comfort us, and He prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies. Do not forget that His rod comforts. We are studying the comfort of the Lord; but too many people think of the rod of the Lord only as an instrument of punishment, an emblem of displeasure. Well, it is true that the Lord does often visit the transgression of His people with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes (Ps. xxxix. 30-32), nevertheless He does not take His loving-kindness from them; the rod of correction is the comfort of the Holy Ghost, who makes known the abounding sin in order to apply the super abounding grace.

The song to be sung in these days is, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." Isa. xii. 2. He strengthens us by His strength. It is interesting to note that the word "taken" in verse 9, "Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth," is from the Hebrew word meaning, "to gird," "to make strong." From the ends of the earth God gathers His people, and girds them with strength. He is our strength against the enemy.

BE NOT ANXIOUS

Notice the margin in verse 10 in the Revised Version. There we have indicated what is placed in the body of the text in the Danish and Norwegian versions: "Do not look so anxiously around thee." This is very literal and true. The Swedish expresses the same thought, though not so vividly, "Do not seek help from others." God would have His people look straight forward. Time is lost when they look around, and besides they cannot walk straight if they do not look

straight ahead. Did you ever notice children when they cross the road? Whoever has driven, or ridden a bicycle, through the streets of a town, cannot fail to have marked it. When a child decides to cross the road, it looks neither to the right nor the left, but goes straight for the opposite side. Surely God has a care for children, else hundreds of them would be killed. They have no thought for themselves. Now whoever would enter the kingdom of heaven must become as a little child. We need not be critical, and say that God does not wish us to be careless. Of course He does not; but He wishes us to be trustful. He tells us to seek the one thing, His kingdom and His righteousness, and everything else will be added to us. We spend too much time calculating probabilities, and discussing possible dangers. God's word to us is, "Go forward." It was when Peter looked around and saw the billows dashing high, that he began to sink. "Looking unto Jesus," is our motto. "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." Prov. iv. 25, 26. God will hold our right hand, so that even if we stumble, we shall not utterly fall. "The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down." Ps. cxlv. 14. So we can say, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise." Micah vii. 8.

"Jesuit Casuistry" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

The height, or rather the depth, of Jesuitical casuistry seems to have been reached by a leading writer in one of the most widely circulated Protestant journals in England, who defends war as a thing that Christians can consistently engage in, by arguing that force is used everywhere in nature, and that even the non-resistance which Christ enjoined is the opposition of force by force. He says, "When Christ and His followers fought their battle with the will, they were using force in its highest and most concentrated form." The argument which would make the non-resistance of Christ equivalent to fighting and killing, would make a murdered man as guilty as his murderer, the robbed traveller an accomplice of the thief who robbed him, and would even make Christ equally guilty with the men who bound Him and nailed Him to the cross. Whoever attempts to justify evil must necessarily condemn all goodness.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem. Ezra viii. 21-32" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

Ezra viii. 21-32.

A LESSON OF TRUTH IN GOD

For seventy years the city of Jerusalem, with its temple, had lain desolate, in fulfilment of the word of the Lord by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah. This desolation was a striking evidence of the result of Sabbath-breaking, and also by

contrast of the blessings which true Sabbath-keeping ensures; for if the Israelites had been faithful in the observance of the Sabbath, the city would have stood for ever. Jer. xvii. 24, 25. No enemy could have done anything against it. As it was, Jerusalem fell, not because of the superior force of the enemies that besieged it, but by its own weight, since it had rejected the Arm that was its defence and support.

But although Israel had rejected God, He had not cast off His people. Even before the fall of Jerusalem, God had foretold its restoration, and had named the man who should fulfil His pleasure in that respect. Soon after the beginning of the captivity this message came: "Thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Jer. xxix. 10, 11. It was God Himself who gave Jerusalem into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (Dan. i. 1, 2; Jer. Jer. xxvii. 1-7), and He did it as the very best thing that could be done for its people. In allowing calamity to come upon them, God had only thoughts of good for them.

There are no accidents in the history of this world. God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Eph. i. 11. Men imagine that they are the makers of history, and that by their counsels and their skill they make and unmake kingdoms; but the truth is that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." Dan. iv. 25, 32. "He removeth kings, and setteth up kings." Dan. ii. 21. Not the smallest and seemingly most insignificant thing takes place without His knowledge and consent. Matt. x. 29, 30. The nations may chafe and rage under God's rule, desiring to break the power of His Government, but God will only laugh at their vain struggles. Ps. ii. 1-4. They may hate the righteous, and plot their destruction; but they can have no power except what is given them from heaven. John xix. 9, 10. It is therefore to God, and not to any human power, that the people of God are to look for help and protection.

Many years before his birth, and while the temple at Jerusalem was standing in all its splendour, and the city was glorying in its independence, God had named Cyrus, King of Persia, as the one whom Him would use as His instrument in the restoration of true Jerusalem and its temple after the destruction. See Isa. xlv. 24-28; xlv. 1-4. Accordingly "in the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, King of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is the God), which is in Jerusalem." Ezra i. 1-3. Cyrus himself recognised that in this act he was but the agent of the King of kings.

For a time the work went forward rapidly; but soon the enemies of Israel began to interfere. First they asked to be allowed to help in the work, but this was

not allowed. Ezra iv. 1-3. The favour of the enemies of the Gospel is worse than their open opposition. Unconverted men in the church are a thousand-fold more dangerous to its prosperity than they could possibly be if fighting it from without. Unfortunately the builders of the temple did not hold fast the beginning of their confidence, but allowed their adversaries to weaken their hands. The Jews had a direct decree from King Cyrus, to restore the city and temple, and this decree could not be changed even by the king himself. See Dan. vi. 8, 9, 13, 16. Moreover, they did not receive any contrary decree from the king to whom their adversaries wrote false reports. These adversaries simply received permission to command the Jews to cease work, and the Jews yielded to their power. Ezra iv. 7-24.

That the work of building might have gone on in spite of this opposition, is evident from the fact that in the second year of Darius, under the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah, the Jews again began to build, without any further royal decree. The word of the Lord, which had been their warrant in the first place, was sufficient authority. Again their enemies sought to restrain them, and would doubtless have been as successful as before, if the Jews had not been emboldened by the prophets of God. "The eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius." Ezra v. 5. Then search was made, and the original decree was found, in consequence of which Darius issued a decree to the adversaries of the Jews to "Let the work of the house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in His place. Moreover I make a decree that ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of the house of God; that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given to these men that they be not hindered." Ezra vi. 7, 8. Thus the wrath of man was made to praise God, and it was demonstrated that all efforts against the truth can result only in its advancement.

From this time the work of restoration went forward, although of course the minds of the evil-disposed ones were not at all change. In the seventh year of Artaxerxes, Ezra, a scribe of the law, was commissioned by the king to go up and complete the work, and was given full power and unlimited command of all necessary funds. It is worthy of remark, however, that in every decree made by the kings of Persia, the God of heaven was especially named as the One whose orders they were carrying out. We have read the decree of Cyrus. Darius, in commanding the adversaries to abstain from hindering the work, referred to God in almost every

sentence, and said in closing: "And the God that hath caused His name to dwell there, destroy all kings and people that shall put to their hand to alter it to destroy the house of God which is at Jerusalem." Ezra vi. 12. So likewise Artaxerxes said in his letter to Ezra, "Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven; for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?" Ezra vii. 23.

And so Ezra, accompanied by a great company of Jews, found himself on the way to Jerusalem. The river Ahava was appointed as the rallying place, and there

He halted for three days to view the people. But there still were many enemies who, although forbidden to interfere with the work of building, would gladly steal upon the company of men, women, and children, and cut them off and plunder their camp. This they could do without their identity being known, and thus they could as effectually hinder the work as before. So we come to the words which contain the substance of this lesson.

These are the words of Ezra: "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way; because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but His power and His wrath is against all them that forsake Him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and He was entreated of us." Ezra viii. 21-23.

What a grand thing it would be if there were more of that same shame now in the leaders of the church. Then, instead of Governments thinking that they are the supporters and protectors of religion, they would know that the ambassadors of Christ are clothed with power infinitely greater than theirs. Every request made by the church and its leaders for Government protection to missionaries, or for any kind of support is a denial of their claim that they are servants of the God who is above all. That which God Himself stirred the king up to do, Ezra would accept as coming from God; but he would not ask armed protection. He knew that "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." Ps. cxviii. 9.

And he was not disappointed. The account ends thus: "Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem; and the hand of our God was upon us, and He delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way." Ezra viii. 31. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Ps. xxxiv. 7. Notice that the hand of God was upon them, and thus they were delivered. It is common to suppose that the hand of God upon one means some punishment, but we may see that it means deliverance. Therefore whoever can say with the full assurance of faith: "Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it all together. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me" (Ps. cxxxix. 3-5), can also say, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?"

"For Little Ones. 'Wonderfully Made'" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

Many creatures, as we told you last week, do not now live as God intended that they should when He first made them. It was His plan that the earth should bring forth food for all living creatures, and not that they should prey one upon another, as so many do now.

God's Word of power, "Let the earth bring forth," is still waiting to-day changing the dust of the ground into living forms. And then in the plants which He

thus forms from the dust, He is working to prepare food for all His creatures, and so He fulfils that other Word which He spoke of that which the earth produces, "To you it shall be for meat."

So His Word is still carrying on His work of creation, doing just what He did in the beginning when "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." But instead of doing this immediately, as He did with Adam and Eve, He works by a slower process, through what we call the laws of Nature.

You eat when, and because, you are hungry, and drink when you are thirsty; but do you ever think of the wonderful work of God with which you are connecting yourself by these acts? Think how His power and wisdom have been waiting beforehand to prepare food to form your body and sustain your life! Read David's words of wonder and praise as he thought upon this work of God's hands:-

"I will give thanks unto Thee; for I am fearfully
and wonderfully made;
Wonderful are Thy works;
And that my soul knoweth right well.
My frame was not hidden from Thee,
When *I was made in secret,*
And curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the
earth.
Thine eyes did see mine unperfect substance,
And in Thy book were all my members written,
Which day by day were fashioned,
When as yet there was none of them."

Think how wonderfully is the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord, to whom all His works are known from the beginning. Before you came into this world so that you could be seen by others, your "frame was not hidden from Him," but He was "making you in secret," preparing "in the lower parts of the earth" the dust of the ground that was to form your body. At last, when His time came, the same beautiful psalm tells us, "Thou didst knit me together." All the members of the body were perfectly fashioned and brought forth, so that others could see what He had seen from the beginning.

And then your body is constantly changing. As you grow God adds to your substance by His power working in you to change the food that you eat, (which we have found is the prepared dust of the ground), into the same substance as your body, just as He works in the plant to change the dust into the same substance as the plant.

This wonderful process we call *assimilation*, -from two Latin words, *ad*, to; and *similis*, like-meaning, to make like unto. It is the same life in all these things, but the life of God can take just whatever form He pleases.

And besides the substance that you need for growth, your whole body is constantly being changed,-giving off little particles of dead material, and taking up new substance in the place of it. Thus you are continually being re-formed, or made new, by the power of God taking the dust of the ground and rebuilding your body.

For this wonderful work God is making a constant preparation, still forming you in secret, preparing your substance in the lower parts of the earth, and knitting your body together by the constant renewal of His life in you through food, water, and air. You know what takes place when these things can no longer be assimilated,-death, desolution,-the body does not hold together any longer, but crumbles back into the dust out of which God formed it.

Will you not, as you eat and drink that which your Heavenly Father provides for you in this wonderful way, thank Him for His constant, loving thought of you, and ask Him to make you by His power still working in you, just what He wants you to be?

"Temperance. The Spreading Plague" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

That the danger from plague is real, and not a mere shadow, may be seen from the following editorial in the *Daily Chronicle* of a fortnight ago:-

It may be doubted whether many people have yet realised the startling fact that in this present month of September more or less serious visitations of bubonic or pneumonic plague, mostly of an exceptionally virulent character, have been reported from at least ten countries in the civilised world. The plague is raging, to begin with our own empire, in several districts of India, and we have it on the authority of Lord Sandhurst that its ravages are extending from day to day. We know from dire experience what an Indian plague may mean. It almost invariably brings panic and fanaticism in its train, and amongst the most recent familiar symptoms we must count the attempt to murder an English colonel at Khoispur, who had committed the crime of fighting this fell disease. At Mauritius, out of the fifty-nine cases no fewer than thirty-nine were fatal. At Hong Kong, more than nine-tenths of the reported cases have ended in death. At Alexandria, where we have made ourselves responsible for sanitary as well as for political measures, the visitation has been comparatively light, but it has declared itself none the less. Russia has had an experience not dissimilar to our own. In Astrakhan there have been several distinct cases; and the Government, which seems to be thoroughly alive to its duty in the matter, has announced the existence of the plague in the Liacsong peninsula and in several parts of Manchuria. France admits the plague in Madagascar; there is an exceptionally violent outbreak at Magude, in the neighbourhood of Delagoa Bay; and it is not altogether foreign to our subject to mention the rapid rise of the death-rate from yellow fever in the unhealthy zone between New Orleans and Key West.

After this long and significant list we come to the serious and protracted visitation at Oporto; and we are constrained to ask ourselves what are our own guarantees against the plague, after it has thus persistently smouldered for months in a great European city. Is our sanitation so perfect, is our system of public medical organisation so far above criticism, that we can hold ourselves absolutely safe from the more dire of all diseases at a moment when it has suddenly sprung to light in more than a dozen isolated regions of which four or five are within the confines of the British Empire? We may say without much fear

of contradiction that the plague germs are practically certain to find an entrance into British ships and British ports. It depends on ourselves, humanly speaking, whether they are to create a fatal epidemic. We have great confidence in the public officials and men of science whose business it is to watch over the health of the nation; but it is quite conceivable that confidence may lull us into the belief that our security is more complete than is actually the case. If precaution were relaxed for a single week, there might be a rude awakening in store for us. English doctors are amongst those of other nations who are carefully studying the symptoms of the plague at Oporto, and the measures which have been taken to combat and isolate it. That is something to the good, and we look with anxiety for the reports of the various commissions of inquiry. It seems to be the general conclusion of the doctors that the epidemic is of the distinct bubonic, or "Indian," type; and there is also a consensus of opinion that it may display more activity and virulence as the rainy season sets in. Oporto has suffered severely from police restrictions, commercial depression, crowds of people who have lost their work, and the inevitable panic with its accompaniment of violence. These troubles may be outside the scope of our reasonable apprehensions, but it is, at any rate, wise that we should face the possibility of an outbreak of plague on our own shores.

The danger is real, yet the plagues that are now on the earth are but the precursors of still more terrible ones. Is there no remedy against them? Yes, there is a sure protection: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. . . . Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Ps. xci. 1-10.

This promise is very real and practical. Whoever heeds the message, "Behold your God," and learns to discern and live upon the Lord's body, will find that God is more real than anything else in the world, seen or unseen, and "a very present help in trouble."

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

-By the sinking of artesian wells, an area of 460,000 square miles in Queensland has been thrown open to grazing.

-On account of a failure to come to an agreement regarding the Budget of expenditures, the Spanish Premier has placed before the Queen the resignation of the whole cabinet.

-The Paris Post Office authorities have decided as an experiment to use motor cycles for the clearance of the letter boxes. This is said to be the first instance of the kind on the Continent.

-The disaster at Darjeeling is found to be much greater than at first reported, both as regards the destruction of property and loss of lives. The official estimate of the number of lives lost is 500.

-Owing to the failure of the crops in the Province of Santa Clara, Cuba, many families in the district around Trinidad are said to be starving, cats and dogs, and even snakes being eaten by them.

-The new battleship *London* has just been launched from Portsmouth. It cost over ?1,000,000. At the same time, a new Cunard liner, *Ivernia*, the third largest steamer in the world, was launched at Tyne.

-Japan is rapidly increasing her navy. An English firm has just completed a torpedo boat destroyed for that country, which has been pronounced highly satisfactory. The present navy has in its service 20,000 men.

-On account of the small rise in the River Nile, which is the least even known in its history great loss is sustained by the agriculturalists in its vicinity. Nearly a quarter of a million acres usually cropped will be useless this year owing to the lack of water to irrigate it.

-The latest information concerning the earthquake which occurred at and around Aidin, Asia Minor, a short time since, is to the effect that 11,000 buildings were destroyed, and 50,000 persons are rendered homeless. The earthquake was accompanied by a sinking of the surface of the land, in some parts as much as six feet. Immense chasms have formed in places, through which springs are welling up and flooding the surrounding land.

-Five women recently died at Liverpool after eating salt fish and potatoes at a stall. The inquest jury reported that death came from contamination, and the matter was reported for further investigation by the city authorities.

-According to the calculations made by the Vatican Secretary of State, at least 1,200,000 pilgrims will visit Rome next year, it being "Holy Year." It is reckoned that these will bring Peter's Pence to the Pope to the amount of ?2,000,000.

-During the past year there were killed in the working of the railways of the United Kingdom 1,179 persons, and 6,343 were injured. This is the largest since 1889, but is considered a small percentage. The death rate is only one passenger in nearly 7,000,000 passenger journeys.

-Six motor omnibuses have just been introduced in London on one of the main thoroughfares, the speed to be from eight to ten miles an hour. London is behind every other metropolis in the world as regards her street railway service, and it is hoped that this innovation is but the beginning of better days in this respect.

-One hundred samples of milk were recently procured at Hackney, by Dr. Stevenson, an analyst, and twenty-one were found to be infected with tuberculous germs. This is almost startling considering the fact that tubercle bacilli in milk are very difficult of detection. No milk should be used without its first being sterilised, and it would be better not to use it at all.

-Several cases of typhoid fever in South Devon have been traced directly to the eating of cockles, taken from the mud in Kingsbridge estuary. This should not surprise us, for shelled fish of all kinds are but scavengers, and when feeding on the sewage from the cities and towns, they could hardly fail to become contaminated with disease germs. Why not discard them entirely, and live on the original diet of man-grains, fruits and nuts?

-An apparatus has been designed at Budapest, said to be capable of transmitting 80,000 words an hour. An interesting trial was made on the 29th ult. on the line between Berlin and the Hungarian capital, with the result that 250 words were accurately transmitted in ten seconds. With this invention a great amount of time may be saved on the wire itself, but before the message is sent, it must go through a process of being perforated on tape, a process already applied by some cable lines.

-From the late report of the Commissioners of prisons in England and Wales, we learn that of the 160,000 criminals convicted, nearly 20,000 were "youthful offenders"-that is, under twenty-one years of age, and forty-two boys and one girl were under twelve years. Only three per cent. of those committed to prison could read or write well, and twenty per cent. could neither read nor write. One in every two hundred of the inhabitants is a criminal. It is urged that the best safeguard against crime is education.

-The Dominion liner *Scotsman* was wrecked in the Straits of Belle Isle on the 28th ult., by running on a rock in a dense fog. The vessel is a total loss. There were over three hundred passengers on board, who were safely got into the lifeboats, but before they landed, through exposure, capsizing of one boat, etc., fourteen lost their lives. The shameful part of the catastrophe is the fact that during the panic after the vessel struck the crew looted the cabins and stole everything in the way of jewellery, money, watches, etc., that they could get their hands on. As much as £2,000 in cash alone was stolen. As soon as they reached ports, about forty of these miscreant sailors and firemen, were arrested, charged with looting and stealing on the high seas.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

The only part of the Word of God that can do any man any good is that which he gets within him. The way to get it there is to receive it, and submit to it. There is power in it to keep us for ever.

If all the money that is being spent in connection with the America cup races, not for the reporting of the result, but merely to gain a few moments of time in the announcement, were devoted to the spread of the Gospel, great things might be done. But then, money is of no use in the Gospel, without earnest consecration of soul to the work; and if Christians manifested one-half the enthusiasm in the saving of souls that is shown over the yacht races, the world would say that their heads were turned, and would begin to talk of insane asylums.

In a letter to his wife, Edward Irving, the famous preacher, wrote thus: "Now, as concerneth speaking, I am fully persuaded, by experience, that is the proper

exercise of lungs, and, being taken in measure, it is always good for me." This witness is true. It is not by the use, but by the abuse of the voice, that men get diseases of the throat and lungs. He who breathes properly, and who speaks from the lungs, can use his voice continually without injury. That the throat is injured by speaking, and that the brain is injured by sound, hard thinking, are two erroneous ideas that ought to be eradicated.

And now another physician has died by his own hand, but this time not through taking his own medicine. This one had a less honourable departure. He had just finished his preparations for the journey to the Transvaal, where he was to offer his services to the Government as a surgeon in cases of necessity, when he was discovered dead on his bed. His medicine bottles were all sealed, and the contents were intact, so that the cause of his death was a mystery until the autopsy revealed some large pieces of meat in his windpipe, the contents of a luncheon of which he had partaken. It is not pleasant to think of such a departure from this world, and yet there are thousands whose food causes their death surely as his did. How sad it is that eating, which is designed as the sustainer of life, should be the cause of so many deaths. It need never be so, but so it is.

Peace and war tremble in the balance as between England and the Transvaal. Troops and munitions of war are being hurried to the scene of difficulty, and every indication goes to show that hostilities will soon be declared, if they have not begun before these lines reach the readers. Once begun, the most hopeful shake their heads dubiously as to the outcome. And all this has come so soon after the Peace Congress! It is with astonishment that we see, in the face of the present condition of the world, many professed ministers of the Gospel declaring that we are now entering the period when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

It is not only interesting, but reassuring, to hear that at the re-opening of the medical schools connected with the London hospitals, one of the leading physicians said that the tendency of the present age is to enlist in the service of medicine the forces of the external world, rather than to place the chief reliance upon the druggist. That is, fresh air, pure water, good food, clear sunlight, are to be depended upon more than heretofore. This is good. If people would only learn to use the means to health, which God has freely provided, they might wholly dispense with physicians.

The *Daily Mail* says that "the enthusiasm with which Americans of all shades of opinion have welcomed Admiral Dewey's return is proof at once of the patriotism of the average American citizen, and of the deep root which Imperialism has now taken across the Atlantic." This is true, and shows that the high position taken by the founders of that Government, has been abandoned, and that it differs in no respect from "the effete monarchies of the old world," over which it boasts so much.

"War and Christianity" *The Present Truth* 15, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

It is an undeniable fact that no nation can hold its place in this world without war, or at least the means of carrying on war. Each nation must fight for its existence. If a single nation should totally disarm, and should determine that under no circumstances would it engaged in war, there is not the slightest doubt but it would soon cease to exist as a nation. It would be seized upon and swallowed up by the others. So war is a necessity to the existence of nations in this world.

But all this does not make war right. Least of all does it justify the words of the Bishop of St. Asaph, who recently said that war is sometimes necessary, when men see that they are about to be trampled under foot; and that to say that because we are Christians force is not to be employed is to "do violence to the truest Christian instincts." That such language can be used by a high dignitary in the church, one to whom the people look for religious instruction, is evidence that there is great need of missionary work in England, and that even the leaders in the church need instruction in the first principles of Christianity.

The Gospel proclaimed "peace on earth." Christ commanded His followers not to resist even when trampled upon and beaten, and to suffer the loss of all their goods rather than use violence against any man. He Himself set the example. The instinct which prompts one to fight when insulted or misused, is common to all men, but it is not a Christian instinct; it is wholly of the devil. A Christian can no more fight and yet retain his Christianity, than he can steal, and still be an honest man.

How is this reconcilable with the first statement made? Simply by the fact that nations are not and cannot be Christian. "But then if all professed Christians should act according to that statement of Christianity, it would leave the carrying on of Governments chiefly in the hands of those were not Christians." Exactly, and would therefore hasten the coming of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Unfortunately there will always be plenty of people with fighting instincts, which they will follow, so that force will never be lacking to uphold national "honour" as long as the world stands. But no one need fear the result of Christians attending solely to the business of their Master, and leaving the management of earthly governments wholly in the hands of unbelievers; for when that time comes, as it surely will, the work of the Gospel, and calling out from the world a people loyal to God, will have been completed, and Christ will come to destroy the kingdoms of this world, and to set up His own everlasting kingdom of peace.

October 19, 1899

"The Longsuffering of God. Ps. xc. 1-4" *The Present Truth* 15, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

In our study of this text last week, which really covered only the first two verses, we saw something of God's greatness, and of our relation to Him. Great as men may be accounted in this world, they are always to the Lord only "little children." In comparison with Him they are indeed "less than nothing;" what a

marvellous manifestation, therefore, of His love and grace, that He calls them His children. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God: and such we are." 1 John iii. 1, R.V. Yea, for whatever God calls anything, that it is.

What a comfort to know that God carries us in His bosom, and that we are sharers of His life. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being," so that He cares for us even as for His own soul. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and for us Christ "poured out His soul unto death." Isa. liii. 12. God is love; His being is love; He is nothing but love; therefore His life is love. So as we live in Him, and His life flows through us unhindered, His love is thus shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is life, and whose first and chiefest attribute is love. So "we love, because He first loved us," for "love is of God."

The recognition of this relationship, this intimate, vital connection between God and us, cannot but fill our hearts with love, not only for Him, but for all creatures and for all creation, with which, through Him, we stand so closely related. How can we ever doubt His care? He cannot forget us, for every moment we are drawing upon His heart's blood. We are not far from Him, but *in Him*. Very tenderly He guards us, for whatever danger threatens us, threatens His own life. Surely there is every reason for us to love and trust God.

"Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."

Immediately the thought will arise in some minds as this is read, "That doesn't

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seem much like love and tenderness. It looks rather as though He petulantly casts men from Him, deliberately consigning them to destruction." If it looks that way to us, it is only because we do not believe the first verse, which declares that He is our dwelling place in all generations. He is from everlasting to everlasting, and therefore to eternity He will still encircle us with His life of love. If we hold fast our confidence in God, all the difficulties in the way of understanding His Word will vanish. Is it not strange that even professed Christians are ready to believe that God has put into His own Word statements that are derogatory to His character? He says that He is everlasting love, and "He cannot deny Himself." If we truly believe Him, with no half-hearted trust, we shall find His tenderness revealed in what to the unbelieving mind seems indifference or even injustice.

Suppose we stop a little while with this statement, "Thou turnest man to destruction," and see if it is really as severe a thing as it seems to us. We really ought to wait long before concluding that God casts men away from Him to destruction, with the current command, "Get you gone!" Turning to the Hebrew we find that the word rendered "destruction" in our version is not a word that is ordinarily used in that sense, and is nowhere so defined. The idea is, "to break in pieces, to be small, to crush, to grind." Before saying, "What is the difference?" let us turn to some other places in the Bible, where the same Hebrew word occurs. The Italicised words in the following text are from the same Hebrew word as "destruction" in our text.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a *contrite* and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the *contrite*." Isa. lvii. 15. Read this verse in connection with Ps. xc. 1-3, and note the similarity in thought. "They are not *humbled* even unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walk again My law, nor in My statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers." Jer. xlv. 10. From the word "humbled" we are referred to the margin, where we read, "Heb. *contrite*." Again: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a *contrite* spirit." Ps. xxxiv. 18. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a *contrite* heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." And in the eighth verse of this Psalm we have: "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which Thou hast *broken* may rejoice." These texts were translated by the same men who translated Ps. xc. 3, so we have their testimony to the fact that "contrition," brokenness, is a proper rendering of the word which in this instance they have translated "destruction." We will therefore see what some other translators have done with the word.

The first translation we pick up is that of the Jewish Rabbi, Isaac Leser. It reads thus: "Thou turnest man to contrition, and sayest, Return, ye children of men." The Septuagint has the same word that is found in Matt. xi. 29, where Christ says, I am meek and *lowly* in heart. It occurs also in 2 Cor. vii. 6, "God, that comforteth those that are *cast down*, comforted us," and in James i. 9, "Let the brother of *low degree* rejoice in that he is exalted," and also in James iv. 6, God "giveth grace unto the *humble*," and in other similar instances. The Vulgate has *humiliation*, and humility, abasement. The German has a word indicating *grinding*. The Danish has it: "Thou dealest with a man so that he becomes crushed." The Norwegian, Swedish, and French translations each have it, "Thou causest [or commandest] man to return to dust." From all these we are fully warranted in rendering verse 3: "Thou turnest man to contrition and sayest, Return, ye children of men."

Before we pass on from this study of the word, however, it will be profitable to stop a minute longer on the derivation of it. The word "contrition" is from two Latin words meaning "to grind together." The latter part of the word is the word "triturate," which is what the chemist does to the medicines which he puts into his mortar. He triturates them with a pestle. *Con* (*co*) means "together." The word "contrition" is thus an exact equivalent of the Hebrew word, which, as before noted, means "to break in pieces, to be small, to crush, to grind." When the drugs are triturated or ground in the mortar they become fine dust, and so we have the other renderings already noted. Our translators evidently concluded that this turning to dust was the end of the man, and so they rendered it "destruction." But it is a blessed truth that God, who in the beginning made man of the dust of the ground, and can turn him back to dust again, not for the purpose of destroying him, but of making a new man of him.

The word return, means, "turn again." We have another very familiar word which has the same meaning, and that is "*convert*." So the Vulgate carries out the thought completely, in rendering Ps. xc. 3, "*Ne avertas hominem un humilitatem, et divisti: convertimini filii hominum.*" That is, "Verily Thou turnest

man to abasement, and sayest, Be converted, sons of men." Man was made of dust, but we are all apt to forget our origin, and so, in our self-exaltation take ourselves out of and away from God, who is lowly; therefore God, knowing that there is no hope for us away from Him, kindly takes measures to humble us, to abase us into the dust again, saying, "Come back, be converted, made new."

Can you not now begin to see the joy and comfort that there is in the text? It may seem that this turning back to dust is really death and destruction, but that is only because "ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Heb. xii. 5-8. God wounds only to heal. "Though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He does not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men." Lam. iii. 32, 33. The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, begins His work of consolation by using His sword upon us.

"Every trial draws Him nearer;
Peace, peace is mine!
All His strokes but make Him dearer,
Peace, peace is mine!
Bless I then the hand that smiteth
Gently, and to heal delighteth.
'Tis against my sins He fighteth,
Peace, peace is mine!"

What a blessed thing to know that our God can make a good, new man out of dust. Indeed, dust is the only material

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out of which a man can be made. As soon as man forgets that he is dust, he becomes bad, and God is obliged to take measures to turn him to dust again, so that he can be reformed, made over. The grinding process is not pleasant at the time, for "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." With what equanimity and even joy we can meet all the seeming ills of life when we know this, and remember also that nothing comes to us except from the hand of God. If we are even insulted and humiliated by one who wishes us evil, we can count it all joy, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God." Everything that wounds or presses us, every deprivation or pain, is only to keep us mindful of the fact that we are nothing but dust, that we may be great only in God's meekness. See margin of Ps. xviii. 35.

But we have not yet finished. We come to the fourth verse of our psalm and notice that it begins with "for." God brings us to contrition, and calls us to be made new, because a thousand years in His sight are but as yesterday. What is the force of this? Ah, we remember that there is another place where we are told that a thousand years with God is as one day, and we look it up. It is 2 Peter iii. 8,

9: "Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The Lord is patient with His wayward children, who, so blind to their own safety, obstinately insist on taking themselves out of His loving embrace. He does not cast them off; He does not say, "Let them go, if they will;" but He is longsuffering with them, and that longsuffering means their salvation. He is not willing that any should perish, and so He bears long with their blind stubbornness. His goodness is the only thing that leads any to repentance.

God inhabits eternity, therefore He can afford to wait. He is even patient when the very men whom He is waiting to save taunt Him with His longsuffering, saying that His delay is an evidence that He has forgotten His promise. But He never forgets. How can He, when everything and all time is always present with Him? All things are in Him. He bears them in His heart, and can no more forget any creature than He can forget His own life. The thousands of years that have passed since God promised the restoration of all things are but as yesterday, even like one of the short watches of the night, during which men sleep.

"This God is our God for ever." "Blessed is that people whose God is the Lord." Therefore will we say, even in the midst of chastisement and affliction, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'Fear Not!' Isa. xli. 14-29" *The Present Truth* 15, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xli. 14-29.)

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel. The poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I the Lord will answer them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, the pine, and the box tree together; that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

"Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and declare unto us what shall happen; declare ye the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or show us things for to come. Declare the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good, or do evil,

that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold, ye are as nothing, and your work of naught; an abomination is he that chooseth you.

"I have raised up One from the north, and He is come; from the rising of the sun One that calleth upon My name; and He shall come upon rulers as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay. Who hath declared it from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, He is righteous? Yea, there is none that declareth, yea there is none that showeth, yea, there is none that heareth your words. I first will say unto Zion, Behold, behold them; and I will give to Jerusalem One that bringeth good tidings. And when I look, there is no man; even among them there is no counsellor, that, when I ask of them, can answer a word. Behold, all of them, their works are vanity and naught; their molten images are wind and confusion."

Another instalment of the message of comfort. The title of this entire chapter might well be, "Fear not." This exhortation is parallel to the words so often used by the Saviour, "Be of good cheer." He who says these words is the Creator, the One whose words are things, which contain the very living form and substance of that which they name. Therefore when the Lord says to us, "Fear not;" "Be of good cheer;" He supplies the courage and cheer. "Thou hast put gladness in

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my heart," says the psalmist. Ps. iv. 7. God does not tell us to make ourselves glad, but He Himself makes us glad. "For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work; I will triumph in the works of Thy hands." Ps. xcii. 4. The joy of the Lord is our strength. See Neh. viii. 10. God's word is His own life; it is charged with His own personality; when we receive it, we receive Him; therefore when we believe His word implicitly, we have Him and all His joy and peace.

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

"Thou worm Jacob." Not a very flattering title, is it? But it is the truth. See how the fact is kept before us that the comfort of the Lord does not consist in telling us that we are pretty good, that things are not so bad as they seem, and that if we do not lose confidence in ourselves we shall win. He comforts us by telling us that we are but worms, but grass, nothing at all, and less than nothing. Thus He anticipates every possible doubt on our part. He takes away all ground for saying, "I am so weak and in so desperate a situation that I have no hope; I can surely never overcome." He plucks courage from despair. From the depths He lifts us up to the heights. We often hear some half-hearted professor calling himself a worm as he prays or bears his testimony. We say "half-hearted," advisedly, because in the cases we have in mind they had well-nigh lost heart, and in tones of discouragement they sighed out that they were "but worms of the dust." It was almost a wail of despair, although too feeble to be a wail, and the speaker seemed to think that he ought to grovel before the Lord, and apologise for presuming to come into His presence. But not in any such way does the Lord set the fact before us. When the Lord says, "Thou worm," He does not say it with anything like contempt. He does not despise us. We feel quickened, and breathe

in fresh courage, as we hear the words from His lips. There is inspiration in the exclamation. It is a part of the everlasting comfort of the Lord.

LIFE FROM THE DEAD

"And ye men of Israel." This expression is almost meaningless as it stands here, because it does not at all express what the prophet said from the Lord. It is very weak. In the margin of our Bibles a little compensation has been made by inserting the alternative reading, "Ye few men of Israel;" But even this does not say what the Lord said. What He plainly said, as it stands in the Hebrew, and as given by Bishop Lowth, is "Ye mortals of Israel." Literally, "dying ones." Christ says, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." John xi. 25. It is true that God's people are a "little flock" (Luke xii. 32), and to them He says, "Fear not;" but they are not only few, they are in a dying condition. They are frail as the grass. They have in themselves no vitality, no principle of life. But what matters that, as long as He is with them, and He is life. Their strength is the Lord Himself. God has chosen us, as we learned from the preceding part of this chapter, but not for what we were worth. He chose us for what He could make of us and do with us.

INSTRUMENTS IN GOD'S HANDS

See what He will do with us, weak and frail as we are: He will transform us into a threshing instrument able to thresh even the mountains, and make them small, and to make the hills as chaff. We are nothing, and less than nothing; "but God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are." 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. Then let us never again say, "I am so weak, so insignificant, so poor and unknown, so helpless and unworthy, that I cannot do anything." That may all be true, but it does not affect the case. We are not so feeble and despised, so weak and insignificant that the Lord cannot do anything with us. Remember that where the earth and all the starry heavens are now there was nothing until God spoke. Darkness was upon the face of the deep until God said, "Let there be light." Therefore although we be nothing, God can do wonderful things with us. The message of comfort which God sends to His people as a special preparation for His coming makes very prominent the fact that He is the Creator. Whenever we fall into despondency because of our sinfulness and weakness, we lose sight of the fact that God is the Creator, and practically deny it. Let us not do it any more.

POWER OVER THE NATIONS

Verse 16 says to us poor worms whom the Lord will transform into threshing-machines for threshing mountains to pieces, "Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them." Now read the

prophecy in the second chapter of Daniel, where we read that the stone cut without hands, representing Christ, smote the image which represented all the nations of earth, and broke it to pieces, and it "became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them." Comparing the two texts, we see that the Lord associates His people with Himself in all that He does. He even condescends to acknowledge the help of these poor worms in the work that He does. In a recent Danish translation of Rev. xvii. 14, where these same kingdoms are spoken of, we find this suggestive reading: "These shall fight against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, because it is the Lord of lords and the King of kings and the called and the faithful and the true, who are with Him." In Ps. ii. 8-9, we read these words to Christ: "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Now note that in Rev. ii. 26, 27, the same words are addressed to the saints of God, and the very same power that Jesus Christ Himself receives is given to them: "He that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of My Father." To have the lowest place in the kingdom of God and Christ, is to be exalted to a place higher than that of the kings of the earth; while the weakest soul that can say with full assurance of faith, "Behold, God is my strength," has more power than all the nations.

A TERRIBLE PLAGUE

In verses 17-20 we have undoubted reference to the time of trouble and the glory that shall follow. In Isa. xxxiv. we read of the earth in its desolation. This desolation begins before the coming of the Lord, and continues through the thousand years during which the saints are in heaven with the Lord, sitting in judgment on the wicked. The fourth plague, described in Rev. xiv. 8, 9, dries up everything on the face of the earth. It is such a drought as has never yet been known.

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By one prophet it is thus vividly described:-

"The barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to Thee will I cry; for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto Thee; for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness." Joel i. 17-20.

GOD'S PEOPLE DELIVERED

But in the midst of this terrible desolation, God's people will not be left to perish. God has not said that they shall not suffer; the disciple is not above his Master, and therefore should not expect to be exempt from suffering with Him. He was hungry and thirsty in the barren wilderness, but He was not forsaken, nor will they be. The promise is, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valley; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." Very forcible is the statement that it is the God of Israel who promises this. That was just what God did for Israel when they came out of Egypt. See Ex. xvii. 1-6; Ps. cv. 41; cxiv. 7, 8. God's people will yet have reason to be very grateful for the record of that miracle, for before they are delivered from their sojournings in a strange land to the land of promise, they will need it as a basis for their cry for the same thing to be done for them. Their confidence in that evil day will be the fact that they have drunk from the Fountain of Life, and know that God gives living water. When the "time of trouble such as never was" comes upon the face of the earth, God's people will be delivered, every one whose name is written in the book of life. Dan. xii. 1.

A TRIAL OF STRENGTH

The latter part of the forty-first chapter of Isaiah is a call to the nations and their gods to give some proof of their power; to make their case good. "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob." State your case, and prove it. Note that the "strong reasons" which the Lord demands are not mere words, but deeds. He backs up His cause by acts. He can point to what He has done in the way of delivering His people. He is the Saviour and Redeemer. What can the false gods show in the way of salvation of a soul? What can any self-righteous man point to in the way of delivering even his own soul from death, to say nothing of helping another? The oppressors who surround God's people,

"Who put their trust in their wealth,
And boast on the extent of their riches,
Yet no one can buy himself off,
None can make payment to God for himself.
The ransom of their soul is too dear, and there is
forever an end of him." Ps. xlix. 6-9.

(Polychrome edition.)

God tells the end from the beginning. He makes known things to come, by means of the Comforter. John xvi. 13. Thus His people are able to know what shall come. God inhabits eternity, so that things past, and things present, and things to come are all alike to Him. Therefore whenever anybody either by word or act professes to be God, He has a right to demand that they tell something that is to come, or at the very least tell the whole truth of something that has taken place in the past. Accordingly we find that many false prophets are gone out into the world, attempting to meet this challenge. Spiritualist mediums profess

to tell things to come, and create a great sensation by telling people things that have happened in the past. But none of them bear the stamp of Divinity. Compared with the lofty utterances of Inspiration, they are as the peeping of frogs. When God speaks to them, none can answer a word. Thus we have in this chapter an outline of the entire trial, from its call to its conclusion.

"What Would Jesus Do?" *The Present Truth* 15, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

"What would Jesus do?" is a question that has been given quite a prominent place of late. There is a much more important question, one more easily answered, and one which should take the place of this; and that question is, "What did Jesus do?"-He "suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps." 1 Peter ii. 21. Instead of speculating about what Jesus would do under certain circumstances, and coming to wrong conclusions because we decide according to what we think or have been taught, we have only to go to the Bible to find out exactly what He actually did, and then follow it.

**"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. God's Memorial"
The Present Truth 15, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

"Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever; and Thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations." Ps. cxxv. 13.

That God's name endures for ever, needs no argument for anyone who believes that there is a God. His name is Jehovah, the One who is and the One who will be. When Moses wished a name to take with him as evidence that he had been authorised to bring Israel of Egypt, the Lord said to him, "I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." And then, after showing that as I AM He was the same God that the fathers had known Him to be, He added, "This is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations." Ex. iii. 14, 15.

God IS. That is His name. The words I AM THAT I AM, which God gives as His name, are exactly the same as Jehovah. He is, and therefore He has been and will be. All time, past, present, and future, is present to Him. Eternity is always now.

Because God is, therefore everything else is. God's name is in Christ, for the only begotten Son had it by inheritance; and "He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Col. i. 17. His name itself implies that He is Creator.

The memorial of God must necessarily be something that tends to keep His name and character in mind. "The Lord is good; sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant." "For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, and all deep places. He causes the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, He maketh lightnings for the rain; He bringeth the wind out of His treasures." Ps. cxxxv. 3-7. Note that this language occurs only a little before the statement that the Lord's name endures for ever, and His memorial unto all generations.

The fact that the Lord is Creator is that which distinguishes Him from all false, pretended gods. It is that which shows Him to be God. It is therefore really His name. "The Lord is the true God, He is

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the living God, and an everlasting King; . . . The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures." Jer. x. 10-13. Note the similarity of language to that of the psalm from which we have quoted.

God is known by His works. That which may be known of God is manifest even unto the most benighted heathen, for God hath showed it unto them; "for the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity; so that they are without excuse." Rom. i. 19, 20. His memorial therefore is in reality His works. He would have His people declare unto their children "His strength, and the wonderful works that He hath done," "that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should rise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments." Ps. lxxviii. 4-7.

It is necessary to keep the works of God in mind, for by them we gain the victory over sin. "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy work; I will triumph in the works of Thy hands." Ps. cxii. 4. The reason why there is so much sin in the world is that men do not think upon the works of God's hands. If they would consider His great works, they would be filled with a sense of their own insignificance, and of their dependence upon His might (Ps. viii. 3, 4), and would yield themselves to Him, for Him to guide and keep them in His ways.

Because men are so prone to forget the works of God, so apt to become absorbed in themselves so as not to see the things that are before their eyes, God has made a memorial for His wonderful works. "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious; and His righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion." Ps. cxi. 2-4. This last verse, "He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered," is literally, "He hath made a memorial for His wonderful works." One translation has it, "He hath appointed a memorial for His wonderful works," and another, "He hath provided that His wonderful work should be remembered." He has not only set His works before the eyes of all people, even performing them before their eyes, but in order that there might not be a shadow of an excuse for forgetting Him, He has above all made a memorial for His works,- something that if kept cannot fail to fix the attention of men to what He has done for them in His mercy and compassion.

What is this memorial? Here are His own words: "Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Eze. xx. 12. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. xx. 8-11.

This is the Lord's memorial, which shall endure. If the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day of the week, the only day that God has ever given to commemorate His wonderful works, had always been kept, there would never have been a heathen on the face of the earth.

"Be still, and know that I am God," says the Lord. In the rush of business, men forget everything but themselves. They act as though there were no God, and their existence depended wholly on themselves. This would not be the case if they had regular periods for meditating on the works of the Lord, remembering that He alone is great, and that everything exists in Him. This would keep them humble, and through the week they would labour with reference to Him, and not as though the world belonged to them, and depended upon them. In all their ways they would acknowledge Him, and He would direct their paths. The Sabbath stillness is the time for men to acquire that knowledge of God which will keep them sensible of their dependence on Him through all the other days. His memorial endures through all generations. Let us ever keep it, as a precious reminder of Him who has put His own life into His works for our sakes, so that we may also endure throughout eternity.

"For Little Ones. An Endless Chain" *The Present Truth* 15, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

Think again of the words of one of David's beautiful psalm which we quoted to you last week:-

"My frame was not hidden from Thee
When I was made in secret,
And curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the
earth."

Remember what we told you of how the Lord has from the beginning been preparing the dust of the ground to form your substance, and how He is still doing this; for all the food that you eat, of whatever kind, is best which has been made alive by the power of God's Word. And in these living forms He has prepared the dust so that you can digest and assimilate it, and it will become a part of your body.

Perhaps it has puzzled you a little to learn that you were made "in the lowest parts of the earth," for the dust which feeds the plants which feed you lies near the surface of the ground.

Yes, but it was not always as you see it now. If the dust beneath your feet could tell you its history, what a wonderful story it would be, not only of change in travel into different parts of the world, into the depths of the sea, and "the lowest parts of the earth," but of transformations, perhaps, into many different forms of life, all a part of the great plan of God, each fulfilling His will, and forming a link in the wonderful chain of His eternal purpose.

This would lead you to say with David:-

"How great are Thy works, O Lord!

Thy thoughts are very deep."

And, as he said, thinking of these very things, in the psalm from which we have before quoted:-

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;

It is high, I cannot attain unto it."

Thinking of these wonderful changes to which the dust has past, someone has said, "Where is the dust that has not been alive?" The following article which is part of a chapter that Charles Kingsley wrote for the children about this will help you to a better understanding of it, and will show you how God is able to bring good out of evil, and to make even such things as volcanic eruptions, which we have found to be a part of the curse which sin has brought upon the earth, and still work for good to the world in its present condition.

But be sure that you keep in mind that what we have here called "Nature" is only *God's way* of doing His work. Nature does nothing of itself, but it is *how* God works. Think over these things carefully, and perhaps we will go on with our talk next week.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

-It is estimated that the number of birds killed in 1898 to supply aigrets for ladies' hats was over 1,538,738.

-A widow in Texas, U.S.A., has just recovered \$2000 damages from one of the lynchers who had a hand in the murder of her husband.

-A fire at the Bluchester Colliery, near Bishop Auckland, resulted and loss of 50,000, and the throwing out of employment over 2,000 men.

-A collision occurred on the Midland Railway, near Chesterfield, on the 7th inst., resulting in injury to forty miners, some of them seriously.

-Scotland has 146 parishes without paupers, poor-rates, or public-houses, the absence of the latter probably accounting for that of the first two.

-Police Superintendent Baker, the fire brigade superintendent of Leeds, has just resigned his position after thirty-one years continuous service. He has attended 7000 fires.

-The Swiss National Council has adopted by 113 votes to one the law regarding compulsory insurance against illness and accidents, which will come into force January 1, 1903.

-Adelaide, Australia, is just now suffering from an epidemic of influenza that has completely paralysed business. The Premier and five of the Ministers are down with the disease.

-Firing by night, by eight of artificial light has been introduced into the Russian army, the light being produced by projectors, shells and rockets. The results of the trials are said to be highly satisfactory.

-A cable from Klondyke to Vancouver has just been completed, so that formerly isolated country is now on direct communication with the rest of the world. A cablegram direct from there was received in London a few days since.

-Thieves recently set the church bells ringing during the night in an American town. People ran from their houses in excitement to ascertain the cause, and in their absence the robbers rushed into the vacated houses, taking everything of value in sight.

-Li Hung Chang has again been recalled to power in China, the Empress Dowager being seriously ill. No living man has had such varied experience connected with governmental affairs as has this man, now called to be once more Premier of China.

-The House of Commons is asked to place a sum not exceeding eight millions sterling at the disposal of Her Majesty for such operations in South Africa as may be deemed necessary and prudent in the prosecution of her plans in that country.

-The Aerial Navigation Company, of San Francisco, are advertising that they will convey passengers from there to the Paris Exposition in thirty hours. This, it is claimed, will be done by three great air ships, each 425 feet long, which are now being built.

-Last week's plague returns from the Bombay Presidency show 5,408 deaths. Australia is highest in the list as a meat-eating nation, with a consumption of 276 pounds per inhabitant per year. Great Britain comes next, with 116 pounds.

-So enormous for the number of Americans returning home from England last week, that Dr. John Brown, of Bedford, the famous authority on Bunyan, who is to deliver the Lyman Beecher lectures at Yale, was obliged across the Atlantic in a different vessel from that which carried his wife.

-The Budget Committee of the Chamber at Paris voted by thirteen against five votes in favour of the suppression of the credit for the maintenance of the Embassy at the Vatican. This is only part of the Campaign that has been organised against the Jesuits, and it threatens to assume a formidable dimensions.

-A scientific farmer at Scottsburg, Indiana, U.S.A., has just succeeded in obtaining a hybrid, a cross between two varieties of wheat, that has caused much interest, the value of which lies in the fact that only one-sixth of a bushel need be used as seed wheat to secure the same crop that a bushel of any other kind would bring. He sold five and a half pounds for ?100.

-As the result of a conference of Admiral Dewey and President McKinley, it has been decided to increase the American fleet at the Philippines by the addition of nine war vessels, one of which is just been completed here in England. The plan is to maintain a strict blockade, and thus cut off all supplies,

arms, etc., which will cause the Insurgents to surrender, and thus the rebellion will collapse.

-A curious case of mistaken identity occurred a short time since at St. Helens. While the family were quietly sitting after tea, and an uncle who was supposed to have been buried a month previous, suddenly entered. A body taken from the water recently was identified as that of the uncle. It was buried in his name, and the relative strew the insurance money. To the man was that was buried remains a mystery.

-There was recently an outbreak of diphtheria in an Adelaide (N.S.W.) Hospital, traced directly to a cat. One of the hospital cats was chloroform, and pure cultivations of diphtheria were obtained from patches found in its windpipe. Parents would do well to see that their children are kept away from animals that are liable to contract infectious diseases, and there is none more likely than the common household cat.

-Mayor Sanders has just fixed the date of the Colchester Oyster Feast for October 25. The *Daily Mail* says that "on that occasion Lord and the numerous company invited to attend will be called upon to dispose of some 12,000 'natives.'" This is a sort of advertising scheme, for if the guests at this Oyster Feast confirm the statement of the Fishery Board that the supply of oysters there is of excellent quality, then "the season will have an excellent send-off."

-In view of the finding of so large a percentage of diseased milk by the bacteriologist at Hackney, as noted last week, the Hackney vestry has issued a disquieting warning to housekeepers as follows: "One hundred samples of milk sold in the parish have been examined by an experienced bacteriologist and twenty-two per cent. of the samples were infected with tubercle bacilli." The order that warns the public that milk infected with tubercle bacilli is capable of causing consumption, and recommends that all milk should be boiled before use. We would go a step further and recommend that it be not used at all, if safety from disease is desired.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

An article contributed to the *Lancet* by Dr. W. R. Williams declares that no other disease exhibits such an immense increase in the last half century as cancer, and that high feeding is probably more potent in determining the outbreak of the disease in the predisposed than anything else. He says that there can be no doubt that the greed for food manifested by modern communities is altogether out of proportion to their requirements.

Greatly as the peace of the world is endangered by the standing armies of the various nations, each country is in greater danger from its own military force than is any other. *The Catholic Times* truly says: "There are few thinking men in Europe to-day who hesitate to acknowledge that the growth of armed forces is becoming a serious menace to the permanence of civil and religious liberty." More nations have fallen before their own armies than before the armies of their outside enemies.

This is the season of religious congresses. The "Free Church Council" was held not long since, then followed the Baptist Association, and now the Church Congress has just closed. One does not need to read the reports of these gatherings, but only to glance over them, to be most painfully impressed. Thickly sprinkled through the stenographic reports appear the words, "laughter," "loud laughter," "prolonged laughter," "applause," "cheers," etc., besides occasional mention of hisses or groans. It seems as though the spirit of these ministerial gatherings is far removed from that of Paul, who said, "Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel." We have in the Bible quite full reports of several addresses by Christ, Peter, Paul, and others of their time, but not a single funny thing appears, nor was there any laughter on the part of those who listened. The painful impression is made that the prevailing type of Christianity nowadays is vastly different from that of Christ and the apostles. Either such serious themes are not handled, or else their seriousness does not weigh very heavily on speakers and hearers.

"The Ideal vs. the Real" *The Present Truth* 15, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

We hear very much about the necessity of having high ideals, and especially of living up to the highest ideal of Christianity. It is all meant well, but it is all wrong, because the highest ideal that any man can have is infinitely below the real; and he who does not attain to the real, reaches nothing. A few texts of Scripture will show us that this is the truth.

The *ideal*, which has come to be almost a synonym for perfection, is, as anybody can see by the word itself, only one's *idea* or conception of what is good. Now the Lord says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts." "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. lv. 8, 9. Also read, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain," or empty. 1 Cor. iii. 20. The thoughts of the wisest men are but emptiness because "every man at his best state is altogether vanity." Ps. xxxix. 5. Then though our ideal be our highest thought, and the highest thought of which we are capable, it is infinitely below what God designs for us. He who strives only after his ideal, seeks only emptiness. If he attains to his ideal, he becomes, at best, a self-satisfied Pharisee.

Some one will say, "But if we have no fixed mark to reach, then we cannot know when we have attained to perfection, nor can we at any time tell how much advancement we have made." Most certainly not. When Christ says, "Well done, good and faithful servant," and proceeds to tell each what good he has done, none will be so surprised as the faithful servant himself. See Matt. xxv. 34-39. When Moses came down from the mount, where he had been in communion with God, he "wist not that the skin of his face shined." No one can conceive of greater works than Christ did, yet He has said that those who truly believe on Him shall do greater works than His.

Christ is reality. Everything real is but a manifestation of His fulness-some revelation of Himself. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell."

Whatever does not come from Him,-whatever is not the outgrowth of His life, even though it be man's highest ideal,-is but emptiness and unreality. Having Him, we have everything, and without Him we have nothing, and are nothing. Great as is God's gift in Christ, anything less than that in its fulness is nothing at all."

God proposes to do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." Eph. iii. 20. He will do this for us, simply because nothing less than this will be sufficient. From this alone we see that whoever has only his ideal before him is groping in darkness and grasping nothing. What are we then to do?-Simply to place ourselves in the hands of the Lord, for Him to do with us as He will. His thoughts toward us are wonderful and very deep. We cannot fathom them. The possibilities for every human being are infinitely above the comprehension of the human mind. Our part is to have our gaze fixed upon, not our ideal, but the ever-unfolding goodness and greatness of the Lord, and His part is to work in us His perfection.

Thus we shall be satisfied, not with ourselves, but with Christ. Self will be completely lost to sight, and we shall glory only in the knowledge of the Lord. And we shall be truly satisfied, even though we be deprived of that which was our highest ideal of goodness and happiness; for when we know Him, and that all fulness, all reality, exists in Him, and only in Him, that is rest. We know that He who has begun a good work in us will perfect it against the day of His coming.

One thing more. We must not be misled into thinking that Christianity consists in having high conceptions of God. It is not our conception of God, but what He is, that saves us. It is from forming conceptions of God, and following them, that men become heathen. They are simply following their own thoughts, and imagine that they are following God. They substitute themselves for God. There is a great deal of this heathenism in the world. The perfect state, that which goes on ever to greater perfection, is that in which the Spirit of God has complete possession of us, so that God alone thinks in us, and at each step in advance we see Him as He is. This is not an ideal condition, but it is one that is possible and real. It is as easy to attain to as it is to live, if we but know how to live, which is to die, that Christ may live in us.

October 26, 1899

"Front Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

"The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Ps. xciii. 3, 4.

There is a grandeur and majesty in the sea. Mountains represent strength, unchangeableness, but the sea, or a rushing river, represents irresistible forces. One is conscious of a power in the sea even when it is comparatively at rest; but when it rages, and its billows roar and show their contempt of puny man in the blinding spray that they spit forth, its fury is awful.

The helplessness of man and the most mighty structures that he can build,- great ships,-in the grasp of the sea, is thus vividly portrayed:-

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." Ps. cvii. 23-27.

That is the first part of the story. The rest is this: "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." This God can do, because "the sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land." Ps. xcv. 5. He measures all the waters in the hollow of His hand. Isa. xl. 12. All the mighty power of the sea is borrowed from God. He both stirreth up the sea, so that its waves roar, and also stilleth their roaring.

This is a reason why men should be humble, and should consent to be wholly guided by the Lord, to the one who talks proudly and foolishly in self-confidence, the Lord says: "Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?" Job xxxviii. 8-11.

Great as is the power of the sea, God's power is infinitely greater. The sea is to Him but as a new-born infant in the swaddling clothes. Just as the one would hush a boisterous child, so the Lord says to the raging sea, "Peace! be still," and immediately it obeys Him. It recognises His authority. It can never overstep the bounds which He sets for it.

Surely, then, man, who is so helpless when seized upon by the billows, and whose mightiest ships are tossed by its waves as mere toys, ought to fear and worship Him to whom its raging is no more than the prattling of an infant. "Fear ye not Me? saith the Lord; will ye not tremble at My presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail;

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though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?" Jer. v. 22.

One would not wonder if the mighty rocks were set for the bound of the sea; we expect to see the waves break to pieces against them; but sand is the symbol of weakness and instability. It is easily moved and shifted from one place to another by the waves of the sea. Yet that very shifting sand is what God has set by a perpetual decree as the bound for the sea. Against it the waves toss themselves, but they cannot pass it, and expend their strength in a roar of baffled, helpless fury. God's word has said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," and they are forced to obey.

What is the lesson for us? Just this: "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and

things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus." 1 Cor. i. 27-30.

All power is of God, and He can exert it through the most insignificant agent. He made man to be an associate with Him in government, and so He is pleased to manifest His mighty power through puny man. This is to His glory. The fact that God can stir up or still the sea is cited as a reason why we should have confidence in Him, and then He says: "I have put My words in thy mouth." Isa. li. 16. The word by which the heavens and the earth were made; the word which says to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," is the word which He has placed in our mouth. It is marvellous, is it not? but it is true.

What are we to do with this word?—Keep it, and use it against the enemy. The sword of the Spirit is the word of God. Eph. vi. 17. It was that word in the mouth of Christ, which said, "Get thee hence, Satan;" and the devil left Him. He was as weak as any man, for He said, "I can of Mine own self do nothing;" but the word was almighty in His mouth, and so will it be in the mouth of every one who keeps it. Then what if we are weak and as easily moved as the sand! The God who makes the sand the bound of the sea, can use even us, when the enemy comes in like a flood, to lift up a standard against him. Even so, let it be.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Lord's Servant. Isa. xlii. 1-9" *The Present Truth* 15, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlii. 1-9.)

"Behold My servant, whom I uphold; My chosen, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the dimly-burning wick shall He not quench; He shall bring forth judgment in truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law. Thus saith God the Lord, He that created the heavens, and stretched them forth; He that spread abroad the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein; I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord; that is My name; and My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise unto graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."

The student should not fail to note the frequent occurrence of the word "servant," in the book of Isaiah. It would be an interesting and profitable employment to collate all the instances of its use, and compare them. In nothing

is there more comfort for us than in the use of this term in the prophecy of Isaiah. By it our relationship to God and Jesus Christ is made very plain.

The reference in this chapter is undoubtedly to Christ. On this there is no possibility for two opinions. Jesus is pre-eminently the servant of God. In Him the soul of the Father delighteth, for Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John vi. 38); and, "I do always those things that please Him." John viii. 29. He is the only-begotten and well-beloved Son of God, yet He is called God's servant, and this title is given Him as an honour. The servant of God may be a son, and the son can have no higher purpose than faithfully to serve the Father. Note well the fact that Christ is both Servant and Son.

If we obey, we are also servants. Nay, God does not wait to see if we are obedient, before He acknowledges us as His servants; as soon as we yield to Him, we are His. "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?" Rom. vi. 16. All men are of right the servants of God, in that they owe Him all their service; but so many utterly refuse the service of God that the term is mostly confined to those who are loyal.

Special comfort and encouragement will be derived from the study of Christ as the servant of God, and the words that are spoken of Him in this chapter, if we recall the words addressed to Israel, in the preceding chapter. In verses 8-10 and 13 we read some of the same things that are here said of Christ. "Thou, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham My friend; thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof, and said unto thee,

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Thou art My servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away; fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." "I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand." Israel, it will be remembered, means those who trust the Lord. To those the same terms are applied as to Christ. They are chosen in Him, accepted in the Beloved. Eph. i. 3-6. They are chosen and upheld by the hand, just as is Christ Himself. So in reading this forty-second chapter of Isaiah let us not forget that we are the servants of God equally with Christ, so that the work that is given Him to do is ours also, and all the encouragement that God speaks to Him, He speaks to us also. Jesus calls us to join Him in His service, saying, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Matt. xi. 29.

"He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles," and He shall set judgment in the earth. To this end the Spirit of God is upon Him. He is the representative of God, charged with the task of carrying on God's case. It is He who conducts God's case at law to a successful issue. He causes judgment to be rendered in God's favour. The Father does not appear in the case at all, except in Christ, who has full authority to speak and act in every matter in the name of the Father. What wonderful confidence the Father has reposed in this Servant! "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." John v. 22, 23. The Father has

placed His reputation and even His character in the hands of Jesus Christ. The "faithful and wise servant" of the Lord is made ruler over His household, and set over all His goods. See Matt. xxiv. 45, 46. But here again we are brought face to face with the fact that we are servants of the Lord, and that this high place of ruling over the house is entrusted to us. God is not partial. He has no special favourites. What He says to one servant, even though that servant be His only-begotten Son, He says to all. The same love that He has for Christ, He has for us. John xvii. 23. This places a wonderful responsibility upon us. We see by this, and shall see still more plainly as we proceed, that the Lord has committed His case to us. His character is in our hands. We are to be agents to establish judgment in the earth, and to let the world know who is God.

Jesus, into whose hands so much is committed, is meek and lowly in heart. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street." Take notice that this is in the singular, street, and not streets. It does not say that He shall not speak in the open air. As a matter of fact we know that Jesus did most of His teaching in the open air, in the fields, on the mountain, by the seaside, or sitting by the wayside well. But He was not boisterous and noisy. When speaking in the house, He would not cause His voice to be heard outside. He did not do anything for effect, or seek to attract attention to Himself. See Matt. xii. 16-21, where Christ charged the people that they should not make Him known when He had healed a multitude, and it is said to be in fulfillment of this prophecy of Isaiah.

There is undoubtedly much to be learned from Jesus as to the use of the voice, not only in public speaking, but on every occasion. A soft, well-modulated voice, yet clear and distinct, with full tones, marks the master. He who can control his own voice, can control the multitude. A sharp, harsh, rasping voice, pitched in a high key, carries no authority with it. Every servant of the Lord is in duty bound to train his voice as much as the muscles of his arms or legs. It is true that many people in the world do this for gain and applause, and that they become puffed up with pride over the power that it gives them; but this should not deter God's servants from doing so in His name, and for His sake, that they may not misrepresent Him. We can learn of the Lord how to speak properly as well as we can learn anything else; and if we do truly learn of Him, then we shall not become elated over any success that we may have, for He is meek and lowly in heart.

The word rendered "cry," in this instance, is used most frequently of crying out in pain. In this respect it is also true of Christ. "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." Isa. liii. 7. Neither in boasting, nor in anger, nor in pain, did the Lord Jesus cry out. Yet His voice was far-reaching, and many heard. A well-modulated voice is not opposed to the command to lift up the voice with strength and say, "Behold your God!"

Very gentle shall the servant of the Lord be. A reed that is cracked, He will not break off. The candle that is just going out, the wick of which is only a smoking cinder, He will not extinguish. On the contrary, He will breathe upon it, and fan it into a flame again. "For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord God will enlighten my darkness." Ps. xviii. 28. By this means He will bring forth judgment in truth. This

shows that judgment is brought forth by building up that which is weak. God is merciful. He is love. This has been denied by His enemies, and His case is to demonstrate the truth. Therefore those who are charged with the conduct of the Lord's case can win it only by exercising the meekness and gentleness of the Lord. By His care for the poor and needy, the Lord disproves the charges that have been brought against Him.

"He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth." It is very interesting to know that the same words are used in this verse as in the preceding. The word rendered "fail" is the same as that rendered "smoking" or "dimly-burning," in verse 3; and "discouraged" is from the word rendered "bruised." He shall not burn dim nor be crushed until His work is accomplished. Of course He will not then; this is an instance of the use of the word "until" where it does not mark the limit. For similar instances, See Gen. xlix. 10; Ps. cxii. 8; Gal. iii. 19.

A discouraged man is a bruised and crushed man. He is one whose light has almost gone out. Hope is expiring in his breast. Such an one Jesus will restore. He will breathe new life into him. He heals the bruised and crushed one. There is no more difficult task in this world than trying to encourage a despondent person. How many there are who think that they have good reason to be discouraged, because they are so sinful, so easily led astray. They have fallen again and again, until they can scarcely be persuaded that there is any hope of their salvation. The servant of the Lord deals with such cases, whispering words of hope and comfort, and does

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not himself become discouraged. He receives rebuffs, but will not be crushed by them. His light will not burn dim, but he will gather courage from apparent defeat. What a blessed assurance this is to us when we think of it as applied to Christ! He will not be discouraged until He have set judgment in the earth, that is, in the hearts of men-in our hearts. Then when I am almost discouraged over my many failures, I will think, "The Lord Jesus has the task of making me strong and giving me the victory, and He is not discouraged in spite of my many failures. He knows my weakness and sinfulness better than I do myself. Surely if He is not yet discouraged, I have no cause to be." And thus gathering new courage from the courage of the Lord, we become strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, and the victory is ours. To us all the Lord says, "Be strong, and of good courage." This was all that He required of Joshua, when He commissioned him to lead Israel into the promised land. Josh i. 6, 7, 9.

The Lord says that He upholds His servant. The same word is used in the two following instances. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; Thou maintainest my lot." Ps. xvi. 5. "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." Ps. xvii. 5. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand." "The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down." Ps. cxlv. 14. Remember that we are the servants of God, if we yield to Him, that is, if we are willing to be His servants; and therefore we have the same promise of being upheld that Jesus Christ Himself had. We have

the same power to keep us from falling that He had. Nowhere has the Lord left any ground for discouragement.

The word "hold" in the expression, "hold thine hand," which occurs so frequently in those chapters, is from the Hebrew word meaning to strengthen. God promises to strengthen our hand. Everybody knows that one can stand better if he has hold of another's hand, provided, of course, that the other one's hand is stronger than his. Think then what strength comes from having hold of the Lord's hand. He says that He will hold our hand, and uphold us, by the right hand of His righteousness. That is all the encouragement we need. He will not drop our hand, and leave us when danger comes. Remember that the Father is greater than all, and no one can pluck His people out of His hand. John x. 29.

What work has the Lord given His servant?-This, "to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." All this we know Christ did; but is anybody else given such work to do?-Most certainly; that is the work of every servant of the Lord, every one whom the Lord chooses. Saul the persecutor was chosen by the Lord to go to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Acts. xxvi. 16-18. Now do not straightway say, "Well, I have not the ability of Paul." That has nothing to do with it. Paul was very weak and feeble in body, and had no ability except what the Lord gave him. If the Lord has not given us the ability of Paul, then He does not expect the same work of us; but one thing is certain, namely, that the Lord has sent every one who has accepted Him, every one whom He has chosen in Christ, and made accepted in the Beloved, to do the very same work to which He sent Jesus and Paul. He has not planned for any idle servants. Do not forget that He says, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes," etc. If we are connected with an electric battery, all the power of the battery may be felt by anyone who comes in contact with us; so when we have hold of the hand of the Lord, His power becomes ours. Even Paul the Apostle said, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who hath made us able to be ministers of the new covenant." 2 Cor. iii. 5.

God will not give His glory to another; that He cannot do, for He cannot deny Himself. He will glorify all who trust in Him, and His glory shall be seen on them; but it will be recognised as His glory. Our light is to shine before men so that they will see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. God will not divide honours with any creature, much less with a dumb idol, which is nothing in this world. This is not because He wishes to exalt himself at the expense of others, as Satan falsely accused Him of doing, but because He cannot divest Himself of His personality. He is; that is His name and His character, and He cannot cease to be. He cannot allow any of the praise due to Him to be given to graven images. He cannot admit that the work of men's hands is right. If He did, that would be the overturning of all righteousness and stability. For the good of all His subjects, and for the maintenance of that which He has created, God must carry the case in which He is concerned to a successful issue. What a blessed assurance it is to

know that He will do this. Wrong shall not prevail against God. Though it for a season seems to have the best of the struggle, it is only in appearance, and but for a moment. "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," and He will gain the victory over all foes. Who will cast in their lot with Him? Who is on the Lord's side?

"Enduring Mercy" *The Present Truth* 15, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; His mercy endureth for ever."

This is the first verse of the one hundred and thirty-sixth psalm, and every one of the twenty-six verses of the psalm in is in the same manner as this one: "His mercy endureth for ever."

To some this psalm seems monotonous; but it ought not to be so. It is surely a blessed thing to know that the mercy of the Lord is everlasting, and we should never be weary of hearing of it.

In this psalm we read of judgment visited upon certain people. It tells of the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt, the overthrow of Pharaoh and of his host in the Red Sea, and the smiting of famous kings. Now most people have the idea that God's mercy ceases, or at least is held in abeyance, when He executes punishment upon the ungodly. This, however, shows us that such an idea is a mistaken one. Nowhere does the Bible give the slightest warrant for the idea that at any time there will ever be any less mercy with the Lord than there is now. The common statement that by and by mercy will step down, and justice will take place, is most dishonouring to God. It implies a change in His character and in His dealing with His creatures. It not only teaches that sometime He will be less merciful than He is now, but it also teaches that now He is as just as He will be at some future time.

In this psalm we are called upon to give thanks "to Him that smote Egypt in

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their first born; for His mercy endureth for ever." The fact that He smote the first born in Egypt is given as a proof that God's mercy endures for ever. He "overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea," not because His mercy failed, but for the reason that His mercy endures for ever.

The mercy of God for the Egyptians was just as great as for the Israelites. They were most cruelly treating the people to whom they owed their lives, and whom God, in fulfilment of His promise, was about to bring into their own land. But He did not precipitately destroy their oppressors. He sent His servants to Pharaoh, making known the truth which would save him and his people as well as the Israelites. The promise to Abraham, which God was about to fulfil, included the justification of the heathen through faith, saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed." Gal. iii. 8. This blessing was offered the Pharaoh and his people, and was rejected with scorn and contempt. "I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go," was the reply of the haughty king. Therefore God, in fulfilling the mercy promised to the fathers, was obliged to destroy the Egyptians. He shook them off, as they were endeavouring to stop Him in His work. His mercy

did not change in the least, but the Egyptians refused to have it, and when people refuse to accept mercy, there is nothing left them but destruction.

He "hath redeemed us from all our enemies; for His mercy endureth for ever." This is identical with the inspired song of Zecharias, after the birth of John: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant; the oath which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life." Luke i. 68-75.

This does not indicate mercy for a special class. "All that hate us," are they who resist the progress of God's merciful reign over the earth. They despise both justice and mercy. We are delivered from our enemies, only in order that we may serve the Lord in righteousness and holiness all the days of our life. If we were not desirous of thus serving the Lord, we certainly should not be delivered. God's everlasting mercy exists for all, and none fail of receiving its fulness except those who will not have it.

Do not be carried away with the idea that in the preaching of the Gospel mercy is revealed, and justice in the destruction of the wicked. God's attributes are not thus divided. In the Gospel the righteousness, or justice, of God is revealed. Rom. i. 16, 17. The righteousness of God is revealed in Christ for the remission of sins of all who have faith in His blood, "that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 25, 26. If God were not strictly just, He could never justify the ungodly. There is kindness and everlasting mercy in the justice of the Lord.

The repetition of the sentence, "for His mercy endureth for ever," shows that there is need of the dwelling much on the mercy of the Lord. "I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing." Ps. ci. 1. "The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy; teach me Thy statutes." Ps. cxix. 64. In the commandments of the Lord, the ten commandments, which are commonly supposed to be the embodiment of stern justice, we learn that the mercy of the Lord endures to thousands of generations. He takes vengeance on them that reject all goodness, but His anger soon ceases in their destruction, while His mercy endures.

The mercy of the Lord not only fills the earth, but it is also "in the heavens." Ps. xxxvi. 5. It "is great, unto the heavens," and reaches unto the clouds. Ps. lvii. 10. The sun, moon, and stars reveal it to us. The exhortation is, "O give thanks unto the Lord of lords; for His mercy endureth for ever. To Him who alone doeth great wonders; for His mercy endureth for ever. To Him that by wisdom made the heavens; for His mercy endureth for ever. To Him that stretched out the earth above the waters; for His mercy endureth for ever. To Him that made great lights; for His mercy endureth for ever. The sun to rule by day; for His mercy endureth for ever."

Therefore "lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by number; He calleth them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking." Keep looking up, and meditating on the greatness of the Lord, and you will never more say or think, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed away from my God." He is always looking in every part of the earth for an opportunity to exert all His mighty power in behalf of the weak and the oppressed. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor." Ps. cxl. 12. Therefore "give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever."

"The Victorious Gospel" *The Present Truth* 15, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

The article which we reprint from the *Chronicle* on "Military Conquest and Missions" is not a blast against nothing. One of the commonest things in the world is for missionary journals to tell how such-and-such a country has been "opened up" to Christian missions by the invading army of some "Christian nation." The war may have been, and doubtless was, the result of greed, and may have cost the lives of hundreds of the invaders, and thousands of the natives against whom it was waged, but "some good has resulted," for now we have free access to the country, and can carry the Gospel unhindered. Thus say the leaders of the missionary societies.

We can only charitably suppose that they do not realise what is implied by their statements. What they virtually say is this: "Our lives are too precious to be risked; but the soldiers go ahead,-it is their business to risk their lives, and lose

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them,-and when the danger is over, we will follow." We are glad to know that this is not by any means the language or the thought of all missionaries.

It is a fact that the Gospel cannot be carried to all the world without the giving of life. The Gospel is itself the gift of life-the giving up of life that others may receive it, the laying down of life to take it again. The victories of the cross in the first centuries after Christ were won by those who "loved not their lives unto the death." But the loss of life if heathen countries should always be "opened" solely by true missionary effort, and not by armed force, would be infinitely less than it is when the army goes ahead. An unarmed man is always and everywhere safer than the man who is known to carry weapons; and scores of valuable missionary lives have been sacrificed simply because they were supposed to represent the people who "opened up" countries with Maxim guns, when they would have been unharmed if the natives had heard of Christianity only as a Gospel of peace.

Christianity has been wounded through the misrepresentations of its professors; nevertheless Christianity itself is perfection and only perfection. There is no comparison between it and any other religion. It never compromises with evil, and never calls sin righteousness. It "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." It is true that God, who "maketh the wrath of man to praise Him," does make even hellish war serve His purpose; but this no more justifies war than

Joseph's prosperity in Egypt justified his brothers in selling him, or the salvation wrought by the death of Christ justified Judas betraying Him, or Pilate in delivering Him to be crucified. The Lord can use even the devil to perform His will,-and it is certain that the devil can never frustrate God's purpose,-but the Lord is never to the slightest degree dependent on the devil nor any of his works.

"Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds) casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 3-5.

"For Little Ones. All for Good" *The Present Truth* 15, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

"None of us liveth unto himself." This is what the Word of God tells us, and perhaps you will understand it better since reading in our last paper of how all things are but as links in one great chain, a part of the great plan of God.

You see that this is true, not of human beings only, but of all things in this wonderful universe. Even the tiny grains of sand that make up the dust of the ground, each is fulfilling its own part in this loving purpose, and no doubt has a far more wonderful work and history than anything that you can imagine.

Try to understand, in all the things that you see around you, their relation to all the other things with which they are connected,-to see just the place and work that God has given to them and how they are fitted for it, and you will be astonished and delighted as you learn more and more of His wonderful wisdom and greatness, who even numbers the hairs of our heads, and without whose knowledge not a sparrow falls.

You will see that all things do indeed "work together for good." Even, as we found last week when we were talking about volcanoes, those things which have come upon the earth as the result of sin, are the best thing for it in its present imperfect, state.

The animal creation preying and feeding upon each other as they now do,-God is overruling even this for good; for some creatures now multiply so fast that they would become a plague and a nuisance if they were not kept down by other animals.

Think of the swarms of insects that would cover the ground if every insect egg became in time a perfect insect. Instead of this, most of them are eaten up by the birds when they are only tiny grubs. The butterflies alone lay so many eggs that the caterpillars which come from them would soon eat up every green thing if they were left undisturbed, and the autumn would bring no harvest,-no food for man or beast or insect. So they would even themselves be destroyed by their great number.

Suppose an insect lays fifty eggs (some lay a great many more than this) the fifty insects coming from them would bring forth a greatly increased number, and the third generation would probably be over a thousand! So you see that the destruction of even one insect is not an insignificant matter.

You have sometimes watched the spider at his work, and thought only of his cruelty and cunning, or perhaps admired the skill with which he weaves his snare. But you may never have thought how much *your* comfort depends upon his work; for if all the flies were left to multiply, there would soon be a swarm like that which darkened the air of Egypt in the time of the fourth plague.

How useful, too, we find our cats to keep down the swarms of mice that would otherwise infest our houses. To show how all things, instead of living to themselves only, are "wheels within wheels" on which the comfort and happiness, and even the life, of other things depend, the question has been asked, What relation is there between the pastoral interests (the work of feeding or grazing cattle) and the number of cats in a district?

The cat is the great enemy of the field mouse, which in its turn is the enemy of the humble bee. This is the only insect that can fertilise the clover blossoms by carrying the pollen from one flower to another. So you see that the clover which feeds the sheep and cows, cannot flourish where there are no cats to destroy the mice which destroy the bees which fertilise the clover.

You will perhaps be able to trace out for yourselves some other links in this chain which is all about you. A well known naturalist recently told this little story of what happened when the ordinary course of nature was interfered with. Water cress is a favourite food of the caddis worms, but caddis worms are eagerly devoured by trout. The trout, in turn, have an enemy in the herons, which usually catch the fish *after* they have grown fat on caddis worms. It lately happened that a large grower of water-cress had three quarters of his crop destroyed by the caddis worms. It was found that trout which usually eat the caddis worm and thus save the water-cress, had been eaten up too soon, -before the time- by a flock of hungry herons, and the worms were left unmolested to destroy the water-cress.

As you go through this world you will see much to distress and pain you, for results of sin are to be seen everywhere and "sin when it is finished, bring forth death." So

"you in this fair world
See some destroying principle abroad,
Earth, air, and water full of living things,
Each on the other preying."

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But remember always that the eye of love watches over all, the heart of love feels for all, and the hand of love is overruling all things for good, although you cannot understand *how* this can be. When "the young lions roar after their prey," they "seek their meat from God;" and He "hunts the prey" for them, and "fills the appetite of the young lions." But He cares just as much for the creatures with which He feeds them, for "the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." Not over each species only, but over every single creature that His hands have formed, and we may be sure that He will do the best for each. He will permit nothing to happen to anything but what will be for His own glory, and

"His glory is His children's good,
His joy His tender fatherhood."

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

-The farmers of New York State, U.S.A., have just formed a Milk Trust, with a capital of \$6,000,000.

-Mrs. Parry, the mother of twenty-five children, has just celebrated her 102nd birthday at the West Ham Workhouse. She is well and hearty, and is able to do needlework.

-The railways of Great Britain have cost on an average \$50,000 a mile, and yet the traffic is so heavy, that a dividend of nearly four per cent. is earned by them for the stockholders.

-Shooting game, aside from being a cruel and heartless sport, is in England an expensive hobby. There is a tax income from this source of over \$300,000 a year to the Government in this country.

-Ceram, a large island lying west of New Guinea, has just been visited with a terrible earthquake. The town of Ambel has completely destroyed, and 4,000 persons were killed, and many hundred injured.

-As an indication of the growth of the sea commerce of Great Britain, it may be stated that the largest vessel of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's famous expedition to Newfoundland, the *Raleigh*, one of the very largest Ocean vessels then made, was a ship of only 200 tons. The *Oceanic*, launched in January last, is a vessel of England was under 50,000 tons; to-day it is over 11,000,000, and the seafaring population of this country numbers over 600,000 men.

-The West Ham Town Council has just adopted a proposal to obtain Parliamentary powers to acquire 100 acres of land, on which it is estimated 3,000 houses can be built at a cost of \$1,000,000, to be occupied by the workingmen of that densely populated area.

-During the week ending October 12, there were sixty-three of which were fatal, and the total deaths from plague numbered fifty-nine. There were nearly the same number of fresh cases during the week at Oporto.

-The leading firms engaged in the calico printing trade of Lancashire and Scotland have just entered into a combine, with a capital stock of nearly \$10,000,000. Thus the manufacturing interests of this country are following in the wake of those of the United States.

-A train on the Chicago and North-western Railway, a short distance out from Chicago, was recently held up at midnight by masked robbers, who blew open the express car and the safe, and carried away cash to the amount of \$5,000, also a large quantity of jewellery.

-The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, through its Secretary, Mr. Benj. Waugh, makes public the fact that during the past year the society has dealt with cases of cruelty affecting 76,000 children, and since its formation it has championed the cause of over 450,000 little victims of cruelty and neglect.

-Alexander Willis, a rural letter-carrier at Great Shelford, has established a postal record. He began delivering letters in July, 1861, and down to the present

time has never missed a single delivery throughout the intervening thirty-eight years, in which he has walked a total distance of 84,000 miles, and although past threescore and ten years, he is still at work.

-Twelve dynamite guns have been ordered to the Philippine Islands to enable the American forces there to cope with the situation. Of these guns it is said that they are the most destructive of any light artillery guns used in modern warfare. The explosion of a shell from one of these guns is guaranteed to kill everything within a radius of fifty feet. Then to add to their effectiveness, a new explosive is to be employed which will render it impossible for any foe to withstand the effect produced by a battery of such guns.

-The spread of a forest fire threatened the destruction of the great vinery on the Santa Cruz mountains, California. (U.S.A.). There was no water supply available, and to save the vinery, 40,000 gallons of wine were used in extinguishing the fire. It is far better to use wine to extinguish a fire outside of the body than to create one inside of the body. The unfortunate thing about this case is that the loss of this wine is the saving of perhaps a hundred times that amount which will be used to destroy men's reason.

-The Thames Conservancy Board has just set in motion the machinery of the new sewage disposal works, erected by the Hampton Urban District Council. This method marks a new era in sanitary science, and promises to effect quite a revolution in the present method of dealing with the sewage of the large centres of population. In brief, it is to render it innocuous by means of microbes. The sewage of the district is forced to the station by means of what are called Shone's injectors, and flows over beds formed of clinker and earth. Here it is left standing so as to allow minute organisms, which cover every particle of the clinker, to attack the organic matter contained in it, and after passing over two such beds, the effluent flows out pure and sparkling. No chemicals are used, and no sludge is said to remain after the sewage is purified. The plan has been given a thorough trial, and pronounced a perfect success.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

"The Bible without the Holy Spirit is like a sun-dial by moonlight."-*Coleridge*.

In 1879 the number of deaths from alcohol in the United Kingdom, was six hundred and fifty-five for each million of the population; now it is nineteen hundred and sixty, just three times as great.

India is again facing a famine. At the Viceroy's Council, Oct. 20, it was stated that the area threatened with famine comprised 100,000 square miles of British and 250,000 square miles of Native States territory, and 30,000,000 people.

The Marconi system of wireless telegraphy is to be put into practical use in the South African campaign, the Government having entered into a contract with the Wireless Telegraphy and Signalling Company for six months. The advantages of this system over that of telegraphing by wires, that may be cut, are obvious. The system has already been tested, and found satisfactory. In the Naval man?uvres in the Channel, messages are transmitted over eighty-three miles.

The Roman Catholics are now quoting a "prophecy" of Edward the Confessor, to the effect that the time would come when his country would turn heretical, but that after a lapse of three hundred years after the break with the Pope. There can be no doubt but that movement was the beginning of a marked return towards Rome.

Our readers must not discount the *Chronicle's* estimate of war by the fact that it is opposed to the present war in Transvaal. Every reader will remember that in times past it has been warmly in favour of war, notably against the Turks. Its present utterance has no reference to any special case, but applies to war itself, as related to Christianity. Its statement will bear repeating: "It is a horror, the sum of all villainies, with no redeeming feature. It does not moralise men, it degrades them, stirring up, as it does, all evil passions, and negating, as it does, all morality. Lying, theft, murder, are not only permitted in war, they are even classed as virtues if only they are performed according to the rules." No man can deny this, and yet there are hundreds of professed ministers of the Gospel who claim that war is perfectly consistent with Christianity!

The speech that met with the most decided opposition in the Church Congress, the demonstration against it amounting to an uproar, and threatening to break up the meeting, was that by Rev. Prebendary Webb-Peploe, who said: "The Anglican Church can no more admit into her services the forms and ceremonies of the Roman Church than she can admit the fetishes of the Pagans." The *Church Times* says editorially, "We shall not pretend to regret that at this point the speaker's voice was drowned by a tumult of protests from the audience. It were a scandal had it been otherwise." The whole Congress showed that the sentiment of the Church of England is overwhelmingly Roman. The Roman Catholics have good reason to expect the "conversion" of England to Romanism.

A pitiable exhibition of parental imbecility and unfitness was made in one of the police courts the other day, when a man attended on a school board summons, because his boy, ten years of age, did not attend school. He complained that he could not get the boy to attend. When asked what he had done, he replied that he had given him three strokes on each hand with a cane, and had beaten him with his belt. The magistrate commended him, and although he stated that he had been "very near cruel" to the boy, the magistrate advised him to give him "another good strapping," which he promised to do. They doubtless suppose that after that the boy will go quietly to school. The use of the rod has a proper and necessary place in the training of children, but the man who pleads that he cannot induce his ten-year-old boy to go to school, nor, presumably, to do anything else to which he is not inclined, shows such parental incapacity, that the rod would be much more reasonably applied to his back and to the boy's. Unfortunately for the race, such people have children just the same as do people of good judgment and character.

In a recent sermon Monsignor John S. Vaughan, brother of the Cardinal, said:-

As there is a sun in the material universe, so there is likewise a sun in the spiritual and ecclesiastical universe. I need hardly say that the sun in the spiritual universe is the vicar of Christ-the Pope.

The sermon is reported in the *Catholic Times* of October 20, and the last clause is put in bold type as a sub-head. Thus it appears that none of the blasphemous claims of the Roman body are in any wise abated in these days. That thousands, and even millions, of people are absolutely sincere in this belief, is evidence of the fact that popular education is not by any means synonymous with enlightenment.

Blind obedience is not required by the Lord. He takes His people into His confidence, and lets them know what He does, and, as far as their minds can grasp it, why He does it. "He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." Ps. ciii. 7. Jesus said, "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth." John v. 20. And further: "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." John xv. 16. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant." Ps. xxv. 14.

There is not and cannot be any such thing as "blind belief." It is unbelief that is blind. Unbelief blinds, while belief gives sight. The Lord has no pleasure in blindness, but does not blindfold His people. He is light, and has sent Christ, the light of the world; and He exhorts us to walk in the light. But light is of no value to a blind man or a man with his eyes shut. Therefore the fact that God wishes us to walk in the light, shows that He expects us to have our eyes open. Christ is sent to bring "recovering of sight to the blind" (Luke iv. 18), and He counsels all to anoint their eyes with the eyesalve which He furnishes,-the Holy Spirit,-that they may see. Rev. iii. 18. His life is the light of men, and whoever is willing to have Christ's life developed in him will see and be taught all things.

November 2, 1899

"Front Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

"Thou art my Rock and my Fortress; therefore for Thy Name's sake lead me and guide me. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me; for Thou art my strength." Ps. xxxi. 3, 4.

Did you ever give serious thought to the fact that although the Bible represents us as being in the sorest need and the most pitiable condition of helplessness, it never once intimates that any thing of all that is done for us is for our own sake. It is all for the Lord's own sake-for His name's sake.

Why? The reason is suggested in the first part of the text quoted. God is our Rock and our Fortress; He is our dwelling place; "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." He is our life. Deut. xxx. 20. "We are His offspring," who nevertheless even down to old age and grey hairs are not separated from His being, but are borne by Him as part of His own life. Since we are so intimately

connected with Him, His reputation, His good name, is bound up with ours. It is to His own personal interest to have us kept from evil.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Isa. liii. 6. This means that God has taken our sins on Himself, for Christ is the shining of His glory, the very impress of His being, and His name is in Him. So in the exhortation to the elders of the church we read: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." Acts xx. 28. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

The Lord is personally interested in our salvation. He has "interposed Himself by an oath," swearing that He would do good, and only good, to us. That means that, like the most indulgent parent that He is, He will give us the desire of our

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heart. He will not oppose our wills in any respect. If we do not love life, and thrust it from us, He will let us have just what we labour and long for; but if we love life, and choose it, He will give us "more abundantly" of it, "above all that we ask or think." He gives us wrath, if we will have it, but no more than we have worked for and treasured up; because He has no pleasure in the death of any. But when we choose life and blessing, He bestows it in superabundance, because "He delighteth in mercy."

"Thou numberest my steps; dost Thou not watch over my sin? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and Thou sewest up my iniquity." Job xiv. 16, 17. Is it not a most comforting assurance? How natural that He who numbers the hairs of our heads should also number our steps. He knows just how many steps we have taken in all our lives. He knows how many useless steps we have taken, how many steps in the forbidden places; but He sews up all the wickedness in a bag, and casts it into the depths of the sea, for His own sake. He leads us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. He guides us with His eye upon us. How sure we are in our goings, when we are content to walk in His way.

What a multitude of worn out people there is in the world! How many there are with tired feet, wearied with the numerous steps they have taken, both profitably and uselessly. To all such the Lord promises rest. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. xl. 31. What a blessed thing to have our steps so guided by the Lord that we shall not get wearied and faint! Is it possible? The Lord says so; why not believe it, and find the joy of it?

If to any person these things seem fanciful, it is only because God is to him an unreality. If we regard Him as a Being sitting apart by Himself, far off from us, looking at us with critical eyes, we shall find no practical support or joy; but when we accept Him as He is, "above all, and through all, and in all," remembering that in the most literal sense He is our strength, we shall experience the joy of His salvation. We expect certain things to be done by the little strength that we assume to be our own; we know that we can do a certain amount of work without

getting weary; very well, take God Himself for your strength, live in and from Him, and you will find the results as much greater than anything you heretofore known or thought, as the infinite God is greater than puny man.

"The Outlook at Home and Abroad" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

The following *resume* of the present state of affairs, by "Historicus" in the *Methodist Times*, is so simple and so impartial, and withal free from speculation, that we are sure it will be read with interest. The student of the Bible cannot be unmindful of the signs of the times, and everything indicates the final breaking up of nations. We do not profess to say how long it may be delayed; but of one thing we are sure, and that is that affairs will be much worse before they are ever permanently better. That better-best-condition will be when the kingdoms of this world cease to be, and the heavenly kingdom of Christ begins:-

One of the things most obvious to every one before the present war began was that it would alter our whole position in foreign politics. That alteration has already commenced. The first movements have come from Russia and Germany. We fondly imagine that we are steadily pouring a number of troops into South Africa. We are. But how many of us knew, and how many who know realise, that all the time Russia is steadily pouring a still larger number of troops into China? She has got a great opportunity, and she would not be human if she did not take it. Some time or other "peace" will be restored in South Africa, but Asia, at any rate, will not be as it was before the war. We shall waken up to a great Russian Empire in Asia, open to the sea, possibly including Peking, covered with railways, filled with troops. We shall not stand where we did in Eastern Asia. It will all be done peaceably, but it will be done none the less.

And Russia is active in another direction. In Persia and Afghanistan she is slowly and steadily advancing. Since the Penjdeh incident in 1885, her progress in Central Asia has been very much checked. Now she is beginning to move again. When peace has been restored, the Russian Empire may in fact, if not in name, touch the Persian Gulf.

Germany, too, is rousing herself from her quiescence. Samoa is the field of action she has chosen for this move. A very unsatisfactory state of things exists in that lovely group. England, the United States, and Germany form an ill-assorted triumvirate, ever quarrelling among themselves as to the control of these islands. It has been so for a long time, and now Germany thinks that the opportunity has come for getting rid of the presence of Englishmen by a piece of stiff bargaining.

These are the only clouds above the foreign horizon for the moment. France is quiescent, owing to the forthcoming exhibition, which alone keeps her from plunging into the vortex of European foreign politics. Austria is battling with her own troubles, and she has just gone back on the position of languages. The Language Ordinance has been repealed. It permitted the majority of the people in certain provinces to use their own language legally. This irritated the ruling minority, the Germans, extremely. As they turned Protestant in considerable

numbers and steadily gravitated towards Germany, the Emperor has repealed the Language Ordinance and restored the tongue of the governing minority to its former position. Whether this will make for peace remains to be seen.

The Balkans, also, are a perpetual trouble to Austria. Foreign politics in mid-Europe resolve themselves, to an extent we little dream of here, into a perpetual struggle for predominance between the Teuton and the Slav. All mid-Europe, from the North Cape to the Mediterranean, was once under ice-stream, this fresh, semi-barbarous, undeveloped giant, the Slav race, presses on its Western neighbours. The Slav is absorbing Finland, which is partly Teutonic and partly Asiatic in its origin; he is threatening Sweden; he is pressing on the German Empire; he is surging up the Baltic provinces, and is slowly and steadily eating up alike the Italians of Dalmatia and the Germans of Austria.

Hungary and Greece struggle for their existence against two foes. The ruling classes of Hungary, the Mongolian land-lords, are between the Teuton rulers of Austria, with the great German Empire lying to the northward as a mighty ally to the Austrian Teuton when the final struggle comes, and their own peasantry who are Slavs, and who are backed by the shadowy, mysterious great empire that lies away to the eastward and the northward, to the confines of the sun and to the Polar Star. That is why Russia, inimical to Austria though she be, helped the Teutonic Hapsburg dynasty to crush the Hungarian struggle for freedom in 1848. Russia does

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does not want an independent Hungarian State. She wants it as a Slavonic addition to her own Empire.

Greece, like Hungary, is between two foes. Her traditional Asiatic foe (she has stood as the bulwark of Europe against Asia for 2,400 years) is the decaying, but still powerful, Turkish Empire, which, aided by the Concert of Europe, played such havoc with her two years ago. But Russia also looks askance at Greek freedom and Greek growth. Whether these two States will be swallowed up is for the future to decide. English Liberalism of the mid-century devoted itself to creating small, free States. Some at least of the Liberalism of the century's end is devoting itself to swallowing them up.

For the present both parties shirk an appeal to the sword to decide which will be paramount in Europe, the Teuton or the Slav. The latter is the fresher, younger, less-civilised nation. Austria is the cockpit of the two contending races, but the war is a war, not of Maxims, but of languages, and the Maxims take the form of "scenes" in the Reichsrath instead of fields covered with dead and wounded men. Some day it may be otherwise; for she present it is peace.

But Russia is utilising the peace to strengthen herself in Asia. Silently, but with astounding rapidity, she has absorbed half Asia, Turkey in Asia, Afghanistan, Persia, India, Burma and Siam, and China, are not yet hers. Last year and this she has taken about one-fourth or one-third of China at one huge bite. She is digesting that just now. Persia, Afghanistan, and the rest of China await their turn.

Pressed by the Slav from the East, Germany in her turn has pressed on all her neighbours. In 1864 she swallowed part of Denmark, 1866 South Germany, in 1870 part of France. Now she looks hungrily at the rest of Denmark and at

Holland, and on the break-up of Austria she will have some bits. Belgium and Switzerland may then go, and the small States be blotted out from Europe.

May be blotted out. But the curious thing is that it is just these small States that have the most effective barriers to the aggrandisement of the big ones. Germany would find the conquest of Switzerland as big a job as she found the conquest of France, and even Denmark gave her more trouble than she expected. Small peoples fighting for their liberty are apt to be very troublesome. Modern ethics, such as they are, do not permit of the ruthless external-nation of small conquered peoples. And there is a sense in which a living man is ever unconquered.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. A New Song. Isa. xlii. 10-13" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlii. 10-17.)

"Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise from the end of the earth; all ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein, the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit; let the inhabitants of Sela sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise in the islands. The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; He shall cry, yea, He shall shout aloud; He shall do mightily against His enemies. I have long time holden My peace; I have been still, and refrained Myself; now will I cry out like a travailing woman; I will gasp and pant together. I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands and will dry up the pools. And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; in paths that they know not will I lead them; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things will I do, and I will not forsake them. They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say unto molten images, Ye are our gods."

THE SONG OF DELIVERANCE

This new song is the song of deliverance. The thirteenth chapter of Revelation sets before us the exaltation of the Papacy against God, and the influence that it has and will have in all the earth, inducing even the people not nominally under the Papal yoke to do homage to it, and to make an image to it, enacting that all who will not worship either the Papacy or its counterpart shall be killed. But in the midst of that seeming victory of the forces of evil, the prophet saw victory for the people of God. He says:-

"I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with Him an hundred, forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; and they

sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth." Rev. xiv. 1-3.

THE SONG OF MOSES

That is to say, none could learn that song except those who had been through the experience. Passing on to the fifteenth chapter, we read:-

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before

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Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest." Rev. xv. 1-4.

From these texts we see that the new song which the redeemed sing is the song of Moses the servant of God. In the fifteenth chapter of Exodus we find that song recorded. It begins, "I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation." Then we read, "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedest out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed; Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation." Verses 11-13. So we see that the new song is a song of exultation at the power of the Lord over all who exalt themselves against Him, professing to be gods. And inasmuch as God triumphs over all false gods, whether it be in the shape of graven or molten images, or in the shape of men who profess to be authorised to speak and act in God's stead, it necessarily follows that all who identify their cause with His must at the same time triumph also. Therefore the new song is a song of thanks to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. xv. 57.

THE TIME OF TROUBLE

Read again the texts cited from the book of Revelation, and note that in each case the new song is mentioned in immediate connection with the time of trouble. When the people of God seem about to be overwhelmed, then the prophet sees them singing a new song on Mount Zion. In this he stands as the representative of all God's people. It is to teach us that the new song, the song of victory, is to be sung in the time of greatest danger. In the portion of Isaiah which we are studying, we see that this is so. The call to sing unto the Lord a new song is

immediately followed by a description of the going forth of the Lord as a warrior. It is in connection with the time when mountains and hills are to be laid waste, and rivers and pools are to be dried up. At that time all the earth is called upon to sing a new song. The inhabitants of the desert and the mountain are called upon to give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise in the islands.

THE REASON FOR SINGING

Compare this scripture with the ninety-sixth Psalm:-

"O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless His name; show forth His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people. For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols [that is, nothing]; but the Lord made the heavens. Honour and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name. Bring an offering, and come into His courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before Him all the earth. Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved; He shall judge the people righteously. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein; then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth."

This is exactly parallel with the portion of Isaiah which we are studying. It is the triumph of the Lord over all false gods, that is, over every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. It is the same thing that is described in Isa. ii., when "the day of the Lord shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols He shall utterly abolish." It is the day when the Lord in "the glory of His majesty" ariseth "to shake terribly the earth." In this time the new song is to be sung by the people of God. God's people are to sing best when the cloud hangs darkest.

This is made still more emphatic in the third chapter of Habakkuk. A terrible time is described by the prophet, so terrible that he trembled at the mere vision of it, and prayed that he might be spared from living through the reality. Yet he says: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls [compare Joel i. 10-20]; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places." Hab. iii. 17-19. No trouble can come on the earth that is so great that God's people cannot sing. It is very common for people to sing when they see no trouble; but it is indeed a new song that is sung when trouble is thickest.

THE NEW SONG AND THE OLD STORY

The last text quoted reminds us of the fortieth Psalm. The prophet says that God has made him sure-footed, so that he can walk safely on high places. So we read: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God." Ps. xl. 1-3. We see therefore that the new song that is to be sung by the saints on Mount Zion is but the song that is sung by them in the wilderness of trial. It is the song of redemption from sin. In the victory over sin, we have the victory over everything.

"When in scenes of glory,
I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story
That I have loved so long."

THE SILENT WATCHER

The fact that God is silent, and does not at once strike down injustice and those who practice oppression, is no sign that He takes no notice. It is very hasty judgment that declares that God does not care. How can He help caring, when every wrong that is committed is done to Him? He has identified Himself with mankind, so that whosoever does good or evil to one of the least of them, does it to the Lord. Matt. xxv. 40, 45. Do not forget that there is no searching of God's understanding, and nothing too small for His notice. He upholds the heavens and the earth. "But they are great things," you say. True, but they are composed of an infinite number of very small particles; and if God did not have a care over every

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tiny particle, He could not preserve the whole. God's care for the whole earth is only His care for every atom composing the earth. If he did not look after the fragments, there would be waste. If He did not care for the atoms, because they are small and insignificant, then they would fly off into space, and soon He would have no great things to attend to. So let every soul be assured that the Lord has the same care for him that He has for the whole world.

THE PROMISE SURE

Men are saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" They are saying that the world is governed by chance, or that God is indifferent to the ills of mankind. Thus they are putting themselves against Him in His great case. They are among His accusers. They forget that "the long-suffering of our God is salvation." 2 Peter iii. 15. Mark that word "longsuffering." God suffers when men suffer. He keeps still, not through indifference, but because of infinite patience and forbearance and self-control. This is to teach men patience. It is for the purpose of giving the worst scoffers time for repentance. But He will finally rise up and scatter His

enemies. See Ps. xlviii. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." James v. 7.

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

What a wonderful promise is in the 16th verse! "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; in paths that they know not will I lead them; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight." Therefore we may with full confidence pray, "Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness, because of mine enemies; make Thy way straight before my face." Ps. v. 8. That is the day when "the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." Isa. xxix. 18. The darkness and the light are both alike to the Lord (Ps. cxxix. 11, 12), so that the night shall be light about His people. Remember that all this time God has His people by their right hand. What matter then if they do not know the way? With God leading, a blind man is far better off than a man with eyes who is walking alone, even though it be in the light. Eyes are of no use to those who do not trust the Lord, for the fact that they do not trust Him shows that they do not know Him, and that proves that they cannot see; for He is everywhere plainly revealed. They are like the idols in which they trust, and shall be turned back, and put to confusion, together with the gods in which they trust. The case of the Lord vs. the false gods is as good as settled now, so that whoever puts himself on the Lord's side is taking no risk.

"Partial Infallibility" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

In the sermon in which Monsignor Vaughan exalted the Pope as Vicar of Christ, he said that for a thousand years England acknowledged his supremacy and infallibility, and then added: "I refer, of course to spiritual matters only. In civil matters Catholic England has her differences and her quarrels with the Holy See, like every other Catholic nation. Not in church matters." Now put with that and extract from the editorial columns of the paper (*Catholic Times*) which contains a report of the sermon. The editor quotes Dr. Mivart, himself a Catholic, as saying that the condemnation of Galileo by the Church of Rome was an "appalling blunder," and that "the Pope and Cardinals emitted an authority judgment which was false not only as regards physical science but also as regards the interpretation of Scripture." The editor says of this: "That is so, but Dr. Mivart must know that such a judgment, lacking the express assertion of the Papal sanction, is not regarded as an *ex cathedra* pronouncement, and therefore does not affect Papal Infallibility."

This reminds us of the hunter who boasted that he never missed his mark, but who fired at a calf long distance away, mistaking it for a deer, and missed it. Upon being laughed at for is the year, he said that he fired so as to hit it if it was a deer, but to miss it if it was a calf. Surely he who is able to judge in that which is greatest, ought to have no trouble in that which is least. "If the world shall be judged by you, are ye unable to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not to that

we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. The people who acknowledge Christ Himself,-not a pretender,-will not set themselves against Him in any particular. Christ's promise to be with His people always, even unto the end of the world, makes unnecessary any vicar, even if such a being were possible.

"Church and Truth" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

It was Bacon who said: "The man who believes because the Presbytery or the church have told him, is a heretic, even though it be the truth that he believes." His belief is really nothing. He who accepts a truth simply because some person or society says that it is truth, would accept an error just as readily. It is the privilege of every person, from the least to the greatest, to know the truth for himself.

"For Little Ones. 'The Light of the World'" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

"Search the Scriptures." The Jews to whom Jesus said these words had been searching the Scriptures all their lives. This was before the New Testament was written, and the Scriptures of which Jesus spoke were what is called the Old Testament.

Every Jewish child was taught the Scriptures from his earliest infancy, for God had said: "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt walkest of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." So of most of them it might be said, as it was of Timothy, "From a child thou hast known, the Holy Scriptures."

It was of these Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus said: "They are they which testify of Me." And He said that if the people really believed the writings of Moses, "they would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me."

Does it then seem strange to you that when Jesus came among the people who had been learning about Him all their lives, they should not know Him, but should persecute and crucify Him as they did?

Paul, who had Himself been one of the persecution of Jesus, tells the reason why "they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers," had rejected and condemned Jesus. It was because they know not "the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day." And he tells also why they did not understand these "voices of the prophets,"-the Holy Scriptures which God had given to teach them of Jesus and prepare them for His coming. He says it was because "their minds were blinded;" and then he tells just what blinded them: "For even unto this day, when Moses is read, *the veil is upon their hearts.*"

How much could you see of any thing, if you tried to look at it with your eyes covered? Yet this is just how many, in the most, of the Jewish people, looked at the scriptures. Their sin and unbelief covered their minds and hearts with a thick

veil, so that they could not see Jesus, whose glory was really shining forth upon them from the sacred writings.

The Word of God is "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path," because it all teaches us of Jesus, who is the Light of the world. It is not, then, how much we have read, or even learned of the Holy Scriptures, but how much we see of Jesus in them, that makes them a light and a blessing to us. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

There is only one thing that can take the veil from our hearts, and so open our eyes and teach us to see Jesus. This is His own Holy Spirit, whose special work it is to reveal Him to all who really want to see Him, just as Jesus said: "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you."

Read the eighth chapter of Acts, where we have the story of the Eunuch who was sitting in his chariot reading about Jesus in the book of Isaiah, but he was not able to understand "the voices of the prophets." Then the Holy Spirit told Philip to go and talk to him, and help him to see Jesus in the Word that he was reading. So Philip began at the very Scripture that the Eunuch was reading, and full of the Holy Spirit, "preached unto him *Jesus*."

How soon the veil from the eyes of this man, and the light of Jesus shown into his heart, when he was taught by the Holy Spirit. When they came to water, he wanted to be baptised at once to show his faith in the One of whom he had been ignorantly reading for so long.

Now we are going to talk over together for a few weeks some of the old familiar stories of the Old Testament, and shall we not, as we do this, ask Jesus to make us pure in heart, that there may be no veil of sin upon our minds, but that we may see more of Him in them than we ever have before. Pray that His Holy Spirit may glorify Him by taking of His and showing it unto us.

There are many who study the Bible and can repeat whole chapters and even whole books of it, but it does them no good, because their minds are not lighted up by the Holy Spirit. While there are others who know very little, and perhaps can repeat only one verse, and yet the little that they know is able to make them "wise unto salvation" because in it they see Jesus.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

- Bubonic plague is officially announced to exist in Rio de Janeiro.
- The Mormons have made the largest gains during the past year of any sect in the United States.
- There was an unsuccessful attempt made last week to re-open the religious question on the London School Board.
- It is estimated that ?80,000,000 in gold and jewels lie at the bottom of the sea on the route between India and England.
- The expenses already incurred in naval and military preparations in connection with the South African crisis exceed ?6,000,000.
- Mrs. Clara Barton reports on her recent return from Cuba to America that there are now 50,000 destitute orphans running wild in the towns of Cuba.

-It is not very encouraging to American civilisation to know that since the defeat of the Spanish at Cavite, 464 American drinking solutions have been established in Manila.

-A consignment of no fewer than 60,000 live quails has just been received in London in crates from Egypt. They are intended for the London trade, and bring about to shillings each.

-The United States is now maintaining in the Philippines an army of 71,000 men, including 6,000 marines blue-jackets. The naval force consists of forty-five vessels, ranging from battleships to gunboats.

-A Belgian engineer has invented an apparatus on the principle of aerial telegraphy, whereby it is claimed that vessels fitted with the instruments can be warned of their new approach to each other, and thus avoid collisions in fog.

-Much anxiety is felt for the safety of an American transport bringing home discharged soldiers from Manila. She is long past due, and nothing has been heard of her for some time, and it is feared she has been lost in a typhoon.

-The leading salt firms of Cheshire, Lincolnshire, Staffordshire and Worcestershire have entered into a combination, the avowed purpose being "to prevent severe competition, whereby profitable working has been impossible, and to advance prices."

-The National Temperance Federation has just held its annual meeting in Manchester. They maintain their own platform of the entire Sunday closing, opposition to municipal management, and the power of the direct local veto without compensation.

-Since last spring there have been over 300 cases of smallpox in Hull, in two days last week thirty-six new cases were admitted to hospital. Two additional structures have been required to afford temporary relief, the number is increasing so rapidly.

-On October 23rd it was reported that for five days an extraordinary blizzard had then been raging in one section of Montana, U.S.A., with great loss to the live-stock interests. In one county alone twenty shepherds and over 20,000 sheep perished.

-A great petition is said to have been prepared in America containing the names of many prominent men, asking the President to offer the services of the United States to Great Britain as a mediator in the Transvaal, in accordance with the rules of international right agreed upon at the Peace Conference. But this is just what the United States is stopped from doing, by having itself adopted England's policy.

-The Missionary Alliance held a missionary meeting in New York one day last week, that is reported as an extraordinary one. Many thousand pounds were subscribed, and when the call was made for funds, the *Chronicle* states that the women took off rings, bracelets, and hearings, and men gave up watches and pins. Savings-bank books and clothing were thrown upon the stage. Several substantial business men who had no money with them pledged themselves to amounts varying from ?1 to ?1,000.

-The Roumanian Ministers of Public Instruction has just issued the following circular to the heads of all the educational institutions for young ladies throughout

the country there: "As it has been proved, practically as well as scientifically, that the corset is an article of anti-hygienic toilet, from the fact that it constitutes a permanent obstacle to the development of the body, and it interferes with the functions of the pectoral organs, the undersigned suggest that the wearing of corsets by the pupils of educational institutions for young ladies be rigorously prohibited."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 44.

E. J. Waggoner

The Secretary of the Church Army, Mr. Edward Clifford, declared that the Church Congress that from the factory girl to the smart Society leader the drinking of stimulants is increasing enormously among women.

Some time ago the Russian Astronomical Society decided to revise the calendar, so as to bring it into harmony with the duration of the year, and to bring Russia into line with the rest of Europe. It still clings to the Julian calendar, so that its dates are twelve days behind those of other countries. The attempt at revision has, however, been abandoned, owing, it is said, to "the impossibility of establishing an agreement between the dates of the religious festivals appearing in both calendars." Thus does superstition and prejudice gain the day.

On Wednesday, October 25, "the Army, the Navy, the Church, and the State, to say nothing of the Lord Mayor of London," went to Colchester to indulge in the annual oyster feast. The report says that "the consumption of oysters was prodigious." There was true Church and State union in devouring the scavengers of the sea. The highest dignitary of "the Church," took advantage of the occasion to make an official announcement. "Cardinal Vaughan said the oyster was the greatest propagator of civilisation in the world, and that human progress was always heralded by the oyster shell."

There is a movement among some of the Jews of London in favour of holding services on Sunday instead of on the Sabbath. The first of these was appointed for last Sunday, in Whitechapel, but we have not heard with what result. Mr. Simon, one of the leaders in the movement, says that the desire is to form "a bridge of religious fellowship and common worship across the gulf which so far has separated monotheists who are Jews and monotheists who are not Jews." It was this same spirit of compromise,-the desire to form a bridge between Paganism and Christianity,-that led the Christians of the early centuries to substitute Sunday for the Sabbath. When bridges are formed between truth and error, the stream of travel is always toward the error. There is no need for any "rules of the road," for the travellers meet nobody. When people pass from error to truth, they do not go by a bridge.

He who can tell all he knows, does not know very much; for no human speech can express the deep realities of life. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit."

It is not uncommon to hear Sabbath-keepers referred to as "people who keep their Sunday on Saturday." This is, of course, an absurdity, for such a thing is

impossible, and Sabbath-keepers do not keep Sunday at all. But the inhabitants of the island of Raratonga, in the Pacific Ocean, have virtually been keeping Sunday on Saturday, because when white people first settled there they made a miscalculation, and took the last day of the week for the first. The local Government has just passed a Bill transferring the rest day from Saturday to Sunday. Although the people have for years been resting and attending worship on the seventh day of the week, which is the true and only Sabbath, they were really Sunday-keepers, and not Sabbath-keepers. Sabbath-keeping means the observance of the seventh day in recognition of the Creator, who made the heavens and earth in six days, and rested on the Sabbath, and of His creative power which still upholds all things, and makes new creatures of all who trust Him.

The following paragraph is from a tale of early Christian life in Corinth, in the *English Churchman*:-

It was the first day of the week. The Christians who had been converted by St. Paul had, of course, no church in which to assemble. It was not for many generations afterwards, when the age of persecutions had ceased, that places of worship could be built. Nor was there a day of rest. The Jews, indeed, observed their Sabbath the day before; but for Gentile Christians there was no such day of rest until the edict of Constantine in the fourth century.

As a matter of fact, the Christians had, of course, a day of rest, the Sabbath of the Lord, the day before the first day of the week-the same one which the Jews rested. But the paragraph is worth noting as a frank admission of the fact that Sunday had no standing in the church until the reign of Constantine, who enacted the first law ever made in its favour. God never made any law concerning it, except to command people to work on it together with the other working days of the week, and no earthly ruler ever legislated concerning it before Constantine. He did it in pursuance of his purpose to unite Paganism and Christianity.

In one of the engagements in the Transvaal a drummer boy aged fourteen shot three Boers with a revolver. For this he was carried through the camp on the arms of the soldiers, his deed has been lauded in the newspapers, and in at least one of them his picture has appeared. He has become famous because he killed three men. If he had killed by one man in London, even though that one man were a Boer, he would now be in prison, expecting a sentence of manslaughter, if not of murder. Strange what a difference distance and numbers make! How many youths in England will be seized with a desire to become famous in like manner? When the lust for notoriety seizes a weak-minded person, he does not always stop to consider time and circumstances, and so these tales of war abroad tend to rouse a spirit of murder at home.

We are glad to learn that the Bishop of Winchester, in his charge at Porteca, concerning the communion, condemned the use of certain manuals on that subject, in which children are warned to wash their mouth the night before they take the communion, lest if it were done in the morning a drop of water might accidentally be swallowed. One says:-

If you swallow even a drop of water that is breaking your fast. To make your communion after breaking your fast dishonours Jesus; it is a sin against the Holy Ghost if done wilfully, and against light it is a mortal sin.

The fact, however, remains that such things are taught in the church, in spite of the fact that the one celebration of the communion from which we get all the knowledge we possess on the subject, was at night, after supper. It is sad to say it, but it is a fact, that a large portion of the church calling itself Christian has always strenuously laboured to avoid everything that the Bible enjoins, and to teach almost everything of which it says nothing or which it forbids.

November 9, 1899

"Recognising the Lord" *The Present Truth* 15, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

"And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." Luke ii. 25-32.

There was another man in the temple that day, who also had the Lord Jesus in his arms, namely, the high priest; but unlike Simeon, he did not recognise in the infant the light of the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel, - the Saviour of mankind. Why could not the high priest, the religious leader of all the people, discern what the unknown Simeon saw so plainly?

The answer is plain: Simeon was "waiting for the consolation of Israel." If any man willeth to do the will of God, he shall know. God says: "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye Me in vain." Isa. xlv. 19. God had sworn to Abraham, and that oath, added to an immutable promise, made and still makes a strong consolation to all who flee for a refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them. This oath of God centred in Christ, and the birth of Christ was the remembering of His holy covenant, and the oath which He swore to Abraham. Luke i. 67-75. The thing was not done in a corner but was placed on record for all men. God had proclaimed, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." No man ever looks to God for consolation in vain.

The high priest, on the other hand, was waiting for the exaltation of himself and his people. His interest was not, however, for the people, but for himself. His desire to see Israel exalted was solely in order that his authority and dignity might be correspondingly increased. He was looking altogether too high to see the Lord, who is meek and lowly in heart, and who dwells with the humble and

contrite. The truth that is revealed unto babes, and even in the form of a babe, was too insignificant for his notice.

Note well the agency of the Spirit of God on this occasion. The Spirit was upon Simeon, not occasionally, but all the time. If Simeon had not been continually walking in the Spirit, he would have missed the opportunity. To how many people the one opportunity of a lifetime comes and is lost, because they have not been ready for it. Just that moment they were taking a rest from well-doing, having become weary. But they that wait on the Lord,-wait for His consolation,-shall renew their strength; they will never be taken unawares either by the enemy of souls or by the revelation of God.

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Simeon "came by the Spirit into the temple." That shows that he walked in the Spirit. He allowed his steps, and all his actions, to be guided by the Spirit of God. The true Christian position is that in which every thought and every movement is but the working of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the whole and only life of the individual. If we were always in that condition we should be directed to many treasures which we now miss.

The Spirit revealed to Simeon that the little baby in the arms of that poor, timid woman was the Lord's Anointed. He could not have known it in any other way, for there was nothing in the child's appearance to distinguish it from scores of other babes that were presented in the temple. He did not have a halo of light about His head, as so many fanciful picture-makers delight in portraying Him. "When we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him," Isaiah had written hundreds of years before. Only the Spirit can make Him known. Flesh and blood cannot do it. Matt. xvi. 15-17. "I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. xii. 3.

What an opportunity the high priest missed that day. He had the Lord's Anointed in his arms, yet he felt no thrill. The babe was nothing to him. It was not merely to comply with the Levitical law, that Christ was presented in the temple, but that the priest might have an opportunity to recognise Him, and to make Him known to the people. That was his business; "for the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth." Mal. ii. 7. But he did not know the day of his visitation, and because he failed on that occasion, which was seemingly so insignificant, he lost everything.

Unto us the same opportunity an obligation comes. "Behold your God!" is cried out to us: and we are to behold Him in order that we may make Him known to others. God makes every one of His people a priest, that they all may "show forth the praises of Him who hath called you of darkness into His marvellous light." 1 Peter ii. 9.

Where shall we see Him? Ah, where can we fail to see Him? Christ is the power of God and in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ever since the creation of the world His everlasting power and Divinity have been clearly seen in the things which have been made. Every created thing, from the mightiest planet to the tiniest atom, reveals the Lord Jesus.

It is not enough to recognise the Lord in one place, if we fail to see Him in another. If we cannot recognise a friend when we see him in a new place, and an address that we have not before seen, we are certainly not on very intimate terms with him. We must be so well acquainted with the Lord, that we shall have no trouble in recognising Him every instant, and on the instant, in every place.

If Christ had come to the high priest in pomp and royal majesty, like an earthly king, he would probably have recognised Him. No; he could not have recognised Him except by the Holy Spirit, no matter in what form He came; but he would at any rate have bowed before Him. But he did not know that the weakness of God is stronger than men, and that God chooses the weak things, and even things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are. The infant Jesus, borne in the arms of that poor woman, whose extreme poverty was indicated by the birds that she brought as an offering, instead of a lamb, was "the power of God." Yea, He was "the salvation of God." Nothing is weaker than a babe. The young of humankind is more helpless than any of the lower orders of creation. Never in our lives can we be more helpless and dependent than Christ was at that moment; yet He was the power of God; for God's strength is made perfect in weakness. This is to teach us that at our lowest and weakest state we may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. We are to recognise and confess Christ in our own bodies, even in our weak and sinful flesh. As surely as any man does this, he will be the victor over all the power of the enemy; for the Word is nigh us, in our mouth and in our heart, so that "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

A preparation for the coming of the Lord is a preparation of character. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

"Notes on the International Sunday-school Lessons. Public Reading of the Scriptures" *The Present Truth* 15, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

"And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. . . . And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up; and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and

the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send

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portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them." Neh. viii. 1-12.

Willing Hearers. -What a difference between that congregation and the ordinary, congregation in these days! The people came together as one man in the street, or rather, "broad place,"-public square,-and asked to have the Word of God read to them. Who would not like to teach such a people? In these days congregations have to be almost drummed together; but it may be that the fault lies no more in the people than in the one who stands before them. It is a fact, however, that there is less interest in matters of religion than in almost anything else. Where could you find a congregation of men and women in any so-called "Christian land," who would stand from early morning, as soon as it was light, until midday, to hear the Word of God read and expounded? That is what the people did in the time of Ezra. Nowadays an hour's service is regarded as outrageously long, if it be a religious meeting. If it be a gathering for pleasure, time is not regarded. People can stand a great deal of that which they like. An entertainment of some light nature may last hours, and people will take no note of the lapse of time. It is nothing for a speaker in a political campaign to make an address an hour and a half or two hours long, and people will stand and listen; yet the very same ones, professed Christians, too, would regard a Bible study of an hour as a great imposition.

Attentive Hearers. -The literal rendering of the Hebrew, without the addition of the word "attentive," is even more emphatic than the way we have it. "The ears of the people were unto the book of the law." They had no ears for anything else. Nothing could turn away their ears from hearing the law. They were not present as a sort of complement to the speaker, as though they were doing him a personal favor in attending; but they had asked to hear the law, and that was what they intended to hear. They heard something worth listening to, and that, together with their interest in that which is good, explains their long standing to hear.

Reverent Hearers. -When Ezra opened the book of the law, all the people stood up. It was the living Word of God, that they were about to hear, and they regarded themselves in the presence of God. It was God Himself who was about to speak to them, and it was fitting that they should assume a reverent attitude before Him. When Ezra addressed the Lord, leading them in worship, they all

bowed down with their faces to the ground. It had been a long time since they had had the privilege of listening to the Word of God, and they were eager for it. The greater facilities the people have for obtaining and learning the Word of God, the less they regard it. In lands where the Bible is not so plentiful, those who know of it prize it more highly.

Responsive Hearers .-All the people said, "Amen, amen," when Ezra read and prayed. It was not a dumb congregation. Worshippers are usually altogether too dignified. It is considered out of place for anyone in the pews to utter a sound. There is no precedent in the Bible for any such thing as one man monopolising all the time, while the people have no opportunity to speak for themselves. The perfection of Christian worship will never be reached until the people in the pews feel just as much at liberty to speak as the man on the platform. Let no one fear confusion. There is no pleasure in talking to people who do not care to listen, so that if they are dissatisfied, and wish to object, they might as well do so as to sit quietly and have words fall on closed ears. Indeed it would be to the advantage of the people, and of the speaker as well, if his sole object is to teach, if everybody felt free to express his dissent from what is presented, or at least his failure to grasp any part of the subject. That would give the teacher the opportunity to make things clearer, for he would know just where the difficulties were in the minds of his hearers. If public services were conducted on the plan of question and answer, the results would in general be far more satisfactory. The desire to hear, on the part of people who came voluntarily, and the sense of what courtesy demands in any assembly, small or large, would in general prevent any disturbance or unseemly expression of dissent.

But that which we had specially in mind, and that which is suggested by the text, is response by way of assent. The people said, "Amen, amen." The Word found a place in their hearts, and they gave expression to their agreement. There is nothing more encouraging to a speaker than such expressions. It is not that he cares for it personally, but it lets him know that he is not labouring in vain; that the people are really listening, and not dozing, or thinking of something else, and that they are being benefited.

Spontaneous Response .-Formality is the curse of religion. The church recognised the fact that the people should respond, and has therefore arranged for it, specifying just what the congregation ought to say, and when to say it. When the heart is touched, and the feelings are stirred, there is no need of instructions as to how and when to give expression to the responsive chord; and if the heart is not in it, it is only mockery. There is nowadays a great deal of discussion over ritualism, but there is in reality as much ritualism in Nonconformist congregations as in the High Church, although of a different kind, and not prescribed by law. When the Holy Spirit is given control, formality will disappear like a cloud before the sun, and every Word of the Lord will meet with a hearty response by both voice and action.

The Sense Given .-The instructors read in the book of the law distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused people to understand. Take notice that the people got the sense, because the Word was read distinctly. It was not simply that the Word was read slowly, but it was read in such a way that just what was in it

appeared. The readers did not put a construction upon it, but allowed the sense of the passage to stand forth. "The opening of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." "The Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."

The Law of Moses .-Compare verse 1 with verse 8. There is a too common idea that "the law of Moses" is something entirely distinct from the law of God. There is an unreasoning and unreasonable prejudice against Moses, that does not obtain with reference to any other Bible writer. If something be cited from the first five books of the Bible, the reply will often be, "Oh, that's in the law of Moses," as though that ended the matter. People will not discount the words of Isaiah or Jeremiah or Paul or Peter, will treat the words of Moses as of no account. There is no reason for this, unless it be that in the writings of Moses fundamental truths are found. No other man has been so highly honoured by the Lord. No other writer has had such direct commendation

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by the Lord. The law of Moses is the law of God, just as truly as the writings of Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel are the Word of God. Moses did not make any laws, and it is altogether a mistake to call him the lawgiver of Israel. He spoke and wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, just as the other holy man of old did. Whoever despises the writings of Moses, despises the Lord Jesus. John v. 46, 47.

The Joy of the Lord .-The people wept when they heard the words of the law. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. iii. 20. It is natural enough for people to weep when they hear the law which convicts them of sin; but God makes it known to them in order that they may rejoice. The law is not against the promises of God. The first office of the Comforter is to convict of sin. The Word of life is declared unto us in order that our joy may be full. 1 John i. 1-5. The joy of the Lord is righteousness, victory. The joy that was set before Christ, enabled Him to endure the cross. Heb. xii. 2. It was not merely joy that He hoped to get in the future, but present joy, the joy of victory, that sustained Him. That, and that only, which will enable us to hold out against the temptations of the flesh, is the joy of the life of Christ, given to us freely; it causes all the pleasures of sin to sink into insignificance. When we receive the Word into our mouth and into our heart, there will necessarily be joy; not a momentary ebullition of feeling, but a joy that is eternal. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Jer. xv. 16.

When the word of the Lord came to the children of Israel to forsake Egypt, they obeyed; but at the waters of Marah, and at many other places, it is easy to see that while they were bodily out of Egypt, their *hearts* were still there. The Lord has called us as Christians to come out from the world and be separate. Nominally we have obeyed this call; but with many, the hearts are still where they were. Just as surely as the longing of the Israelites for the leeks and onions and flesh-pots of Egypt was the cause of their destruction in the wilderness, so now unless all is surrendered-unless we forsake everything, cut loose from every earthly entanglement, and place ourselves and all that we are, body, soul and spirit, on God's side, we shall miss the promised land.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Magnifying the Law. Isa. xlii. 18-25" *The Present Truth* 15, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlii. 18-25.)

"Hear, ye deaf; and

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look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind, but My Servant? or deaf, as My Messenger that I send? who is blind as He that is at peace with Me, and blind as the Lord's Servant? Thou seest many things, but Thou observest not; His ears are open, but He heareth not. It pleased the Lord, for His righteousness' sake, to magnify the law, and make it honourable. But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses; they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none sayeth, Restore. Who is there among you who will give ear to this? that will hearken and hear for the time to come? Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord? He against whom we have sinned, and in whose ways they would not walk, neither were they obedient unto His law. Therefore He poured upon him the fury of His anger, and the strength of battle; and it set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart."

ALWAYS MORE TO FOLLOW

In studying portions of Scripture which are "hard to be understood," we shall save ourselves from falling into error if we adopt the rule, and rigidly adhere to it, never to guess at anything. Another thing we must always bear in mind, and that is, that no one on earth can give any statement as to the teaching of any text, which will be final and authoritative. That is to say, nobody can exhaust any portion of God's Word. When we have stated what we see in any text, that does not hinder somebody else from seeing a great deal more. The trouble with people who read what anyone has written, in whom they may have confidence, is in assuming that he has said all that may be said on that subject. Or, seeing the thing plainly, when it is set before them, they are satisfied, and do not think it worth while to keep on looking, so as to see more. That is wrong. No matter how much we see in any word of the Lord, we may be assured that there is much more that we do not see. A belief in the Divine perfection and fullness of God's Word, would keep any people from ever publishing a "creed," summarising the teachings of the Bible. Let these things be borne in mind as we study.

CHRIST'S DIVINE MISSION PROVED

When Jesus was here on this earth, He proved the Divinity of His mission by causing the blind to see, and the deaf to hear. Matt xi. 5. Many miracles did Jesus in the presence of the people, that they might believe that He is the Christ,

and that, believing, they might have life through His name. John xx. 30. The prophecy of Isaiah shows that the great controversy as to who is God will be continued until the very last day of time,-until the Judgment settles the question for ever. Then since it was necessary that miracles should be performed eighteen hundred years ago, in order to demonstrate the genuineness of the mission of Christ, God's Representative, it cannot be otherwise than that the same things must be repeated as long as there is any doubt over the matter.

MIRACLES TO BE WROUGHT

That miracles of healing will be performed by the servant of the Lord even in the very last days, is evident from the scripture before us. "Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see." Someone will say (for there are always people ready to discount the Word of God, and to make out that God has not promised us very much) that this command to the deaf to hear, and to the blind to see, is to be taken in a spiritual sense; that those who do not understand the truth of God, and who are spiritually blind, are to see the Lord, and to understand the truth. Undoubtedly that is true. But the urging of that in order to break the apparent force of the text, shows that they do not appreciate the greatness of the work of conversion. Which is greater, to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee" or to say to a palsied man, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk?" Is it easier to make a man behold his God than to cause him to see his fellows? Why should anybody who believes in conversion think it a strange thing that God should heal any defect in the body? Without doubt all these texts mean that people will understand the Gospel, but that does not show that they will not also receive bodily healing, but the contrary. It may well be, however, that the most of these mighty miracles will be wrought in what are called heathen lands, and that these boasted lands of enlightenment, where the Gospel has been preached so much, and so much slighted, have already had the most of the evidence that will be given them. It is the isles that are waiting for the law of God, and God's servant is commissioned to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes.

SIGHT FOR THE BLIND

"Who is blind, but My Servant? or deaf, as My Messenger that I send?" "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." This was said of Christ. He Himself suffered all the ills from which He delivered men, yet He did nothing for Himself. And this shows that there is no condition that is hopeless. We are deaf and blind; very well, the Lord says that His Servant whom He upholds, His chosen, in whom His soul has delight, whom He has sent to open the blind eyes, is also blind. He has assumed all our blindness. No one is afflicted as He is, because He has the combined afflictions of all men. No soul of man has so great a weight of sin on him as the Lord Jesus Christ had, for He had the sins of the whole world. But He is "the Holy One and the Just," therefore there is not a soul on earth but may also be just and holy. In Him, all deafness and blindness, all infirmities of whatever kind, both physical and spiritual, are removed. "In Him is no darkness at all."

Therefore though we be blind and deaf and dumb and lame and vile, all this is passed from us to Him. "With His stripes we are healed." Even so, with the blindness that He has assumed, we see.

GOD'S INTIMATE FRIENDS

"Who is blind as He that is perfect?" The Revision has, "as he that is at peace with Me." The Norwegian has it, "as My confidential friend," and this is warranted by the Hebrew fully as much as either of the others. This fits with what has preceded, when we remember that the servant of the Lord is Israel, the seed of Abraham, God's friend. What care we what our condition is, so long as we are God's confidential friends? We may be in prison, but that makes no difference as long as the key is in the hands of our intimate friend. Remember this as you read the last verses of this chapter.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Danish translation of verse 21, "the Lord is well pleased for His righteousness" sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable," is, "the Lord has pleasure, for the sake of His righteousness, to make the law great and glorious." This shows that the law of God is His righteousness. The more the law is honoured, the more the righteousness of God is exalted. The greater the law, the greater the righteousness of God. Let us see if there is any comfort in this.

The psalmist says, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Ps. xl. 3. The foundation of God's throne is righteousness (Ps. lxxxix. 14; xcvi. 2); and God's throne upholds the universe. If the foundations were destroyed, therefore, there would be no existence for anybody. If righteousness should cease, of course the righteous would cease to be, as well, since the righteous are the salt of the earth. But there is no danger, for Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 17, 18. The Lord will not destroy or alter the law, because that is His righteousness, and He cannot deny Himself.

FULFILLING THE LAW

A complete answer to anyone who is so perverse that in the face of the plain statement of Christ, that He did not come to destroy the law, he will say that Christ fulfils the law by abolishing it, is found in the words of the text: "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable." What honour can anyone give to Christ, and in what sort of esteem does he hold His work, who says that Christ destroys that which is honourable, and holy, and just and good?

"But He fulfilled the law," says one. That is exactly what He did. What then? "Oh, then we do not need to do it; since He fulfilled it, we can have nothing to do with it." Indeed, that sounds very strange from the lips of one who professes to

love the Lord Jesus. It is very easy to understand how one who says, "We will not have this Man to reign over us," can say, "We do not wish to have anything to do with anything that He is connected with." But why should a Christian desire to be separated from that which finds its fulness in Christ?

NOT UNDER THE LAW

"But we are not under the law." No indeed, thank the Lord for that. And why are we not under it? Because we walk in it. Have you forgotten that the message of comfort prepares the way of the Lord? and that the undefiled in the way are those who walk in the law of the Lord? Ps. cxix. 1-3. We are delivered from the law, which condemned us to death for our transgression, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Rom. vii. 4-6. And this is done by the body of Christ, in whom the law finds its perfect fulfilment. When we are joined to Christ in perfection, then the same fulness of the law will be found in us. The curse of the law is not to them that do it, but upon them that do not continue in all things that are written in it. Gal. iii. 10-13. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law; that is, He has redeemed us from disobedience, unto perfect obedience.

SIN ABOUNDING, GRACE SUPERABOUNDING

"He will magnify the law." "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. iii. 20. Therefore the greater the law is made to appear, the greater will sin appear. It was just for this reason that the law

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entered, "that the offence might abound." Rom. v. 20. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." So we see that in magnifying the law, God is making His grace to abound, in revealing His righteousness, which He puts in and upon us, for the remission of sins. The magnifying of the law, and making it honourable, is but the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE LAW OF LIFE AND THE LAW OF DEATH

The law is righteousness, yet righteousness does not come by it. That is, righteousness does not come by any man's works of the law. It is only "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 2), that makes us free from sin and death. The righteousness which is by the faith of Christ (Phil. iii. 9), is the only righteousness that will enable anybody to stand in the day of Christ's coming; for the law is in His heart in perfection. The law in the heart of Christ is the law of which a copy was placed on tables of stone by the finger of God. In Christ we have it upon the Living Stone, and not upon the dead stone. So while on the tables of stone given to Moses, it is only death, on the Living Stone, Christ Jesus, it is life. The magnifying of the law shows us how great is the gift of life which God bestows in Christ.

PRECEPTS AND PROMISES

For it must be known that all the precepts of God are promises. Nobody has ever first given something to the Lord, that it should be recompensed unto him again; "for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things." Rom. xi. 35, 36. God does not give us life as a reward for something that we have done for Him, but He gives us life which contains the performance of the things which He wishes us to do. When God says, "Thou shalt not," He does not mean that we must keep ourselves from some evil, but that He will provide the means whereby we shall be kept.

By comparing two texts of Scripture we can readily see this. God said to all Israel, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Ex. xx. 2, 3. Again He says: "Hear, O My people, and I will testify unto thee; O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto Me, there shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god. I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." Ps. lxxxi. 8-10. From this we learn that when God spoke the ten commandments He meant that if the people would but hearken to Him, they should be kept from all evil. The greater the requirement of the law, the greater the gift of God. The magnifying of the law is the magnifying of the grace of God.

TERRIBLE MANIFESTATIONS OF MERCY

The terrors of Sinai reveal the mercies of Calvary. Men are accustomed to think and speak of the terrors of the law as given on Sinai, but they forget that Calvary is equally terrible. Was it death to touch the mount where the law was proclaimed? even so Calvary meant death. There were thunders and darkness and earthquake at Sinai, and at Calvary there were the same. Yea, even from the throne of grace, to which we are invited to come and obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, proceed lightnings and thunderings, and voices which cause the earth to quake. Rev. iv. 5; xi. 19. The awfulness of Calvary, which wrung from the lips of the Saviour the cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and which broke His heart, show the greatness of the law which had been broken. On the cross Jesus magnified the law of God. There it was shown that so unchangeable is the law, that it will take the life even of the only begotten Son of God, when He is "numbered among the transgressors." But the greater and more awful it appears, the more may we rejoice, because we know that God has pledged His own existence to the bestowal of all its righteousness upon us. What a blessed promise it is, that God will magnify the law. Let no one speak lightly of that which Christ by His death made honourable.

TIME FOR GOD TO WORK

"It is time for Thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void Thy law." Ps. cxix. 126. Men have despised and rejected the law of God, and in this they have been aided by His professed followers; for there are many who bear the name

Christian, who do not hesitate to speak most disparagingly of the law. So it is thought so small a matter, that men have no hesitation in putting their own laws in its stead. In this, they are despising and rejecting Christ, whose life it is. Now as the great controversy is to decide who is God, it follows that in the last days, when the message goes forth, "Behold your God!" the law in Christ must be proclaimed as never before. God will show that He is our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King, in that He alone can save. Isa. xxxiii. 22. But bear in mind that when the Lord works to magnify His law, because men have made it void, He is not working merely to vindicate His own rightful place, but He is working for men. The law of God has been made void in men's hearts, in that they have driven it out, and have turned to their own way. It is time for Him to work, but where?-in men's hearts, to lift up the standard of righteousness. Men by making void the law of God have fallen by their iniquity and God works to restore them by restoring the law in their hearts. And "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

"For Little Ones. An Allegory" *The Present Truth* 15, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

Are you wondering what is the meaning of this word? or do you know already that it is something taught under the image of something else? In this it is like a parable, which is "a tale to teach the truth."

When Jesus Christ taught the people who crowded around to hear His words, how often He used parables to make it easy for them to see and understand the lessons that He wanted them to learn.

Think of all the stories that Jesus told the people; see how many you can remember, and what were the lessons taught in each one. Some I am sure, you know well,-the Sower, the Ten Virgins, the Good Samaritan, the Good Shepherd. In each of these some precious lesson of truth was hidden; but *hidden* only that it might be *seen*.

You think this strange, do you? We usually *hide* things that we *don't want to be seen*. But hear what Jesus said when the disciples asked Him about His parables: "There is nothing *hid* save that it should *be manifested*." That is, there is nothing hidden, except for the purpose of making it plain.

The word "manifested" comes from *manus* the hand, and means literally, that can be laid hold of with the hand. We sometimes speak of a thing which is very clear and plain to our understanding, as being "easy to grasp," or to lay hold of.

Jesus taught the people the truth by the stories called parables, not to hide it from them, but so that the simplest of them, and even the little children, might be able to see and grasp it, and hold it in their minds.

But there were some among those who listened to Jesus who were not willing to be taught as little children. Indeed, they even thought that they knew more than Jesus did, because He had never been to any of their schools. And from them the parables of Jesus hid the truth, because they could not "receive the kingdom of God as a little child."

"Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast reveal them unto babes." The parables of Jesus, which made the truth simple enough for babes to understand, hid it from those who were "wise in their own counsels," that "seeing they might see, and not perceive; and hearing they might hear, and not understand."

You love to hear the parables of Jesus from the New Testament, and to learn the lessons of truth that He has hidden there for you. But did you know that the Old Testament also is full of the parables of Jesus?

He who went on earth taught the people by parables, had from the very beginning,-the time of the fall,-been teaching them by object lessons the good news of salvation from sin through His own sacrifice; and also giving before hand to those who had "eyes to see" and "ears to hear" the history of His own life upon the earth, and His death and resurrection, and the great deliverance that by it would be wrought for all who believed in Him. Remember what we learned last week, that *all* the Scriptures teach of Jesus.

Of one of the most familiar Bible stories, the history of Abraham,-his home life with Sarah and Hagar, the birth of Ishmael, and after long years of waiting, the birth of Isaac, the child of promise,-of this the Apostle Paul says: "Which things are an *allegory*." That is, we are not to read this only as an interesting, true story. It is this, but much more. We are to learn from it some precious lessons of Gospel truth which God has in this way made plain for us to grasp.

But this is not the only allegory in the Old Testament. This is simply to teach us how we are to look upon *all* these Scriptures, and the stories that they teach us. The life of Jacob, of Joseph, Moses, David,-of each of these we may say, as Paul said of the life of Abraham, "Which things are an allegory."

So let us as we study these, look for the precious truth, the lessons of Jesus which were hidden in them for the people of old time to teach them the Gospel, and which still remain there to make it plain for us.

"Bad Habits" *The Present Truth* 15, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

A physician is quoted as saying in defence of tobacco that it does not do any more injury than tea and coffee, and infinitely less than overeating. This is doubtless true, for tea and coffee are both poisons, though not so virulent as tobacco, and they are used to a much greater extent than tobacco is; and while probably less than one-half of the whole population use tobacco, everybody eats, and almost everybody overheats. But that does not make the case any better for tobacco. To say that it is no worse to be a thief than an habitual liar, does not justify theft. One would think, to listen to many people's defence of their evil habits, that they think they are all right if they can point to anybody who is a shade worse than they are. It is human nature to compare ourselves with somebody else instead of with God's law, and it is worthy of remark that everybody chooses somebody who he thinks is worse than himself, with whom to compare himself. Thus, by his comparison, he appears very good. But this is "not

wise." 2 Cor. x. 10. "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 45.

E. J. Waggoner

-At Faires, Alabama, U.S.A., two dwelling houses caught fire, and were destroyed, and fourteen of the occupants were burned to death.

-The apple crop of Nova Scotia is this year 90 per cent. of a full crop, and the second largest on record. Half a million barrels will be exported.

-On account of the South Wales engineers refusing to accept the terms offered by the employers, 25,000 colliers are now idle in that district.

-American ladies in England are raising a fund to provide a hospital ship for British troops in South Africa, and already about ?5,000 have been subscribed.

-As an indication of the rapid increase of lady physicians in the United States, it may be stated that twenty-five years ago there were in all only 500; now there are 4,500.

-During the past year England and Wales spent on relief of the poor the sum of ?10,828,276. In London the charge of maintaining the poor amounts to 14s. 6d. per head of the population.

-Artesian wells are a boon to the northern part of New South Wales, where the flow is reported as 164,000,000 gallons from 379 artesian wells.

-One who has looked into the matter reports that in the pawn shops of Paris there are 37,000 quilts and blankets, 10,000 mattresses, 19,000 sheets and 435,000 articles of wearing apparel. This indicates who the patrons are, and to what straits they are reduced.

-England has a public debt amounting to ?20 for each man, woman, and child in the nation, and is paying out ?50,000,000 a year on her army and navy.

-As an indication of what people will pay to see a popular demonstration, it may be stated that a Chicago millionaire paid ?200 rent for a house in the line of the Dewey parade in New York; the lease was for two days.

-Far behind as China is in certain directions, she has two of the fastest war ships in the world's navies-a torpedo boat that goes over thirty-five knots an hour, and a 4,400 ton cruiser that goes twenty-three knots an hour.

-The medical officer of the Abercain District Council has just reported a very serious outbreak of diptheria at Crumlin, Monmouth, due to the permission granted some thirty show children to view a corpse of a victim of the disease.

-The London County Council have decided to clear four slum areas in St. Luke's, Southwark, Poplar, and Clerkenwell, at a cost of ?500,000, on which buildings of approved sort will be erected, to accommodate at least 6,000 families.

-There is certainly need for the existence of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, as according to the report, as many as 2,206 cases of cruelty by parents were verified by their officials during the past month.

-The vicar of Standish, near Wigan, has given a piece of land for a nominal rent of one shilling a year, on which a company are building a weaving shed to

hold 400 looms, so as to find employment for female parishioners. This is practical Christianity.

-An imperial decree of the Sultan of Turkey has been issued, abolishing all measures that prevented the free movements of Armenians; and ordering the restoration of governmental assistance, of the churches, schools, and monasteries destroyed during the late troubles.

-A London paper estimates that the world consumes no fewer than 12,000,000,000 cigars! Taken in connection with the amount of the filthy weed that is consumed by chewing, the quantity is almost past comprehension, and in view of it, it is no wonder that the race is going down at such a fearfully rapid pace.

-For two and a half years the dog muzzling order has been strictly enforced in London, on the 28th ult. the order was revoked, as no case of rabies have been reported for several months, and it was really amusing to note the apparent satisfaction of the canines, at being freed from the annoying appendage.

-A new style of rapid-firing gun has just been completed in the United States that fires six-pound shells at the rate of sixty a minute. The highest speed that has hitherto been attained by the rapid firers was twenty-two shots per minute, but they were at random and not aimed. Truly the indications are that the great battle of Armageddon is not far in the future.

-Relations between the Italian Government and the Vatican are reported recently to have become still more strained than ever, owing to the action of the Minister of Public Worship, himself a Roman Catholic, who withdrew the State-paid stipend of the Archbishop of Sorrento because the latter reprimanded a parish priest for delivering a patriotic speech in favour of the Savoy dynasty.

-The War-Office has just accepted from each of two London firms, 13,000 bottles of soda water, for the use of the troops at the front. It would be a wonderful boon to the army if nothing stronger as a beverage were used by the soldiers. In this connection, it may be stated that the Boers have issued a proper order closing all hotel bars and a fine of ?600 and confiscation of all liquor for violation of the order.

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E. J. Waggoner

The *Chronicle* says that wounds made by the Manser rifle bullet heal very quickly, as was proved in the Cuban war. "The number of men who died ostensibly from wounds were generally victims of the commissariat department." That is usually the case. Eating, which is designed as a means of sustaining life, causes more deaths than almost any other one thing.

It seems that there are some compensations for prison life. The *Hospital* calls attention to the fact that in the countries where meat-eating prevails most, cancer shows the greatest increase, and adds: "Dr. Roger Williams points to the rarity of cancer in prisons and workhouses, where but little animal food is allowed, and hard work is exacted." Fortunately it is not necessary for anybody to go to prison to secure this advantage.

Proof that the dog muzzling order which has been in force for three years has not been a curse, and that its abolition cannot be counted a blessing, is afforded by the fact that within a few hours after the muzzles were removed, four persons who had been severely bitten by dogs were received at St. Thomas's Hospital. Muzzles may not be pleasant for dogs, neither are bites pleasant for men; and the human animals would seem to be entitled to first consideration.

The infallibility of the Pope of Rome is claimed by Monsignor Vaughan partly from the following text: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. xxviii. 20. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." John xiv. 16, 17. "When He, the Spirit of truth is come, and He will guide you into all truth." John xvi. 13. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John xiv. 26.

But all these things were spoken to all the disciples-to all believers, the church as a whole. There is no room for a pope of any kind, for the Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, and He is sent to the whole church, and to each individual impartially. The humblest believer is therefore far better qualified to declare the truth than the Pope of Rome is, for each believer has all the advantages that the Pope can possibly have, with this additional advantage, that he does not profess to be pope. Self-exaltation shuts away the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Christ is meek and lowly in heart, and the truth of God is revealed unto babes. Matt. xi. 25, 29. "If *any man* willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." John vii. 17.

A Russian man-of-war recently fired upon and sunk a Japanese ship for "illegal sealing," and the crew consisting of eighteen men were drowned. This appears in the newspapers without comment, as a mere incidental news item. Was it done because the Russians object to cruelty to animals?-Not by any means, but they wish to preserve those seals for themselves. Those seals represent money, and human life counts for nothing when money or its equivalent is in the other side of the scales. "The love of money is the root of all evil," and has been the cause of nearly all the wars that have ever occurred.

One of the serious charges against the theatre, and plays in general, is unconsciously made by a prominent member of the profession in a criticism of a new play. He said of it that it was "unnecessarily realistic, and consequently vulgar." Now nobody in the world would claim that every real thing is vulgar, and that there is no such thing as real respectability or morality. It follows, therefore, that the stage never deals with anything but the vicious side of life, and that the perfection of theatrical art is to present wickedness in a veiled form, suggesting the evil, and leaving the minds of the spectators to form the conclusions. The education of theatre-goers is therefore in the line of constructing, or rather filling out, combinations of evil. Let everyone decide whether that can produce as healthy characters as this rule: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things." Thank the Lord, there is yet virtue to think about.

One day last week a policeman saw a miserably-dressed man throw a brick through the plate-glass window of a tailor shop in South Kensington. He at once arrested the man, who was perfectly sober, and who said: "I have been walking about for many days, and I cannot get any work. This is a last resource. I want to be locked up, for I shall be better off in prison than wandering about hungry and homeless." When sentenced by the magistrate to two months' imprisonment with hard labour, the poor man expressed his thanks.

At about the same hour another man, a sign-writer smashed a plate-glass window in the city, and then walked up to a policeman, who asked him why he did it. "I am starving, and I wanted a lodging," was the reply.

It is pitiful that where there is food enough now for all, and thousands are living in luxury, some should be so pressed by hunger as to long for even the hard fare of prison with its accompanying hardships.

In writing of the Congregationalist Council in Boston, U.S.A., Washington Gladden, D.D., mentions as "agreements which marked a substantial progress in theology," the fact that "the method of creation is the method of evolution was strongly asserted by several speakers, and was not, so far as I know, contradicted by any. The rights of the Higher Criticism were also clearly affirmed, and there was no dissent." From this it appears that "progress" in theology means abandonment of the Bible. It is far better to be a Bible student than a theologian.

The German Emperor is determined that Germany shall possess a first class Navy, and the proposal that he has now made is that the existing Naval force shall be doubled by 1916, so far as battleships are concerned. Will the British Government feel bound, as in the case of Russia, to build twice as many ships, in order to preserve the ratio of England equal to the two strongest Powers? Well may it be asked, "Where is the race of armaments going to stop, and what burdens will the new century lay on mankind if this is the way we are going to open it?"

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E. J. Waggoner

"The children in this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." This is shown in the care taken by those who are striving for success in this world, to have their bodies in the best possible condition, while many professed Christians seem to think that it is almost irreverent to speak of health and the care of the body, in connection with the Gospel. Those who are running for an incorruptible crown ought to be far ahead physically, as well as spiritually, of those who have only a corruptible crown in view. Our "reasonable service" is to present our bodies "a living sacrifice," holy, acceptable unto God.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. 'I Am with Thee.' Isa. xliii. 1-7" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xliii. 1-7.)

1. "Yet now, thus saith Jehovah;
Who created thee, O Jacob; and who formed
thee, O Israel:
Fear thou not,

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for I have redeemed thee;
I have called thee by thy name; thou art
Mine.

2. When thou passest through waters, I am with
thee;
And through rivers, they shall not overwhelm
thee;
When thou walkest in the fire, thou shalt not
be scorched;
And the flames shall not take hold of thee.

3. For I am Jehovah, thy God;
The Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer;
I have given Egypt for thy ransom;
Cush and Seba in thy stead.

4. Because thou hast been precious in My sight,
Thou hast been honoured, and I have loved
thee;
Therefore will I give men instead of thee;
And peoples instead of thy soul.

5. Fear thou not, for I am with thee;
From the east I will bring thy children,
And from the west I will gather thee to-
gether;

6. I will say to the north, Give up;
And to the south, Withhold not;
Bring My sons from afar;
And My daughters from the ends of the
earth:

7. Every one that is called by My name,
Whom for My glory I have created;
Whom I have formed, yea, whom I have
made."

No attention should be paid to the chapter division here, although as a matter of convenience we have made it the division of a lesson. But there is no break in the subject, and we cannot get the full force of the scripture here quoted without

reading the last part of chapter xlii. "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord, He against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in His ways, neither were they obedient unto His law. Therefore He hath poured upon them the fury of His anger, and the strength of battle; and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by name; thou art Mine." And then follows the assurance that God is with them even in the fire and the water, and that they shall not be burned or overwhelmed. He who gave Israel into captivity is his Redeemer.

PRESENT HELP

Our versions make the mistake of rendering verse 2, "*I will be* with thee." The common version is better than the Revision, in that it places the words "will be" in *Italics*, indicating that they are not found in the Hebrew, as they are not. There is no verb expressed, as is often the case in the Hebrew, which is very brief. Now it is evident that when the copulative verb is omitted, the simplest form of it is that which should be supplied, which is the present tense, and not the future. Therefore it is correctly given by Lowth, "I am with thee." That exactly represents the character of God, whose name is I AM. There can be no doubt that God will be with us, when He is always present. With Him the present contains both the past and the future. He is always I AM; therefore in all the ages to come He will be the hope of His people. But if we read it, "I will be with thee," we are apt to forget the present. The present is all that we are concerned with; if we have God with us as "a very present help in trouble," we can ask for nothing more. With God it is always now.

THE SECRET OF DISCONTENT

"Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have, for Himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we may say,

"The Lord is my Helper; I will not fear;

What shall men do unto me?" Heb. 13:5-6, R.V.

Having Him, we have everything. That is true enough, and no one will deny it; and yet we very seldom act as though we believed it. And that shows how rare real Christianity is; for the very fundamental principle of Christianity is the continual presence of the Lord, and that He is everything. He who does not believe that God is always present, always loving, and always all-powerful to carry out His loving designs, does not believe in God. But whoever believes that must be content, because he knows that with the Lord he has all things. Rom. viii. 32. It follows, therefore, that anxiety and worry are marks of heathenism. "Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But seek ye

first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi. 31-33.

WHAT CONSTITUTES HEATHENISM

There is more to this than appears on the surface. We are not aware how often we proclaim ourselves heathen. Consider this very apparent distinction between the heathen and the worshiper of the true God: The heathen is not content without a god that he can see; while the Christian trusts the God who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, neither can see. 1 Tim. vi. 16. In short, the heathen cannot trust his god out of sight, while the Christian has as much confidence in his God when he cannot see Him as when he can. Now no one would ever complain if he could see all that he desired ready to hand. It is when we cannot see how we are to get on, that we begin to murmur or grow anxious. Yea, it is often a murmur, in that the desponding one says, "God has forsaken me." Because he cannot see God, he thinks that He does not exist. We doubt God, because we cannot see Him. We cannot endure that He should work behind a veil. Thus we proclaim ourselves heathen. People may think that it is not a very great thing to believe in God, but really to believe in God is everything. Real belief in God means freedom from all worry, because God cares for us, and tells us to cast all our care on him. 1 Peter v. 7.

GOD'S NEARNESS

"I am with thee." Therefore we are not to fear. Jesus came and said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," and He had just said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Matt. xxviii. 18, 20. He cannot leave us nor forsake us, because He fills heaven and earth. Jer. xxiii. 24. In every sunbeam, in every sparkling drop of water, in every breath of air, the Lord is present, and His presence is with us for the purpose of giving us rest. Ex. xxxiii. 14. How near He is, when we can feel His breath upon our cheek, yea, even in our nostrils. "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?" Deut. iv. 7.

CHRIST'S SAVING PRESENCE

"Fear not!" Why not? "For I am with thee." The Lord has left on record some examples of the saving power of His presence, so that we may learn not to fear. After the miracle of feeding the five thousand with five loaves, when the people were about to take Jesus by force, and make Him king, he constrained His disciples to get into the boat, and to go before Him to the other side of the sea, while He sent the multitudes away. The night came on, and "the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew," and the ship in which the disciples were "was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves," "and it was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them." Then suddenly they saw a form walking calmly on

the angry waters, and they cried out with fear; but Jesus said to them, "It is I;" literally, "I am;" "be not afraid." It is the same word, "Fear not, for I am with thee." They thought that they were alone on the waters, but His eye was upon them all the time. His name is I AM, and He was with them when they could not see Him as well as when He appeared to them.

THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER

When the disciples recognised the Lord, "they willingly received Him into the ship." Their fear was past. Then what? "Immediately the ship was at the land whither they went." He is the beginning and the end. With His presence there is the fulfilment of all things. The task that is but just begun is finished if it is begun in Him. They feared no more, after Jesus came to them; yet there was no more reason to fear before they saw Him, than there was afterwards. Would we fear in any circumstances whatever, if we could see Jesus right before us, or at our right hand? You say, "No; not at all." But we do fear, and yet He is present. "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." Ps. xvi. 8. Are our fears due to the fact that we do not have confidence in the saving power of the Lord? or because we do not believe that He is present? In either case, they are a remnant of heathenism that we have not yet shaken off.

IN THE FIRE

There were three Hebrew captives in Babylon, who proved the power of the presence of the Lord. A stern decree had been issued, commanding everybody to bow down before a golden image that the king had set up. The penalty for disregarding the decree was burning in a furnace. They unqualifiedly refused to bow down to the image. Here was a test as to who was God. Was it the king and his idols? or was it the God of Israel? If the three men had bowed down through fear, what would their act have said? It would have said that they did not believe in God; that they could not trust in Him to deliver them from the king and his idols. But their profession of faith was more than a theory. They knew whom they had believed, and that their God was able to deliver them. So into the fiery furnace they went, where the fire was so hot that it slew the men who had to draw near to the outside of it to cast them in. But what of them? God had said, "When you walkest in the fire, thou shalt not be scorched; and the flame shall not take hold on thee;" and so it was. Only their bands were burned off, and the three men rose and walked erect in the midst of the furnace; for God was with them. Then the king commanded them to be brought out, "and the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed upon them." Dan. iii. 27.

PRESENT THOUGH VISIBLE

Did you ever think that we hear nothing more about the form of the fourth after the three men were taken from the furnace? He was clearly seen for a few moments, walking to and fro with them in the flames; then the doors were opened and the men were called forth, and their companion disappeared. Did He forsake them? Not at all; He was as near them when they could not see Him as when He appeared. In fact, there is nothing to show that the three men in the fire saw Him at all. His appearance was more for the benefit of the king and his idolatrous court, then for the three men themselves. They knew that He was present without seeing

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Him. It was the consciousness of His presence that made them able to stand unmoved in the presence of the threatened punishment. God is unchangeable. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and for ever; therefore He is as near when unseen as He is when He is seen. They who believe and trust in His presence when they cannot see Him will at the last have the privilege of seeing His face, and beholding Him for evermore.

DWELLING WITH EVERLASTING BURNINGS

There is coming a time when "the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." 2 Peter iii. 12. "The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Then the inhabitants of the earth shall be burned, and few men will be left. Isa. xxiv. 6. Who will be the few men left? Only those who are able to dwell with the devouring fire, and amidst everlasting burnings. Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15. Those who make the Most High their habitation, being confident of His presence, even though it may seem that He has forsaken them, will be able to dwell in the midst of the fire that devours the earth, for they dwell with God, and "our God is a consuming fire." Heb. xii. 29. This promise in Isaiah will be very real to many before very long. But none will be able to trust in it when the great test comes, except those who have lived in the consciousness of God's presence, and the proof of it in the deliverance from sin.

GOD WITH US

What is the practical daily result of having God with us? Well, of course, in the first place it is that we have life, and breath, and all things, for "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Everybody in the world gets this from the Lord; but those who acknowledge His presence, and who delight in it, get benefits that others do not. Of Christ we read that God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power, and that He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." Acts x. 38. So the benefit that those receive, who love and acknowledge the presence of God with them, is the power to do good to others. Now remember that the name of Jesus is "Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us." Matt. i. 23. He is with us all

the days until the end, and therefore God is with us, that we, like Him, may do good.

Of the child Samuel we read, "And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." 1 Sam. iii. 19. The result of God's being with him was that he spoke "as the oracles of God," so that his words were too valuable to be lost. If we invite God to stay with us, we must consent to allow Him to manage all our affairs, and us too; but that ought not to be considered a hardship, since His way is perfect.

Perhaps the most instructive case of all, as illustrating the presence of God with a man, is that of Joseph. "The patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt; but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his affliction, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh." Acts vii. 9, 10. Note this, that God was with him when he went down to Egypt, although he went as a slave. It was not merely in the prosperity that God was with him, but in his affliction. Indeed, it was God who sent Joseph into Egypt. When Joseph arrived in Egypt, he was sold again, but the Lord did not forsake him. "The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian." Gen. xxxix. 1, 2. But it was not all smooth before him, even though God was with him. Joseph was falsely accused, and without being given any chance to clear himself, he was cast into prison. Surely the Lord had forgotten him then. Not at all. "The Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. And the keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper." Gen. xxxix. 21-23. The Lord is not afraid or ashamed to go to prison, so that the fact that a man is in prison does not prove that the Lord has left him. Indeed, the Lord is often in prison. See Matt. xxv. 36, 43.

After a long time, and much weary waiting, Joseph was taken from prison, and placed over the land of Egypt. He became practically the king of Egypt. He was ruler over all the land, and all that he lacked was a seat on the throne. Joseph did not know what he went to prison for until Pharaoh sent for him; and then he found out that that was the way to the place of power. But Joseph did not spend his time mourning, although he could not see the way out of prison. We can look back to that time, and seeing the end at the same time that we see the experience that he passed through, it seems to us a matter of course that Joseph should do as he did. But we must remember that to Joseph things looked as black and hopeless during those years in prison as they would to us. If we could see our way clear, we should never murmur, nor doubt the presence and goodness of God. Joseph could not see ahead, but he did not mind that; God was with him all the way, and that was sufficient; he did not need to see ahead. If we would but remember that He knows the way that we take, and can see the end from the beginning, it would save us much time and useless despondency. God is with us in the dark as well as in the light, in fire, and water, and prison, as well as in times of ease and prosperity.

"Honest Work" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

The Rev. Dr. Newman Hall, nearly eighty-four years of age, has been ill for a few weeks, but writes to the *Christian* to correct the impression that his illness was due to overwork. He says:-

Preaching Christ has been the chief joy of my life since eighteen years of age. I was never injured by it-never caught cold by open-air preaching, never became hoarse by exercise of voice, never lost my sleep through the anxiety and excitement of meetings and addresses.

Hard, honest work never yet injured anybody, for to do work was what man was made for. It is true that many people have died from working when, because of a feeble condition brought on by carelessness or wrong habits of living, they were not fit for work; but work of any legitimate kind never yet of itself injured anybody. It is the work done at table that is responsible for the most of the langour, lassitude, the jaded and "overworked" condition, of which so many complain.

At the half-yearly meeting of the "Catholic Truth Society," Father Maturin, an ex-member of the Church of England, expressed his belief that the Ritualist movement in the Anglican Church is bound to end at Rome. Nobody who understands the situation can have any doubt of it, since it is wholly Roman to begin with.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Woes of Intemperance" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?"

"They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine."

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." Prov. xxiii. 29-35.

Place with this lesson a few other texts. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Prov. xx. 1.

"Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess: but be filled with the Spirit." Eph. v. 17, 18.

Let us consider the last text first. In wine there is excess, or riot, as the Revision has it. Here we have the answer to those who talk about taking wine in moderation, but not going to excess. Take notice that the text does not say of wine in it one can go to excess, but that excess is in wine excess. Wherever there is wine there is excess.

How much wine must one have in order for it to be said of him that he has wine?-No more than a single drop. We say, "a drop of wine." A barrel of wine is nothing more than a mass of drops of wine. The single drop is wine just as surely as is the barrel. Therefore if one has but a drop of wine, he has excess, and it can be truly said of him that he has drunk to excess. Excess is in the wine, in every drop of it, so that one cannot have a single drop of it without going to excess. One drop is too much. All the evil that is in a hogshead of wine is in the one drop, only of course not to the same degree. The evil that is in the large quantity is only the evil of the single drop multiplied. There is no element in the barrel of wine that is not in the one drop. The thing to do therefore is to let it alone.

Wine is deceitful. That is the reason why the one who uses it never thinks that he has too much. Men think that it supplies a demand of the system, when the fact is that it creates the demand which it seems to supply, but which it never satisfies, because the more one takes, the greater the demand.

People drink too drown trouble. Yes, and people commit suicide for the same purpose. When a man is dead he knows no trouble, or anything else. But that is the worst remedy in the world for trouble. Drink helps a man who is in trouble in just the same way that suicide does: it takes away his consciousness, so that the one who by drinking forgets his troubles also forgets everything else.

Drink does not help the man in trouble, but it helps people into trouble. At first it produces exhilaration of spirits; but that is deception, for the good feeling is not real. Everything appears in a rosy light, and the man thinks that he is the happiest person in the world. He thinks that he can do anything that he undertakes, and he feels well in body. But he is no better off than he was before, and is no stronger, for that which stimulates does not strengthen. Then there comes the reaction. Just to the extent that one is exhilarated, is there a corresponding depression of spirits.

Our nerves were given us for a definite purpose, namely, to warn us of danger, and also to enable us to appreciate that which is good,-to discern good from evil. If they be excited unnecessarily, they lose this power of discernment, and cannot warn us of danger. If a bow be kept bent all the time it loses its elasticity, and at last will not respond to the one who draws it. So if the nerves be stimulated, they in time lose the power to respond to legitimate use. This is true of every part of the body. The brain suffers most of all, so that the one who uses stimulants, even though they may for a time seem to make his brain more active, are diminishing its usefulness. So drunkenness destroys the intellect. Therefore we have the injunction not to be drunk with wine, in connection with the exhortation to understand what the will of the Lord is.

"Thine eyes shall behold strange women." There is no greater cause of impurity in the world than the use of stimulants and intoxicants. It is utterly impossible for an intemperate man to be a pure man. The spirit of wine is in direct opposition to the Spirit of God. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." James iii. 17. But wine destroys the sense of Divine things, working against the knowledge of the will of the Lord. Therefore it tends to impurity. Since it is taken solely for the pleasure that it gives to the flesh, it is but

natural that it should stimulate the desires of the flesh. Absolute temperance, in the fear of God, would for ever settle the question of "social evil." But this cannot be brought about by any wholesale methods. The individual must be dealt with, and brought to the knowledge of God.

They that tarry at the wine have contentions. "Pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated," is the wisdom that comes from above, and the stimulant that deadens the perception of God's will necessarily tends to make one impatient and irritable. An intemperate man, cannot be a patient man. On the other hand, a perfectly temperate man can never be an impatient man. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, is the order that is given in the Scriptures, and it is not accidental. 2 Peter i. 5, 6.

Too often people mistake the evil and the source of intemperance, and therefore their efforts against it are futile. The sin of drunkenness does not consist in taking a certain amount of liquid from a glass. One may take water and be innocent. Neither would there be any sin in taking any amount of any kind of liquor, if there were no evil results from it. The sin consists not, in the mere act of drinking, but in the injury done to the temple of God, and to the consequent robbery of God, in the fact that the service due Him cannot be rendered. But this state of things is

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often arrived at in many other ways than the drinking of intoxicating liquors. The most of the drunkards in the world are made at the home table, even in homes where liquors are never found. The stimulating and even intoxicating tea and coffee accomplish the same results although to a lesser degree, and lead to the use of the stronger stimulants. No one ever saw a confirmed tea-drinker who was not nervous and easily irritated, especially if he or she were deprived of the accustomed stimulant a little longer than usual. Tea and patience are never done up in the same parcel. It would not be so if tea and coffee were food, but they are not, and they supply no want of the body, but are only detrimental.

Overeating, which is the almost inevitable result of the modern method of cooking, as one cook vies with all others to see what complicated dishes can be produced, is a prolific source of drunkenness. It is in itself one of the grossest forms of intemperance. Victuals are prepared, not with reference to the absolute needs of the body, but with reference to perverted tastes, and to the creating of perverted taste. So people are led on by the tickling of their palates to eat far more than is necessary, and that, too, of food which is in itself the producer of poisons in the system, which have the same effect as alcoholic liquors. Many earnest and conscientious temperance women labour hard to eradicate the evil of intemperance, while at the same time they are working with all their might to promote it, by means of the food which they set upon their tables. Those who think to stop intemperance, even in a single individual, by working solely against alcoholic liquors, while they pay no attention to the matter of food, are working to little purpose.

But some one will say that not all people who drink are impure, and that many people who drink do not exhibit the affects here mentioned; and concerning tea, coffee, spices, and rich foods, they will most certainly say that they know many

people who use these things and are not injured at all. Even allowing that this were true, it would not prove that these things are not injurious. There are many men who have put their heads in lion's mouth, and have been uninjured, but that would not be taken as proof that it is not dangerous, even beneficial, to put one's head in a lion's mouth. Many men have done this thing once too often, and it has been found that a seemingly innocent lion is not to be trifled with. It is far safer to keep one's head out of such places. But the fact is, that no one can indulge in any of these things without injury. It is not always apparent, but it is none the less certain. A person indulges his appetite for many years, with seemingly no evil results, and he thinks that he is an exception; but suddenly he dies after a very short illness, or sometimes with no warning at all, and people wonder how so strong a man should be taken off so suddenly. If the foundations are undermined, the house cannot stand, no matter how strongly it be built.

The whole matter is summed up in a few words. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. x. 31. It is our duty, which we owe to God, to eat "for strength, and not for drunkenness." The needs of the body, and not "the desires of the flesh and of the mind," should be attended to. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 7, 8.

"All Responsibilities His" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

A Christian lady, when asked "If God gave her a choice, whether she would prefer to live," replied, "she would not make a choice, but would refer the matter back to Him." So does the holy soul decline all responsibilities of its own and confides alone in the wisdom of the Father.

"Little Folks. 'The First Adam'" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

Read in your Bibles in the first two chapters of Genesis all that you can find about Adam, the first man that God made, and then we will talk over together some of the things that we are told about him. Notice all these things particularly, for we shall speak of them again next week.

First, God said: "Let us make man in our image." In the first chapter of Luke we read that "Adam was the son of God." He was a perfect likeness of his Father; so that all who looked upon him could see at once that he was a child of God.

Next God said: "Let them have dominion." Over the whole earth and everything upon it, - the beasts, the cattle, the creeping things; over the air and all the birds that fly in it; over the waters, the fish, and all "whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea," Adam was to have dominion; that is, all these things were to be his kingdom, he was to rule.

What do we call one who has a kingdom? A king, you will say at once. And how is a king distinguished,-what is the mark of a king or queen? If you were in a large assembly of people among which was a king or queen, I think I know what you would look for; the crown, would you not? And you would know that the one upon whose head you saw it was the king. But it is not always, in fact it is very seldom, that the kings and queens of earth wear their heavy gold crowns; they can put them on and off just as they like.

Queen Victoria has not worn her crown more than twenty times during all the sixty-two years of her reign.

Adam, the king of the earth, had a crown, but it was not like that. It was not something that could be put on, and the burden of which would make his head ache, but it was a part of himself: "Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour." His crown of glory was the shining forth of his own kingly character, the image of God in which he was made; it was "a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

In the kingdoms of this world where everything has been turned upside down by sin, it is the crown that makes the king; that is, one is *made king* by *being crowned*. But that is not God's way. He made man a king by giving him His own kingly nature; and this royal character was itself the crown of glory that encircled his head. He was *crowned* by being *made king*, and not made king by being crowned.

But although Adam himself was perfect, and lived in such a beautiful home, and was king over every living thing, there was still something wanting to make him quite happy. God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone." He had no companions who could enter into his plans and feelings, and share the kingdom with him.

God brought before Adam everything that He had made, but among them all "there was not found an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man."

While Adam slept, God pierced his side, and from his own being formed a suitable companion for him. "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." But Eve herself came from the side of Adam, so the whole human family really came from him. He was to be the head of all the human race, and all who lived and reigned with him on the earth would be his own children, formed from his body and bearing his image-just *himself multiplied*.

Think what a beautiful picture of happiness and peace; man in the perfect image of God, crowned with glory, one happy family ruling over everything in the earth. But Adam, as you know, fell from his high position as king; he lost his crown, disgraced himself and his family, and sold all their possessions for nothing.

Yet in all these things of which we have spoken God had been "preaching the Gospel beforehand," showing how all that man, lost through sin could be brought back to him. Next week we will talk of this again, and see what "good tidings" God has hidden there for us.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

-Two powerful battle ships and one cruiser have just been ordered added to the French navy.

-A terrible epidemic of dysentery is reported in Japan. Out of 50,000 persons attacked, 12,000 have died.

-Last year 25,000 persons were killed by wild animals in India. Tigers were responsible for about 1,000 deaths.

-The English Presbyterian Church has ten hospitals connected with its missions in China and India, where 30,000 patients are annually treated.

-A baby while sleeping in its cradle in a village near Nice, was pounced upon by an eagle and carried off, and no trace of the child has been discovered.

-From a careful computation of the church-going people of London, it is estimated that there are three main 3,750,000 persons who never enter into place of worship.

-To care for the starving people in India, the Government has endeavoured to provide places for them on public works, and over half a million are so employed at present.

-Smallpox following hard on famine has, according to the latest news from Mombasa, been making fearful ravages in certain sections of British East Africa, the natives dying by the thousand.

-The Japanese empire has established a national system of education, in which it is decreed that "religion in any form," shall "no longer be taught in any of the schools receiving financial aid from the national funds."

Pope Leo XIII. is declared to be worth ?4,000 ,000. The Christ and the Pope professes to represent went through the world without even a home. It is expected that most of this money will be left the Catholic church!

-Rich gold deposits have been discovered on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Okhotsk, and already expeditions are planning to brave the severe weather conditions existing there, in search of the precious metal. What will not a man give in exchange for gold?

-The excavations in the ruins of Babylon have demonstrated the fact that the "broad walls of Babylon" were one hundred and thirty-eight feet thick. There was first an outer wall twenty-four feet thick, and inner wall forty-three feet thick, "built of burnt brick bearing the stamp and impress of Nebuchadnezzar," and between these two walls there was a filling of seventy-one feet.

-The Transvaal leads the world in the amount of gold produced 1898. Australia comes second and the United States is third. The world's output of gold for 1898 is worth ?57,400,000.

-Fashion has now decreed that owls must be sacrificed, because there the others are wanted for spring trimmings. In spite of all the protest to the contrary, it would seem as though the slaying of birds for ornamentation is on the increase, rather than diminishing.

-According to the report of the London School Board there are over 55,000 of the pupils in attendance at the schools, that are underfed, and a movement is on foot to augment the voluntary agencies that work in this direction, whereby all these can be supplied with at least one meal during the day.

-On account of the withdrawal by the British Admiralty of so many freight boats between the United States and England, to be used as transports to the Transvaal War, at Boston, U.S.A., every elevator is filled to its utmost capacity with grain, and over 1,000 loaded freight cars stand on the sidetracks waiting to be emptied.

-The Head Pension Agent of the United States reports that his bureau has on file 20,000 applications for pensions arising out of the Spanish war-a number which implies that more than half the total force is engaged in that brief campaign were killed, wounded or disabled. This is, of course, a palpable fraud, but it indicates to what lengths men will go in these days for the sake of obtaining a little money without working for it in an honest and legitimate manner.

-The Christian Endeavour Society will hold a world's convention in London in 1900. Forty thousand delegates are expected to be present, and the convention will take the form of a huge camp-meeting instead of being held in halls in various parts of the city. Two huge tents, capable of holding 10,000 persons each will be brought over from America, and it is expected that around these will be pitched up words of 1,000 smaller tents, which will form a "white city" which will be remembered in the history of religious gatherings.

-A prospect of terrible suffering is reported from Cape Nome, Alaska. This is the latest bonanza in the gold fields. According to reports, the metal is picked up in fabulous quantities along the seashore. There is plenty of gold, but there are at least a thousand more men in the camp than can be supplied with food and shelter. The men have been warned, but in their desire to be on the ground in the spring, they could not be induced to leave. Coal is from \$15 to \$20 per ton, and no supplies can reach them during the winter.

-An international congress, under the patronage of the French Government, has been appointed to be held in September, 1900, to consider the question of Sunday as a legally and socially recognized day of rest. Representatives of both Catholic and Protestant clergy are on the committee, which will include members of Parliament, economists, and delegates from various commercial and manufacturers' unions. The congress will be open to all who are interested in the programme, but only active members and delegates will have a right to take part in the sessions.

-Twenty-two traction engines with trucks have just been dispatched from England to South Africa for use in the Transvaal military operations. They weigh about fifteen tons each, are capable of carrying forty tons, and travelling thirty or forty miles per day. One engine can do the work of eighty horses. In the tests they were submitted to, no obstacle seemed too great for them to cope with. Trees were lifted with roots attached, deep gullies navigated, and under the skilful guidance of the operators they seemed as sinuous as serpents, as they were guided about.

"The Only Way" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

"Could not God have devised some other way to save man?"

Who has not heard this foolish question asked? Yet foolish though it be, it must be answered, because it indicates an entire lack of comprehension of the nature and greatness of the Gospel of salvation; and that ignorance must be helped, in order that the questioner may lay hold of the hope set before him.

The question is foolish, in that it does not become people who are in deadly peril to stand and argue over the means provided for their rescue. Here is a man in deep water, and he cannot swim. He is in danger of drowning; indeed, he will drown if help does not come. Now a rope is thrown to him, but instead of grasping it, he begins to question. "Is this the only rope that has been provided for the saving of the drowning? Could not some other mode of rescue have been hit upon? Why could it not have been just as well to throw out a plank?" Before the man could have time to finish all his questions, he would go down.

The question is the more foolish, because it is not asked with any thought that the means of salvation that God has provided are not sufficient to save mankind. If there were danger that the board over which a man must pass from a burning building to safety might break, and let him fall into the street far below, there would be excuse for examining it carefully. But the question is asked merely to satisfy an idle curiosity, which, as before said, ill becomes a lost person.

The question implies that salvation is not a very good thing. The one who asks it seems to think that almost any man can carry about in his head three or four schemes for saving men, each of them about as good as the one that God has provided; and here again is it dishonouring to God. Infinite wisdom has provided only one way of salvation, but finite man would plan half a dozen.

But to come to the question itself. Here is the fact: Speaking of the Name of Jesus, in which the former lame man stood before the Council a perfectly sound man, the Apostle Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12. This being the case, it is useless to look further, or to speculate about what might have been.

We may and should, however, consider the way of salvation, because it is plainly set forth before us; and when this is done there must be an end of all speculation. God has set forth Jesus "to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed." Rom. iii. 25. We are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Verse 24. This is the way, and the only way that has been provided. Could there have been another way?

Who is this Jesus? The answer to this question will settle the other one. What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He? He was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, but "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. i. 4. He in whom we have redemption through His blood, is "the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and

upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." Col. i. 15-17. What think ye? Could there have been any other way? is there anything outside of Him?

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without [that is, apart from] Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John i. 1-4. That which fallen man needs is life; and he can get it only from Him who is life, and who alone has life to bestow. Angels are created beings, living by the power of Christ, just the same as men, and therefore one of them or all of them could no more bring salvation to mankind than any man could.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God because He laid down His life for us." 1 John iii. 16. God has purchased the church "with His own blood." Acts xx. 28. He is the only God, and the living God, therefore He says, "What could have been done more for My vineyard that I have not done in it?" Isa. v. 4. When God Himself can find nothing else to do for men, it is useless for men to seek further.

One thing more. God must be just, at the same time that He is the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. He that believeth not is condemned; but none could justly be condemned, if there was a possible way of salvation, that had been left untried. The way which God sets forth is a tried way, and He has ventured His reputation and His life upon it. There will not be found in the Judgment of the last day a single mouth opened in criticism of God, but all will admit that He is just, and that He has done all that could be done for the salvation of man. The provision is ample enough for all, and "now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." Therefore make haste, and "lay hold on eternal life."

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 46.

E. J. Waggoner

At a recent meeting of the Playgoers' Club, at the Hotel Cecil, an actor said that the Viennese audiences "did not dine heavily before play-going. It dined early, and went with all its wits about it. Would not the British merchant forego his big dinner in the interests of dramatic art. The existing methods of play-going in England did not favour that unquenchable joy in dramatic art which the Viennese exhibited." Shall church-goers wait for theatre-goers to show them how to derive "unquenchable joy" from the service of God? Will they not rather set a far higher example, and, by recognising that light spirits and heavy feeding never go together, so live that their dinner will never interfere with their ability to appreciate spiritual things, but will, on the contrary, be a help?

November 23, 1899

"The Blood of Sprinkling" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

The longsuffering of God had waited on Pharaoh in vain, so far as he was concerned. Through many and grievous plagues God had preserved him, to show His power in him, that the name of God might be declared throughout all the earth. And truly the power of God was manifested, and manifested, as it always is, for salvation; but Pharaoh would not believe, and so it was ineffectual in his case.

Delay was no longer of any avail. Judgments were unheeded, and mercy was despised; and the Lord was about to send all his plagues upon the heart of Pharaoh, and to put him off from the earth. Yet one more chance would be given him. By one act every person, both of the children of Israel and of the Egyptians might show their faith in God if they had any.

Directions were given concerning the preparation of a lamb. Each family was to have one, and to kill it in the evening. And so the order ran: "They shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it." "It is the Lord's Passover. For I will pass through the land this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; . . . and the blood shall be to you a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." Ex. xii. 6, 7, 11-13.

The directions were very specific. Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and told them how to kill a lamb, and continued: "Ye shall take of a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." Verses 21-23.

Here was perfect equality. There was no difference made between Jew and Gentile, because the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. Rom. x. 12. If the Jew did not believe, he would suffer with the unbelieving Egyptians; and by the same rule if the Egyptians believed, he would be saved with the believing Jew. Faith is the distinguishing mark of the true Israelites.

What is all this to us? What interests have we in the history of that affair that took place nearly thirty-five hundred years ago? Just this: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. xv. 4. The lamb that was slain signified Christ, who is our Passover, and who is sacrificed for us. 1 Cor. v. 7.

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God's people are still in Egypt, and the Lord has set his hand again the second time to deliver them from the house of bondage. Isa. xi. 15, 16. The darkness that covered the land of Egypt was but a sign of the darkness that covers the earth, and the gross darkness that covers the people, when the Lord shall arise upon them, and His glory shall be seen upon them, as the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings.

Therefore we come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling. We are not redeemed from our vain manner of life by corruptible things as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Peter i. 18, 19. We have all sinned, and therefore sentence of death has been passed upon us, but we are justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood, to show His righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God." Rom. iii. 23-25.

The blood is the life, and this is what Christ poured out to us and for us on the cross. "Being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Rom. viii. 9, 10. He died for all, so that all, without exception, may appropriate the blood. And He lives for all, so that all may take shelter under His life.

Faith takes hold of the sacrifice, made "once for all," and appropriates it. Everywhere we may see it, for the drops of blood shed by Christ have fertilised the soil even of the sin-cursed earth, so that it brings forth bud, and flower, and fruit, the stalk and the ear and the full corn in the ear. But for that blood, which flows from the throne of God in a "pure river of water of life, as clear as crystal," and distils to the earth in the dew and the rain, the earth would be but a desert-a chaotic mass. Christ Himself has sprinkled the blood upon us; for "as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. v. 18.

What have we then to do? Abide in the house! God is and has been our dwelling place in all generations. Life only by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for each one of us. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Cor. v. 19); hence He has purchased us "with His own blood." Acts xx. 28. If we abide under the blood,-the life of God,-He must pass over us when He goes out to destroy, for "He cannot deny Himself." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," and be as secure as He is. Living by faith in Him, it is no longer we, but God living and working in us, so that He sees not us, but His own life. What a sure dwelling place!

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save me from its guilt and power."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. God's Witnesses. Isa. xliii. 8-13" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xliii. 8-13.)

"Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the peoples be assembled; who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear, and say, It is truth. Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My Servant, whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He; before Me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after Me. I even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour. I have declared, and I have saved, and I have showed, and there was no strange god among you; therefore ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was, I am He; and there is none that can deliver out of My hand; I will work, and who shall let it?"

A NEW CHALLENGE

This lesson brings us to the very heart of the trial. All nations are challenged to come into court with their witnesses, and justify themselves in their opposition to God. They refuse to submit to His authority. In that case therefore they ought to be able to show themselves superior to Him. This is a repetition of the call made in the forty-first chapter, but the student will notice that the Lord abates something of His demands upon them. In the former instance He called upon them all to come, and to produce their strong reasons, saying, "Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen; let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." That was altogether too much, and there was none that could utter a word. Now the Lord says, "Who among them can declare this, and show us former things?" They cannot tell things to come; very well, try something easier: show what has happened. Surely that is the least that could be asked of proud boasters.

THE PROPHET THE ONLY TRUE HISTORIAN

But they cannot do even that. It requires just as much prophetic power to

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tell correctly what has happened as it does to tell what shall take place in the future. There are thousands of histories written, but after one has read all of them, he does not know the truth of the things concerning which they treat. Even many of the events recorded never took place, but are merely local gossip that grew with the telling, and after the lapse of hundreds of years, is taken as fact. Everybody knows how a rumour will grow, and how in a very few days it will be repeated in all seriousness by the most well-intentioned persons as a veritable fact. It is said that Von Ranke, one of the greatest historians, has an object lesson in this, which made him very careful in his writing. He was absent from home for a few days, and during his absence an accident occurred, by which

several persons were injured. On his return he tried to ascertain the facts in the case, but none of his informants, all of whom saw the affair, agreed in their accounts of it. One had one story, and another had another. Of course all could not be correct, and it was quite likely that all were more or less wrong. Then the historian said, "If I cannot get the exact facts about a thing that happened in my own neighbourhood within a few days past, when I can talk with the eyewitnesses, how can I be sure of what happened hundreds of years ago?" We do not need to go abroad for an experience in this respect; who has not had many similar experiences in trying to learn the details of any affair? Carlyle, himself, an historian, says, "Foolish History, ever, more or less, the written epitomised synopsis of Rumour, knows so little that were not as well unknown." Even when we have the exact facts recorded, the human historian cannot tell us the truth of what lay behind the events: the motives of the actors. He draws inferences, but he cannot read the heart; and so the real history remains a sealed book. Only in the Judgment will the exact truth of all things be known. When the hidden things of darkness are brought to light, and the counsels of the heart are made manifest (1 Cor. iv. 5), at the coming of the Lord, then we can study the history of the world with certainty.

HOW TO STUDY HISTORY

But can we not know anything of the past? Must we discount everything that we read in history? Is all study of history useless? Yes and no. We may study history profitably or we may study it to no profit whatever. We may know some of the things that have happened in the past, if we study in the light of the Word of God, who was, and is, and is to come, and who therefore knows things past and present and future equally well. He can do what He challenges the heathen to do; tell former things and also what shall be. Whoever studies history, and ignores the revelation which God has given, might far better let the study alone. It is to him worse than useless. God, who knows the hearts of men, always tells the exact truth, and He alone can do it. If one will first become acquainted with God's Word, knowing it not merely as a record of facts, but as a living power, he may read history written by men with profit; for being filled with the Spirit of truth, he will be able to discern the truth and error, even of things of which the Bible has not spoken particularly. When we say that the Bible is the place to study history, we do not mean that the Bible contains an account of all that has happened in the past, nor even of all that it may be useful to know; but the Bible does contain an outline of all history, even of what are called "pre-historic times," so that it is a faithful guide, and it enables one to know the truth. This is the promise of Jesus, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth." John viii. 31, 32. Man cannot tell the truth even of what is passing in his own heart; how foolish then are his assumptions of wisdom in the face of God!

GOD ALONE SPEAKS TRUTH

"Let them bring forth their witnesses that they may be justified." If men could tell the truth, the whole truth, then it follows that they would be justified. That is self-evident. If men could substantiate their statements, if they could make their words stand for ever, then there could be no case against them. In that case, God would be disgraced, because their words are against Him. But every day proves how utterly unable man is to tell the truth, even when he does not mean to deceive. On the contrary, the Word of God is settled for ever in heaven, and even the thoughts of His heart endure to all generations. Ps. cxix. 89; xxxiii. 11. The instead of our seeking to justify ourselves, let us hear the Word of God, and say, "It is truth."

MEN TO BE GOD'S MOUTHPIECES

Now God speaks to the people whom He has called from the north and the south, and from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by His name, and says, "Ye are My witnesses." God has spoken, but His word is denied; His character has been impeached; it is evident, therefore, that He must have somebody to testify in His behalf, if He shall win His case. This is not theory, but actual fact. If there could be no one found to testify for God, He would lose His case; for the charge against Him is that He is not able to save. He started out by making man, and placing him over the earth as its lord; man has lost the dominion; he has turned against the One whom he was designed to represent; if therefore God were unable to win anybody back to Him, to be faithful and true witnesses for Him, that would prove that He was not God. So God must have witnesses, and have them He will, even if he should be obliged to make new men out of stones. Although God has spoken, He rests His case on the testimony of men. It is by the lives of men, that the world is to learn the truth of God. John xvii. 21.

We are associated with Jesus as witnesses in this case. The Lord says, "Ye are My witnesses, and My Servant whom I have chosen." See chapter xlii. 1-4. From Him we are to learn the kind of witness to be rendered. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John i. 18. Only in Christ can we know who God is, so that we can testify in His behalf, and we can know Him only as He is revealed in us. Let us first then study Christ as a witness for God.

CHRIST THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS

His name is the Word of God, and He is also called Faithful and True. Rev. xix. 11-13. He is "the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." Rev. iii. 14. Before Pontius Pilate He "witnessed a good confession" (1 Tim. vi. 13), and said to him, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice." John xviii. 37. He Himself is the truth. John xiv. 6. In Him all fulness dwells, therefore He tells the whole truth; and there is no unrighteousness in Him, so that He tells nothing but the truth. He is therefore a

perfect witness, He does not testify of hearsay, but says, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." John iii. 11.

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Jesus was able to render perfect testimony, because "God was with Him." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." 2 Cor. v. 19. But God is with us, beseeching by us as He was by Christ, and we are ambassadors in the stead of Christ. Therefore if we do not properly represent the Lord it is because we reject His presence.

THE SPIRIT OF THE TRUE WITNESS

When God calls our attention to His Servant whom He upholds, He says, "I have put My Spirit upon Him." Isa. xlii. 1. "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." 1 John v. 6. Without the Spirit of truth, no one can tell the truth; his very life is a lie. So before Christ sent His disciples forth, He said, "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts i. 8. We are therefore placed on an equality with Christ, in the matter of witnessing, since we have the same Spirit given to us that He had.

REPROOFS OF INSTRUCTION

Wisdom cries, and says, "Turn you at My reproof; behold, I will pour out My Spirit upon you, I will make known My words unto you." Prov. i. 23. This is in keeping with the message of comfort. The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, comes with conviction; if we turn at His reproofs, then we receive the fulness of the Spirit, and thus we know the words of God; and then the Spirit dwelling in us will testify of the truth. This testimony will not be merely verbal, but will be the testimony of the life, revealing itself in "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. v. 22-23); in short, all the attributes of God.

THE WITNESS OF CREATION

All nature testifies of God. His everlasting power and Divinity are revealed in everything that He has made. Rom. i. 20. Even among heathen peoples, where the Scriptures were never seen, He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave rain and fruitful seasons, providing food and joy for the people. Acts. xiv. 17. "The heavens declare the glory of God." From inanimate creation we learn the kind of witness that the Lord desires. It is simply the revealing of His indwelling presence. It is simply to let the world know that He is. In that He is, He is in us; therefore if our lives do not reveal the character of God, we are false witnesses; we make Him seem to be other than He is.

God has a claim upon all men; all are rightfully His witnesses. He has summoned all, and has given to all the witnesses, even the blood of Christ-His own life. There is not a soul on earth that does not live solely by the life of God,

the life that is secured to us by the death of Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Since all receive life from Him, and it is His own life, it is self-evident that the character of God, and that only, ought to be revealed in all. If any do not reveal the character of God, they say either that it is not the life of God which they have (which is a lie), or else that God is such an one as they are, which is also a lie. Every one who testifies against God is therefore one of God's witnesses who has perjured himself.

GOD ALONE HAS POWER

In what God has done for us when there was obviously no other helper, He has given evidence that He is God. Verse 2 was specially enacted when Israel came out of Egypt, and crossed the Red Sea. All the idols of Egypt had been overthrown, and the things in which the Egyptians trusted, were shown to be useless, and were destroyed. God saved His people when there was no strange god among them, and they acknowledged that Jehovah was a great King above all gods. By His working among them they were witnesses that He is God. We ourselves are in the same position. Every day are we unconscious witnesses that He is God. Whatever gods men serve besides the only true God, are gods of their own making, and therefore of less power than the men themselves. Every day men breathe, without giving the matter a thought; they even lie down at night and sleep, losing all consciousness, yet they continue breathing. Every breath is therefore a witness to the presence and loving power of God. Then when men speak against God, or speak that which is not truth, they prove themselves to be false witnesses, because their witness is contradictory. With the breath which is evidence of the love and power of God, they deny Him. God's case is sure; there is none but He that can deliver, and there is none that can pluck one of His saved ones out of His hand.

There is the most blessed comfort imaginable in this, that all are of right witnesses. All are "accepted in the Beloved." He has not cast off a single soul. It is on the fact that He in no wise casts any out, but that He receives and pardons and cleanses all, making them new creatures, kings and priests, that God rests His case. God is obliged to receive all who come to Him, or else the charge against Him will stand good. But it is not merely a question of whether or not God will receive a man. He does not leave it uncertain. That is, He does not give anybody cause to wonder if He will receive him. No; God Himself goes out to seek the lost, and whenever He finds one who is dishonouring His name, it may be by lying drunk in the gutter like a beast instead of standing upright like the king that God made man, He says, "You belong to Me; you are one of My witnesses; I have a right to your testimony, for I have given you My life." And by the power of His own life; by the power by which He is from everlasting to everlasting, and by which He upholds all things, He will show His perfect character in that degraded man's life, if the man will surrender to Him. He says, "I will work, and who shall let it?"

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Keeping the Sabbath" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

"In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the

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Sabbath. And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath; and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the Sabbath. And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day." Nehemiah xiii. 15-22.

This lesson is called "Keeping the Sabbath," but it should rather be called "Breaking the Sabbath," for that is what it is all about.

In order to understand the acts of Nehemiah, it is necessary to put ourselves in his place. Therefore we must consider the Jewish State, and note the difference between it and nations generally. The great mistake that most people make in reading this account, is in supposing that his action is a model for rulers in these days. Let us see why it is not.

In the first place, Israel was not a nation in the ordinary sense of the term. When Balaam tried to curse Israel, God made him bless them, so that we know that whatever he said was directed by the Spirit of the Lord. Looking at Israel, he said, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Num. xxiii. 9.

Then what did Israel constitute?—Simply "the household of God," the church. It was never God's design that His people should be governed as other people are, but that He should be their sole ruler. If they had lived by faith in God, as Abraham did, there would never have been any need for judges or any sort of officers of the law. All these things came in solely as a result of that lack of faith which rejected God as ruler.

The family is the one institution which God has designed. The head of every family was to be the priest for the family, and each family, including all the dependents, would form a congregation, or what in modern language is

erroneously called a church. That this family plan was to be perpetuated, is seen in the promise to Abraham, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xii. 3.

In harmony with this plan God was bringing Israel out of Egypt-a great collection of families constituting God's great family, which was to be added to as others accepted the faith. That the family is still the unit of God's Government, and that His people all form one family, is seen by the fact that we come into the kingdom of God only by a new birth. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. God's subjects are all His children, and His kingdom consist solely of His family. "The whole family in heaven and earth" is named from Christ, who has been placed over it as Head. Eph. iii. 14, 15. God is the Father of all.

When the children of Israel called for a king, like other people, God said that it was a rejection of Him. 1 Sam. viii. 7. They wanted a king, that they might be like the nations, or, literally, like the heathen around them. All the nations were heathen, and in fact the formation of nations is in itself heathenism,-the rejection of God as ruler.

Although the people rejected the Lord, He did not reject them. He still claimed them as His children. He reserved the right to select their king, and the family idea was still maintained as far as possible. We must remember that it was religion, and that alone, that made the people of Israel. The name itself signified victory over sin, the victory of faith. There were no different "denominations" in the kingdom, as in England, for instance, for the entire nation was simply the church of God, although they had deviated from God's plan for them.

At the time which our lesson covers, Nehemiah was at the head of this family government. Israel had returned from the Babylonian captivity, wither they had been taken because they kept not the Sabbath. See 2 Chron. xxvi. 14-21. Now that the seventy years of captivity were at an end, and the people were in their own land again, it was a terrible thing to begin at once to do that which had before brought such calamities upon them. It is not to be wondered at that Nehemiah was greatly aroused over it.

Remembering that the whole people were really one family, for Jacob was the father of all, we read the command concerning the Sabbath: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. xx. 8-11.

There is no question that every man has the right to demand that the Sabbath shall not be profaned in his house, either by servants or visitors. It is his duty to do this. It is his duty to see that tradesmen do not deliver goods on that day. He has no right to enter into the homes of others and say how they shall do on the Sabbath, but he himself must keep the Sabbath, and that means that he must not allow the Sabbath to be profaned on his premises. Nehemiah was under God the leader of this family. He was the leader of the church. As such it was his province

to exhort all the members of the family, and to warn strangers that they must not come upon the premises for the purpose of doing business on the Sabbath day. But this no more gives the rulers of ordinary governments the right to legislate concerning Sabbath-keeping, than it gives them the right to say whether or not men shall be Christians. The two cases are not at all parallel.

It must not be lost sight of that it was *the Sabbath*, and *not Sunday*, that was in question here. It was the seventh day of the week, the day before the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday. The people in those days had no more thought of the first day of the week as the Sabbath, than they had of the fourth. It was not until long after the crucifixion and ascension of Christ, that Sunday began gradually without any precept or authority, to take the place of the Sabbath of the Lord. Remember that God does not change. His ways are equal. Eze. xviii. 25, 29. He once punished Israel severely for violating the Sabbath-the seventh day of the week. This is well known. Now can anybody say that there would be equal dealing if He should now look upon labour on that day as a lawful thing,

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and should punish men for labouring on a day on which He then allowed and commanded them to labour? If God did so, how could He judge the world? No; depend upon it, God does not change, and not one jot or tittle of His law has changed. The same day is now the Sabbath that was the Sabbath in the days of Nehemiah, and so it will be to all eternity. Do you think it is not a light thing to disregard God's commandments? If so, read Isa. xlii. 24, 25.

"The Knowledge of God Is Power" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

Jesus said, "If any man willeth to do His [God's] will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself." John vii. 17.

There is no knowledge but the knowledge of God; and the knowledge of God is given for use, for action, and not for speculation. God wishes men to *do* His will, and to this end He makes known the knowledge of it. But it is God who works both to *will* and to *do*, so that the real knowing of God's will is the doing of it. The knowledge of God is power, even the power of an endless life, since to know Him is life eternal. John xvii. 3. Hence he who really knows the Lord is one with Him-one in thought, in spirit, in life. When the new covenant is finally made with men, all will know God from the least to the greatest, and His will then will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

"For Little Ones. The Second Adam" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sin." You know who is the one man through whom sin and death came upon the whole human family,-the first Adam, of whom we were talking last week.

What a change from the happy condition of things as God first created them! Think of all that he lost through sin. In the beginning he was *a perfect man*. If we

want to know what a perfect man is, we must look at Adam before the fall, for there we see just what God meant man to be. He bore the image of God; he was a king, and had dominion over all things in the earth.

But when he fell from this position because of disobedience to the Word of God, he lost everything. He lost the image of God, his kingly nature; and with that went his royal robes of light and his crown of glory; his kingdom also, for when he lost the power to rule himself, and became the slave of sin and Satan, he could no longer rule the earth and all other creatures, but these also passed under the power of Satan. The sad proofs of this are seen in the marks of the curse and of death everywhere in the earth; everything shares man's imperfection.

But what now? Was the plan of God when He made a perfect man and gave him the earth to be his home and kingdom, all upset by the wicked work of his enemy Satan? No; for nothing can hinder the purpose of God, but everything that is done to stop His work He will use to make it all the more glorious.

He says: "My Word. . . shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." And His Word has gone forth saying, "Let us make man in our image, and let them have dominion" over the earth. "Whatsoever God doeth it shall be for ever." So the earth must for ever be the home and kingdom of the children of men, bearing the perfect image of God.

But where can such be found? for all the family of Adam share his sins, his imperfection, and his death. They are all, as we found last week, a part of himself, "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh," and so "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," and "in Adam all die."

Ah, but thank God there is One Man, one perfect Man, "the Man Christ Jesus," through whom all God's plan of love for the children of men, and for this whole world, can be carried out. Jesus is called "the Second Adam," for He takes the place of the first Adam, as King of the earth, and Father of a family of perfect human beings who shall live and reign with Him on the earth. "The Son of man is come to seek to save that which was lost."

Through no fault of our own, but "by one man's disobedience," through the sin of our first father Adam, we are all born sinners. This is why even little children have naughty thoughts and ways, and are sometimes disobedient, and unkind to each other.

But there is a way of escape for us out of the old sinful nature that makes us do these naughty things. Listen:-

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of One shall many be *made righteous*." To be made righteous is to be made again into the beautiful image of God, able to obey His Word and do His holy will.

We did nothing to make ourselves sinners; we are born so, but the first Adam dragged us all down with him in his fall. Neither can we do anything to make ourselves good; but the Second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, by His perfect obedience to every word of His Father, has redeemed us all, and lifted the family of man back again to the place where God meant for them.

He has won back the kingdom and the crown, and has power to restore the image of God in men, making them again the sons of God. But there is only one

way that we can become His children, and sure all these blessings with Him. We became the children of the first Adam by being born so, and that is the only way that we can ever be the children of the Second Adam. He Himself tells us, "Ye must be born again." "For as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born . . . of God."

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

- Over 8,000 British emigrants went to the United States last month.
- On June 1st, 1900, the United States will begin taking the twelfth Census of that country.
- During the last month there were seventy-one British vessels lost, involving the loss of 109 lives.
- When soaked in liquid air, cotton wool and absorb so much oxygen that forms an explosive as strong as dynamite.
- It has been about 390 years since Russia pastor decree of banishment to Siberia. During that time 1,500,000 persons have been sent into exile.
- The plague of locusts is unabated in Argentine, myriads of these in sects depositing their aches in wheat centres, which is producing a very depressing effect on the agricultural populace.
- There were eighty-seven fresh cases of the plague reported by the Governor of Mauritius during the week ending Nov. 9, sixty-two of which were fatal.
- Immense damage has been done in Mandalay by floods, caused by heavy rainfall. There has been a host cell destruction of property and great loss of life to cattle.
- The largest egg known to exist in the world was sold last week at an auction room in London for forty-two guineas. The egg is equal in size to six ostrich eggs.
- According to the report of the inspectors of lunatic asylums in Ireland just issued, there are now confined in insane establishments in that country 20,304 persons, which is an increase of nearly 1,000 over the report of the previous year.
- By virtue of a treaty, Great Britain has renounced all her rights in Samoa, and Germany and United States to buy the islands between them. England received compensation in the Tongan Islands and the Solomon group, and also in West Africa.
- When the Cape to Cairo railway is made, it will be the longest stretch of line in the world. The Canadian Pacific line is to 2,906 miles long; the Siberian railway, when completed, will be 4,741 but the Cape to Cairo line will be nearly 6,000 miles in length.
- It is estimated that the gold obtained from there to the end of 1998 amounted to three and three quarter millions of pounds. But the estimate is also made that 30,000 people went to obtain it, and that their expenses would not be less than ? 10,000,000.

-As an illustration of how a man can fail from a trusted position by misconduct, the papers state that one day last week Francis Hewitt was sentenced to a month of Leamington Spa for public begging. Only a few years ago he was a bank manager drawing a salary of 1,500 a year.

-Submarine boats the past week have made very successful trials. The *Holland* ran a mile in nine minutes in the New York, on an even keel submerged to a depth of ten feet, and the *Goubet* under water for five hours with a crew of three men, without accident. These boats are doubtless destined to become very important adjuncts in naval warfare in the future.

-The Russian Government owns a remarkable vessel. It is a boat called the *Ernack*, was built with the object of cutting passages through the ice. It is a steamer of 8,000 tons, with a propelling force of 10,000 horsepower. For propellers are employed, three behind, and one on the fore part of the ship. This vessel will work its way through a ice eight and nine feet thick.

-As an indication of the growth of the tea trade, Mr. John Ferguson read before the Royal Colonial Institute a paper concerning the development of trade in Ceylon tea. The export trade began in 1873, with 23 pounds. By 1879 it arose to 100,000 pounds of, and at the close of 1899 the export trade will have reached 125,000,000 pounds. There are now 380,000 acres under tea cultivation.

-The relations between Russia and Japan are reported to be in a very critical condition, the point being that Japan has refused Russia possession of land on the sea front held by Japanese subjects at Masampo, which is a port on the coast of Korea. Japan has made a special demand on the shipbuilders of Glasgow, who are constructing for that government a battleship which will be one of the largest afloat, and the force of workmen has been doubled. Other things indicate that unless a satisfactory adjustment of matters is arrived at, there may be a settlement of the difference by war.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

There are few if any living ministers of the Gospel, who have preached and written more real Gospel than Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler. In a recent letter to young pastors he gives this good advise: "Never defend your Bible; preach it boldly in love, the whole of it. God's Word is its own vindication."

"Substitution of Ceremonies for Reality" *The Present Truth* 15, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

The incongruity of two "Christian nations" engaged in deadly conflict at the same time celebrating what they suppose to be the birthday of the Prince of peace, and listening to the message, "Peace on earth, goodwill to men," appeals very forcibly to some people, and accordingly it has been suggested to the authorities in South Africa, both at Cape Town and the Transvaal, that "on that day, at any rate, there should be peace from midnight to midnight."

It is sad that any Christian should have so little knowledge of the Gospel as not to see the incongruity of such a proposal. What a caricature of peace it would

be, what a travesty of upon the Gospel of peace, for two armies to cease all hostilities on midnight of the 24th of December, expecting to resume them at midnight on the 25th, and in the meantime solemnly to announce that they were celebrating the birthday of the Prince of peace! It would be awful mockery.

The proposal, evidently made in all sincerity, shows how much the Gospel has come to be considered as a mere form and ceremony, as satisfied by the observance of certain days and certain ceremonies. Such religion is essentially heathenism, differing from that which is ordinarily known as such only in kind. If the suggestion were adopted, it would doubtless be hailed as an evidence of the hold that Christianity has on the people of the world, whereas it would simply show how greatly people are controlled by superstition in spite of centuries of Gospel preaching. We are reminded of the man who reckoned himself a good Christian, for while he would usually swear till the air was blue with oaths, he never swore on Sunday!

Even supposing that the 25th of December were the day on which Jesus was born in Bethlehem, which it most certainly is not, the mere observance of that day, in any way whatsoever, would have no element of Christianity in it. Christianity is a life, and if it exists at all in any person, must be the whole of his life. People often have enough perception of the fitness of things to say that it is useless to give one day of the week to God and all the rest to the world and the devil; but the fact is, such a thing is impossible. Such an idea is on a par with the stories of dead men who on certain occasions come out of their graves and walk about. It is just as impossible for a man to render real acceptable service to God on only one day in the year, or in the week, and to serve himself and the devil all the other days, as it would be for a man to come from the grave in full vigour one day in each year or each week, and lie lifeless all the rest of the time.

God can raise the dead, but when He does it, it is to the end that death shall no more have dominion over them. The Spirit of God can quicken into life those who are "dead in trespasses and sins;" but He does not do this periodically. Christ "ever liveth," but His life is nothing to us unless He lives in us; and while He is longsuffering, and will come back even after having been received and again thrust out, it is not conceivable nor possible that any soul should open the door at midnight to receive Him, with the express understanding that He must leave at the next midnight to come again if called for at any time. That would be but to make a plaything of the Lord.

The birth of Christ must be regarded, but not by celebrating a day. We are left in utter ignorance of the day when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, so that there need be no temptation to substitute the celebration of it for real acceptance of Him; just as God did not allow the Israelites to see any form when He talked with them from Sinai so that they could not attempt to make a likeness of Him, and substitute that for Him. Deut. iv. 15-19. Yet men have presumed to do both. The birth of Christ is to and for each individual. If Jesus be not born in a man's heart and life, it will be of no avail to him that He was born in Judea nineteen hundred years ago.

The Gospel is "Christ in you the hope of glory." Col. i. 27. If He be not in us we have no hope. And the new birth which makes the sons of God, is the

beginning of Christ in us. We become the sons of God, because Christ, the only begotten Son, is conceived in us, and brought forth in our lives. So Paul said to the Galatians, who were losing the faith, "I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Gal. iv. 19.

Not more to Mary in Nazareth and to us is the Word spoken, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." Luke i. 35. Compare Acts i. 18: "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." When that takes place, then are we truly children of God, because Christ is born in us, not to live apart from us, but to be our life.

This must be celebrated, not in form, but in fact, every day. For "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." 2 Cor. iv. 16. Not merely one day in the year, but every day is the message to sound to us, and through us to the world: "Peace on earth, it goodwill to men;" for the peace of God is to rule in the hearts (Col. iii. 15), and is to keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. iv. 7. Let this be so in you, and you can continually give the glad news of the birth and resurrection of Christ, as surely as did the shepherds, and the women who came to visit the sepulcher. You can bear witness to the fact that Christ lives, because you will know in your own body the power of His birth and resurrection. This, and this only, is Christianity.

November 30, 1899

"Front Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel." Micah. v. 2.

If we compare this verse with the rendering that is given in the quotation in the Gospel of Matthew, we shall learn something of what God means by a ruler, and how He rules: "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come forth a Governor that shall rule My people Israel." Matt. ii. 6.

The margin has "feed," and the Revision has "be shepherd of," as an equivalent. These two are the same; for the shepherd feeds the sheep; and one or the other of those means must be used here, since the Greek word cannot be rendered "rule." It must be rendered, "He shall feed," or, "He shall shepherd" them. The translators of our common version evidently had the original passage in Micah in mind, and feared that if they translated Matt. ii. 6 literally, it would seem like a contradiction; so they gave us "rule." But there is no need to be afraid to take God's Word just as it reads. There is no contradiction between the text in Micah and the quotation in Matthew; we simply learn that God's idea of ruling is that of feeding.

God is Ruler of the universe; He is King over all; yet "Jehovah is my Shepherd." Christ is "that great Shepherd of the sheep." Heb. xiii. 20. Earthly rulers expect to be supported by those over whom they rule; God Himself

supports all His subjects; indeed, His rule consists in feeding them, acting as Shepherd, leading them by still waters and in green pastures. He does not rule them and feed them, but His feeding of them is His ruling.

Jesus said: "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." John x. 11. So the Ruler feeds His people with His own body. What a foolish choice Israel made when

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they rejected God as their Ruler, and desired a king like the heathen round them! God warned them, saying, "He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. . . . And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants." 1 Sam. viii. 11-17.

Contrast this with Christ, who "gave Himself for us." The earthly king took of his subjects for himself; the heavenly King gives Himself for His subjects. It is a poor exchange that men have made; but there is still opportunity for us to change back, and to accept as our Ruler the One who gave Himself for us, and who rules only by virtue of His life in us, upon which we are to feed that we may live.

For our king is "the Bread of Life." He came forth out of Bethlehem-the "house of bread." What wonderful fitness! He is the corn that fell into the earth to die, that He might bear much fruit. John xii. 24. He was bruised and crushed for us. As the Bread of Life, His body was and is broken for us, that we may eat, and be "filled with all the fulness of God." "This is the Bread which came down from heaven, not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." John vi. 58.

Yet the manna was bread from heaven. Ex. xvi. 4, 15. Spiritual meat, even Christ's body, which is the true food (John vi. 55), was given to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and eaten by them. 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. Nevertheless they died. "With many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness." Wherefore? Because they did not eat in faith. It was because of unbelief, that they could not enter the promised land, but died in the wilderness. Heb. iii. 17-19. "They believed not in God, and trusted not in His salvation; though He had commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, and had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food." Ps. lxxviii. 22-25.

This Bread of Life is given to us, that we may eat, and not die (John vi. 50); yet if the man who eats of Him does not believe, he will certainly die. See Rom. xiv. 23; 1 Cor. xi. 29, 30. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John iii. 18. So he who does not eat of Christ in faith, discerning His body, is the same as though he did not eat. It is therefore only by faith that we really and truly eat of

the Bread of Life; and "the just shall live by faith." So he who truly eats the Bread of life will live for ever.

The children of Israel died because they lusted after evil things. 1 Cor. x. 5. They said, "There is nothing at all, beside this manna before our eyes" (Num. xi. 6), and, "our soul loatheth this light bread." Num. xxi. 5. That shows that they did not believe that the manna was the body of Christ,-bread from heaven,-for if they had believed it, they would have been satisfied with it. Men are "abundantly satisfied" with the fatness of God's house (Ps. xxxvi. 8); but it can never be taken except by faith. If one does not discern the Lord's body, he gets no real and lasting benefit from it.

Three different events are set before us in the Scriptures, to enable us to discern the body of Christ. We have read of the manna in the desert, and are told that it was bread from heaven-spiritual food. The same night that Jesus was betrayed, He took bread,-the pure, unleavened bread that was upon the table at the Passover meal,-and, after giving thanks, said, "This is My body." 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24. Here we have Christ's testimony to the effect that pure food is His own body, and that in eating it we are feeding upon Him. On at least two occasions he had miraculously fed some thousands of hungry people with a very small portion of food. There was not bread enough for all to get a crumb, yet all were filled. Where did the bread come from?-Evidently from His own body. He did not at that time say anything (although He did the next day); yet no words would have made it clearer, that it was from the body of Christ that the multitude ate that day; for they saw it demonstrated.

God gave the children of Israel manna in the desert, in order that they might "know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Deut. viii. 3. In eating it, therefore, they were eating the Word of God. Why does God feed us? What is the real object of eating?-"That we may live," some one will say. That is true; but in saying that, we must not forget that God is our life and the length of our days. Deut. xxx. 20. Only in Him do we live. Acts xvii. 28. It would be possible, as has been proved on occasion, for God to keep us alive without our eating; but if that were done, we should have no visible proof that we do not have life in ourselves; in taking food, however, which we are obliged to do regularly, we have the proof constantly before us, that we have no life in ourselves, but must receive it daily from God, who feeds His flock with His own life. Food is given to us in order that we may know God, and not forget His benefits.

The rulers of the Jews-the princes of this world-crucified the Lord of glory, because they did not know Him. 1 Cor. ii. 8. They did not discern, under the veil of human flesh, the body of Christ. If they had, they could not have crucified Him. Their ignorance was their sin, but there was forgiveness for it if they repented, and accepted Him. Can we be guilty of the same sin?-Certainly. How?-By not discerning Christ's body, under the veil of the food that he provides for us daily. "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." 1 Cor. xi. 27, 28. Whoever eats bread, not simply on the set occasions

when the Lord's Supper is formally eaten, but at any time, and does not discern the Lord's body-His life in it, given to us that we may have life with which to serve Him, is guilty of the death of Christ just as certainly as were the rulers of the Jews.

Just a moment's thought will make this clear. For example: If I am seen taking

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a man into my house, and the house is watched, but the man is never seen to come out again, I shall be charged with murdering him. There will be strong presumptive evidence of it, and the finding of his body will prove it. Well now, when we eat the daily bread that God provides us, we take His body, His life. That is plainly to be seen. That puts us under obligation to let His life appear in our bodies, and to control us; for He alone has the right and power to live His own life. But if we do not discern the fact that we are taking His life in the food that He gives us, we shall not yield ourselves to it. We shall assume that the life that we have is our own, to use as we please. Thus we take Christ in, but He is not seen again. We take His life, and bury Him. We are thus guilty of His death. That is a terrible thing.

Let us not do so any more. We do not need to. Christ liveth. He may be, and should be, and *is*, crucified in us: but if we confess, Him-if we confess that "Christ is come in the flesh,"-and then believe in our heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, and so allow Him to live in us by the power of the resurrection, we shall continually eat righteousness and life and salvation. He is made unto us righteousness; and they who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. Oh, receive not the grace of God in vain!

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Sin-bearer. Isa. xliii. 14-28" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xliii. 14-28.)

"Thus saith the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and I will bring down all of them as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, in the ships of their rejoicing. I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; which bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they lie down together, they shall not rise; they are extinct, they are quenched as flax: Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now shall it spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The beasts of the field shall honour Me, the jackals and the ostriches because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen: the people which I formed for Myself, that they might set forth My praise. Yet thou hast not called upon Me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of Me, O Israel. Thou hast not brought Me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured Me with thy sacrifices. I have not made thee to serve

with offerings, nor wearied thee with frankincense. Thou hast bought Me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled Me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins. Put Me in remembrance; let us plead together; set thou forth thy cause, that thou mayest be justified. Thy first father hath sinned, and thine interpreters have transgressed against Me. Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary, and I will make Jacob a curse, and Israel a reviling."

GOD'S POWER TO DELIVER

Again we have a reminder of God's power and His care for His people. We recall from the fortieth chapter that Israel says, "My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God." Therefore God tells what He has done for their sake. All the enemies of His people, who put their trust in their war ships, are taken captive by Him. He delivers His people from bondage, even making a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters, as when He brought Israel out of Egypt. The chariot and the horse, the army and the power, are as nothing compared with the Lord. "The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." "Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; they sank into the bottom as a stone." Ex. xv. 1, 4, 5.

That was a wonderful deliverance; but the Lord will do still more wonderful things. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had drive them; and they shall dwell in their own land." Jer. xxiii. 7, 8. The things which God will yet do for His people are so great that the marvelous events of the exodus will pale into insignificance by the side of them.

GOD'S CHILDREN DELIVERED FROM EGYPT

The Lord is the God that has brought His people out of the land of Egypt. "Out of Egypt have I called My Son,"

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says the Lord by the prophet, and this is true of every one of His sons. Out of the land of Egypt must we all come; and that wonderful deliverance in the days of Moses, will stand as the evidence of God's power to save, and the quickener of faith, until the future, final deliverance shall have been effected, and then to all eternity the "new thing" that God has done will be the theme of the saved. In the performance of this new thing the Lord will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the dessert to give drink to His chosen witnesses, His servants. Now this was written nearly a thousand years after the exodus from Egypt, when God caused the waters to run in the dry places like a river, so that Israel might drink;

and since that time there has never been a similar occurrence, that is, none on a similar scale; therefore it is evident that these things are yet to be fulfilled. That they are to be literally fulfilled, we cannot doubt. If we should deny that we here have statements of what will actually occur, the only reason for it would be the improbability of such things being done, because we are not accustomed to them. But that would be a denial of the Lord. This is a case in which God's power and love are called in question, and He will do such things as will leave no chance for doubt. In the time of trouble of which we have previously read, when the flame devours the pastures of the wilderness, God will cause rivers of water to spring forth from the dry ground to refresh His children.

POWER YET TO BE MANIFESTED

The wild beasts will also honour God. We remember that Jesus was in the wilderness of temptation forty days, and was with the wild beasts. Mark i. 2, 13. They compassed Him about, and gaped upon Him with their mouths, and He was threatened by the lions, and was seemingly about to be tossed by the horns of the wild oxen (Ps. xxii. 11-13, 21); yet not one of them touch Him. They recognised in Him the authority of their Creator. Even so it was with Daniel in the den of lions. Their refusal to harm the prophet of God, although they were hungry, as was shown by their instantly devouring his accusers, was a testimony to the saving power of God. Thus they honoured Him. God's people are yet to be brought into just such close places for their faith, and the wild beasts of the desert will do homage to the power of the righteousness of Jehovah in them. God made man to have dominion over the beasts, and this he had as long as he remained his loyalty to God, and when men become perfect witnesses for God,- when the image of God is perfectly restored in them, and the life of Jesus is manifested in their mortal flesh,-the authority of God in them will be recognised by wild beasts and serpents. When it is thus demonstrated that man has recovered his kingly authority, it will be but a very short time until the first dominion will be restored to him.

GOD'S GLORY REVEALED IN AND BY ME

"This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise." It is of us that the Lord speaks. The Apostle Peter says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him that hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." 1 Peter ii. 9. That is what God has made us for. He has chosen us as His servants, that He might reveal Himself in us. It is our "high calling in Christ Jesus." Is it not a wonderful thing, that even as the glory of God shone forth of old from the sanctuary, so now He will let His glory shine forth from the men who will acknowledge themselves to be the temples of God? And the glory of God that is seen on them, will be their own glory, shining forth from them. "He will beautify the meek with salvation."

ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE

What shall we think of the Lord's complaint against Israel, that they have not brought burnt-offerings to Him, and have not honoured Him with their sacrifices? Does it mean that they had been remiss in their daily and yearly services? Not by any means. Remember what He said to them in the very beginning of the prophecy of Isaiah. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith the Lord; I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats." Isa. i. 11. What does He mean then, by what He says here? He means just what He meant in the beginning, when He said, "Bring no more vain oblations." Their sacrifices were vain, because there was no heart in them. They did not give themselves, and that is all the sacrifice that is acceptable to God. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. xii. 1. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Ps. li. 17. When these are present, God is "pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness." God says, "I have not caused thee to serve with a burnt offering, nor wearied thee with incense." In like manner He said by the prophet Jeremiah: "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." Jer. vii. 22, 23. Sacrifice was never anything in itself; for God has made the only sacrifice that can be of any value. Sacrifices were never anything more than an expression of trust and thanksgiving.

MAKING GOD TO SERVE

"But thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins; thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities." This is one of the most striking statements to be found in the Bible. Instead of being the servants of God, we have made Him our servant! The term is the same as that used in Ex. i. 13, where we read that "the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour." Also Ex. vi. 5: "I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage." Isn't it shocking? Just as the Egyptians made slaves of the children of Israel, putting them to hard and distasteful service, even so we have done to God, piling upon Him all our sins, and making Him carry the load day after day. Now we begin to get hold of that which will reveal to us the infinite patience of God.

We are all familiar with the words: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29); but few read the word in the margin, which ought to be in the text, namely, "beareth." If we always thought of Him as the Lamb of God who bears the sin of the world, it might make His work mean more to us. "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 2. Mark it; He is, not, He makes propitiation for

sins. He "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." 1 Peter ii. 24. These things we have all

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heard, and they are so common that they have almost lost their meaning to us. Our lesson brings before us in the most vivid manner the Lord's relation to us and our sins.

ALL SIN IS UPON GOD'S LIFE

Take the words in the first chapter of Hebrews, that Christ, being the effulgence of the Father's glory, "and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." He upholds or bears all things. The weight of the universe rests upon Him. Not a thing but is held in place by the power of His life. "In Him all things consist," and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." He is the Soul of the universe. There is no life anywhere but the life that flows from the heart of God. That is the simple truth, which is easily said, but which we may well think upon for days and years.

The fact that God is in all things, even in sinful man, is scarcely ever thought of; and too often wholly disbelieved. Compare Deut. xxx. 11-14 with Rom. x. 6-8. In the first passage, together with the context, we learn that Moses was addressing the children of Israel, and exhorting them to obey God. That shows that they were not wholly obedient, and we well know that they were not. Then he tells them that they need have no difficulty in obeying the Lord, for the commandment is not hidden from them, neither is it very far off. They do not need to go across the sea for it, nor ask somebody to go up to heaven, to bring it down for them, that they may hear it and do it. No; the commandment, the Word, is very nigh, in their mouth, and in their heart, that they may do it. It is there whether they do it or not; it is there in order that they may have no excuse for not doing it.

SAVED BY THE LIFE

Read now the parallel text in Romans. It is quoted from this one, but inasmuch as Christ is the Word, the name "Christ" is substituted for "Word." "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that is, the Word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Confessing the Lord Jesus means confessing the truth concerning Him, namely, that He "is come in the flesh," even in our own sinful flesh. Why should He come there?—In order that "the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. viii. 3, 4. The theory that would make Christ keep entirely away from sinners until they begin to serve Him, would throw upon

them the labour of converting themselves. No; Christ dwells in every man, waiting his permission to reveal Himself. Therefore the wrath of God is justly revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, because they "hold down the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. i. 18. Christ is the truth. John xiv. 6. That which may be known of God is manifest in wicked men, for God hath showed it unto them; for His everlasting power and Divinity are to be seen in everything that He has made, including man. They are therefore without excuse for their sin. Christ is present in every man to save him from sinning.

It is therefore idle for the sinner to say that the Lord will not receive him. Why, the Lord has you; He has been carrying you all your lifetime. There never has been a heart throb, not a pulse beat, not a tingle of a nerve, that did not reveal the presence of the life of God; for all those things reveal the presence of life, and there is no life in the universe but the life of God. If there were, then there would be another God. That is the whole question in controversy-whether creatures can live separate from the Creator. They who think to save God from the disgrace of being in sinful men, do Him no honour. They are conceding all that the devil would claim. If any man can establish his ability to live an hour without the Lord's life, then he can live for ever without Him. But this no man can do, and it is the Lord's mercy that he cannot.

WHAT GOD ENDURES FOR MAN

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." But for that we could not live at all. In our flesh, our life, is the Divine Word,-God Himself. And what is our condition?-"Laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters;" "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Isa. i. 4-6. This is the condition of the flesh in which the Divine Word has condescended to dwell. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Matt viii. 17. All the loathsomeness of sin the Lord who hates sin was pleased to take upon Himself, that we might be freed from it. He has for ever identified Himself with humanity. Every sin that is committed by the vilest transgressor is committed with the life that God has loaned to him. God dwelling in human flesh is made the servant of men's passions. They are corrupters, in that they corrupt the life that God has given them. He is not responsible for a single sin, for "in Him is no sin," yet because it has been committed with His life, He assumes the responsibility. The weight of every sin is upon the Lord, and that it is no small weight is seen from the fact that it crushed the life out of the Son of God. What infinite patience, that He still continues to bear it!

LOATHSOMENESS OF SIN

But it is loathsome to Him. With the picture of the body utterly corrupt, full of putrefying ulcers from head to foot, and you have an idea of what God is bearing.

Can you wonder then that He says, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins?" Ah, we do not need to plead with Him, to make Him willing to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; He is most anxious to do it; it is He who pleads with us to allow Him to do it for us.

Yes, and Christ has by Himself made purification for sins. With all the sins of the world upon Him, He gave up His life; but because He knew no sin He came forth from the grave, and so when we confess that Christ is come in our flesh, we may know that He is risen from the dead, so that He lives in us with the power of the resurrection life. As soon therefore as we make the confession, and yield completely to Him, we are freed from the bondage of sin; for God is not so in love with sin that He will retain it a second after we turn it completely over to Him. He will cast it into the depths of the sea.

The Lord has bought our sins; they belong to Him. He has bought us, and we belong to Him. We therefore have no right to do anything with ourselves. But when we refuse to confess our sins, and at the same time to confess Christ, we are claiming the sins that are upon Him. We are retaining them, because we refuse to acknowledge that they are sins, and we go on putting more sins upon Him. Patiently He abides with us, however, literally suffering long. He has our sins, whether we acknowledge it or not; therefore it does not add one whit to His burden for us to let them rest upon Him alone, and not try to bear any of them ourselves. On the contrary, it relieves Him for us to confess our sins, and cast them entirely upon Him, for then He casts them off, and bears us alone. Before, He bore us and our sins; now He bears us freed from sin. Why not grant the Lord this favour?

He asks us to remind Him of what He has done for us. "Let us plead together," says He. Literally, "Let us go into court together." If we will but declare the truth, we shall be justified, for the truth is that He has all our sins upon Him. All that is required of any man, in order to be saved, is that he tell the simple truth about what he sees. If we admit that God is supporting us, that we live by His life, and that consequently all our sins are upon Him, and that we are in harmony with that arrangement, then we are freed from them. So although our first father sinned, and we as a consequence were born in sin, we are made as free from them as the only begotten Son of God. What a wonderful Saviour!

"The Church Militant" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

Several weeks ago the President of the United States visited the Methodist camp-meeting at Ocean Grove, New Jersey, and made a short speech. After he had gone away, the General Secretary of the Epworth League delivered a sermon in which he said:-

When President McKinley spoke about peace with honour, and meeting our duty in the islands of the sea like men, our souls leaped within us, for we recognised in him the conquering spirit of the old Roman and the militant aggressive spirit of Christianity. . . . He spoke as a patriot and a Christian. There

are more than one million young men in the Epworth League alone. No Alexander or Cæsar ever had an army like that. We aspire to be the Tenth Legion for any campaign. President McKinley may plan for peace at home or peace with honour abroad. These young men with their blood and breeding will march through sand or jungle and fling themselves at a breastwork with a hardihood and a daring that no veteran of the Old Guard or Wellington's Iron Brigade could surpass. He has our prayers to-day. He can have our money to-morrow, and the whole million will enlist the day after if we are needed.

The report says that these remarks "aroused the enthusiasm of his hearers, and the Auditorium resounded with loud 'amens.'" This is a most striking sign of the "perilous times" that are to come, when war and bloodshed will be reckoned the highest manifestation of Christian zeal. The Crusaders or the Mohammedans could not surpass this.

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Unacceptable Service: Lessons in Giving. Mal. i. 6-11; iii. 8-12" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

The title of this lesson is simply, "Lessons in Giving," but the first portion of Scripture has no reference to giving, but to the service of the sanctuary, so that the lesson properly comes under two heads. Both portions of Scripture are so pertinent that they need to be reprinted, that everybody may read them.

"A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a Father, where is Mine honour? and if I be a Master, where is My fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise My name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised Thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon Mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted Thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person?" saith the Lord of hosts. "And now, I pray you, beseech God that He will be gracious unto us; this hath been by your means; will he regard your persons? saith the Lord of hosts. Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on Mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. i. 6-11.

Whoever reads the book of Malachi entirely through will see that while it is addressed to all Israel, the priests are especially singled out. The people had departed from the Lord, but it was the priests that had led the way. "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. ii. 7, 8. A great responsibility rests upon religious teachers

and leaders. Apostasy begins at the head, rather than at the foot. It is the elders that draw away disciples after them. Acts xx. 28-30. If the people are going astray, be sure that the priests are still farther astray. Christ said that He sanctified Himself, in order that His followers might be truly sanctified. John xvii. 19. That is the true way, but it is seldom done. All reforms among the people have to be carried out in spite of the leaders of the people. The people are ready to follow the light, but they are hindered by the teachers of the law, who take away the key of knowledge, and will not enter in themselves, nor allow others to do so. If a religious teacher or one in authority in the church is not far ahead of the people, leading them along, then he is far behind them, dragging them back.

"Ye offer polluted bread upon Mine altar," says the Lord. how did they do this? How did it become polluted? By being in the unclean hands of the priests. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No. Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean. Then answered

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Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Lord; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean." Haggai ii. 11-14. A clean person cannot make a thing clean by touching it; but an unclean person defiles everything that he touches. So the priests, who had unclean hands, made every offering polluted, even though it was clean when it came into their hands.

This scripture has often been quoted as showing how unwilling people were to do any service unless they were paid for it; but such use of the text is based upon a misunderstanding of it; rightly read, it contains nothing about working with or without pay. Notice that the first words, "*for naught,*" are in Italics, indicating that they are not in the Hebrew. The Revised Version has a fairly correct renderings of the text, thus: "Oh that there were some one among you that would shut the doors, that ye might not kindle a fire upon Mine altar in vain!" The Lord is not complaining because the priests and people would not work for nothing, but because they did any service at all. What He desired was that they should leave off all form of service in the sanctuary. For while people often think that Divine service consists mostly in form, and that things cannot be wholly bad if there is at least a form of godliness, the Lord tells us that under such circumstances it would be a relief to Him if there were no form of service, no going to meeting, no preaching nor praying.

Compare Isaiah i. 10-15: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of

assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear thee. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood."

Surely this is enough for one lesson. If we learn it, we have learned all that we need to know. Service that is rendered to the Lord from an impure heart and with unclean hands, is an abomination. He would much rather that one did not profess to serve Him. "Divine service" does not consist in going to church, in saying or hearing prayers or sermons, and in singing, nor in keeping fast and feast days. In what does it consist? Hear the Word of the Lord: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Isa. i. 16, 17. Service to God means the same kind of service that Jesus rendered, when He went about doing good. When He washed the feet of the disciples, when He fed the hungry, when He blessed the little children, when He cleansed the lepers, when He cheered the heart of the widow, and when He spoke words of compassion and courage to the repentant sinner, He was doing Divine service. The only kind of Divine service there can possibly be, is the service that the Divine Son of God does. If we allow God to work in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure, we shall render Divine and acceptable service.

Cannot a sinner then serve the Lord? Oh, yes. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Ps. li. 17. The ointment that was poured upon the feet of Jesus by a sinful woman was far more pleasing than the grand feast of the self-righteous Pharisee. Luke vii. 36-50. God is pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, and He counts every sacrifice a sacrifice of righteousness, no matter how vile the sinner who brings it, when it is brought in contrite love.

There is a promise in this lesson, an assurance of a time when the Lord will be served acceptably by all. "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering." Righteousness will prevail at the last, even though wickedness seem now to have the supremacy. Christ was never more powerful than when He hung up on the cross, the butt of all the ridicule that an unfeeling mob could heap upon Him. That despised cross was the power of God. By the power of the cross a new creation is to be effected. "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." The power of the cross is the power that creates and upholds. The power that created the heavens and the earth in the beginning still acts. Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; therefore the new heavens and the new earth shall again spring forth from the cross which men despise. Then all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest, and every service will be acceptable. Every offering will be pure, for it will be brought by pure hands, the gift of a pure heart,-a heart in which God rules. But that new heavens and new earth will not be created until it is seen that there is need for them, that is, and tell there are new creatures, who

need a suitable dwelling-place. So even before the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, there will be a pure offering, an offering in righteousness. Who will accept the transforming grace of God, so that every work of their hands will be acceptable and will be established, because prompted by the Christ who dwells within?

"Robbing God" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and He shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you happy; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. iii. 8-12.

There are a few principles underlying the statements made in this portion of Scripture, that need emphasising. If they are remembered and followed, there will be no difficulty. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Ps. xxiv. 1. This text stands over the Royal Exchange, but it is very doubtful if any of the men who do business there ever looked at it, or

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believe it if they do. There is a standard of honesty among businessmen. If one does not act according to it, he is soon discredited. One point is that a man has the right to the control of his own affairs, and that property belonging to another must be delivered to him. The man who cannot or will not meet his obligations, must cease to do business. He is shut out of the Exchange. Meeting an obligation, means the delivering to another that which belongs to him. Now people do not believe that the earth belongs to the Lord, or else they do not deal with Him with the same honesty that they deal with their fellow-men. If the earth belongs to the Lord, then He has the right to control it, and every man ought to yield to Him His own. Ah, not only do they not believe that the earth belongs to the Lord, but very few even believe that there is any God. Heathen principles prevail not only in the world, but largely among those who call themselves Christians.

Although the earth is the Lord's, He has given it to the children of men. Ps. cxv. 16. This does not absolve them from acknowledging the gift. To receive a gift, and never to acknowledge it, is ingratitude such as always brings a man into disrepute, if manifested toward one of his fellows. But in giving the earth to man, the Lord has reserved a portion for Himself, as He certainly has the right to do, when it is all His. "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord." "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." Lev. xxvii. 30, 32.

This is not a mere "Levitical law." There is the statement of the simple fact: "The tithe is the Lord's." There is no limitation, no qualification. It is not limited to time nor to place. It is true all over the earth, in all time. "Didn't Christ do away with it?" Christ did not come to this earth to overturn the Father's Government, but to establish it. He did not come and give His life for the purpose of upsetting what God had established. Even if that had been His purpose, He could not have accomplished it with regard to the tithe, for there we have not a law, but a fact, and nothing can ever change a fact. "The tithe is the Lord's," and nothing can ever change the fact. The tithe may be kept back from Him, by robbery, but robbing one of his property never proves that it is not his. If a thing belongs to me, it can never cease to belong to me unless I sell it or give it away. If a man steals it, it is mine still; if I lose it, it still belongs to me if it can be found. Now we have no record that the Lord has ever sold or given away His right to the tithe. That is to say, there is no evidence to show that God has ever renounced all claims on this earth and on mankind. The tithe belongs to Him now just as much as it did four thousand years ago. "I am the Lord, I change not."

"But did not Jesus reprove the Pharisees for paying tithe so strictly?" Let us read what He said. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin." "There you have it; that relieves us of all obligation!" Not so fast, please; let us read a little further: "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." Matt. xxiii. 23. The woe is not for paying the tithe, but for their unrighteousness, while outwardly very punctilious in the smallest details. It is the same thing as in the first chapter: no service is acceptable to the Lord when the heart is corrupt and deceitful. Hypocrisy is what the Lord hates. The people could see that the Pharisees were scrupulous in the payment of tithe, therefore they paid it; but that could not atone for their deeds of oppression and their lack of mercy. To pay tithe of what they had rung from some poor widow was not acceptable to the Lord. God says, "I hate robbery for burnt offering." Isa. lxi. 8. After naming judgment, mercy, and faith, the Lord says, "These ought ye to have done," but He did not say that they ought to have done these things instead of paying tithe. "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." That is, they ought not to have ceased paying tithe, which is the same as saying that they ought to have paid it, but they ought at the same time to have done works of mercy, judgment, and faith. Christ did not spend time on this earth trying to overthrow the truth, for He is the truth. He came to bear witness to the truth, and one truth is that the tithe is the Lord's.

When a man has exhausted his argument against the payment of tithe, he will often turn, and say, "A Christian cannot be content with giving only a tenth, as they did under the law, but must give more, corresponding to the greater light and privileges that he has." Very well, but the greater always includes the less. If it is one's duty to render to the Lord more than a tithe, that certainly does not abolish the tithe. But mark the words, and you will note several things that may have escaped your notice. In the first place, we are not told to give the Lord a tithe. It belongs to Him, and we are to pay it. It is not a gift to Him. To be sure, the word

giving may be used in connection with it, just as one may say, "To-day I met Mr. A., and gave him the five pounds that I owed him," but he does not mean that he made the man a present of five pounds. So in handing the tithe over to the Lord, we are simply giving Him what belongs to Him; over and above that are offerings that ought to be made. And these were due the Lord in ancient times just as much as to-day. The very simplest way that we can show that we and all that we have belong to the Lord, is to pay to Him His own.

God says, "Ye have robbed me." Will a man rob God? One would think that God is the last One that one would think of robbing; but it is not so. Men who would feel grossly insulted if it were intimated that they would rob a man of a penny, or would take anything from him that belonged to him, will not hesitate to rob God. All their lives they rob Him, and never once feel any compunctions of conscience. Why is this? Is it because God is so far away, and does not press His claims as men do? Is it because nobody thinks any the less of a man who robs God, while it is disreputable to rob men? If it is for one or both of these reasons, is it not plain that such a man would rob his neighbour if he could do it without losing his standing in society? Can such a man be called an honest man? If a man be brought into court charged with theft, can he clear himself of the charge by saying, "I robbed only one man, and he was a foreigner; I have never robbed one of my neighbors." Robbery is robbery, no matter who the victim is. Surely it is no less a crime to rob God than it is to rob a man. What a big debt we all owe to the Lord!

Marvellous to relate, the Lord positively rewards men for doing their duty

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that is to say, He rewards those who have robbed Him, when they come and restore what they have stolen. What man would do that? Giving to the Lord, or paying Him what is His due, never impoverishes anybody. People do not grow poor by serving the Lord. There are thousands of people in the direst poverty to-day, who would in a few months be in comfortable circumstances if they would serve the Lord in truth; not make a profession of religion, but really serve the Lord with a perfect heart. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8. They are in poverty because of habits of life, which a perfect living out of the Gospel would take away, leaving them free. God says that when a whole tithe is brought to Him, He will open the windows of heaven, and bless till there is not room enough to receive it; it will overflow. If anybody wishes to know what sort of blessings the Lord will pour out, he has only to prove the Lord, as He says, and he will see for himself. How many men who invest thousands in doubtful speculations, dare take the Lord at His Word, and give over to Him that which belongs to Him?

But do not try an experiment with the Lord. It is not best to keep too strict a book account with Him. Do not go to making the experiment for a year, resolved that if at the end of that time you do not see a marked increase in your business, you will leave off, and pay no more tithe to the Lord. That is not to bring a whole tithe into the storehouse. The payment of the tithe is in itself an acknowledgment that the whole belongs to Him. The tithe of yourself, that is, a tithe of your labour belongs to the Lord, but you cannot divide yourself, therefore you belong to Him

entirely. So the only way in the world for you to bring a whole tithe into the storehouse of the Lord, is for you to give Him yourself. You will find that the Lord knows a great deal more about business than you do, and can manage your affairs better than you can. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruit of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Prov. iii. 5-10. Give yourself to the Lord with His tithe, and you will find a blessing that will overflow to others.

"ForewarnedóForearmed" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

The memorable battle of Arbela, that resulted in the overthrow of the Persian kingdom, is one of the most remarkable of all history. The Persians under Darius numbered over 1,000,000, while the Macedonians under Alexander were only 47,000. The attack of the Macedonians seemed but madness, the odds were so heavy against them; but Alexander knew his strength, and the secret of this self-confidence lay in the fact that, on the eve of the engagement, there fell into his hands full and complete details of the plans of the approaching attack of Darius, and by this foreknowledge, he was enabled so to place his army that the Persian forces were routed, and he gained the victory that made him monarch of all the then known world.

There is no more unequal struggle in all history than that of the man who endeavours to cope with the devil without the help of Jesus Christ. But Christ knows all the wicked plans of the archenemy of souls, and these He has revealed to His children. "But ye brethren are not in darkness,"-for God has been faithful in giving due warning of any judgments that were to come upon the world, that all who would might escape. Noah preached a coming flood for one hundred and twenty years; Lot was warned of the destruction of Sodom; and the Christians knew years before, of the overthrow of Jerusalem, and so definite was the sign given of the latter event, that when the time came, every Christian within the walls of that doomed city knew it and escaped.

But merely because we are "the children of light"-because we know these things theoretically,-that alone will not save us. Lot's wife knew of the destruction of Sodom, but that did not save her from being turned into a pillar of salt; and the Saviour in speaking of what would take place in the end of the world, and the danger there would be of even the elect being deceived and turned out of the way, uses these significant words, "Remember Lot's wife." What did she do? Simply "looked back,"-that is all, but that meant her destruction. She desired to escape the doom of the city, but while her body was on the plain, her *heart* was in Sodom. There is in this a lesson of a special importance for those who live in the last days, for "as it was in the days of Lot . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:28, 29. "Come out from among them,

My people," are the Lord's words to His children, and "be ye separate." There can be no compromise. Some of the Lord and a little of Sodom or Babylon will never save us.

The struggle is a fierce one; but with all the secret plans of Satan laid bare, for "we are not ignorant of his devices," and with Jesus as our commander and leader, we are ten thousands times more sure of victory, in this conflict, than was Alexander the Great; and he who is faithful to the end, who overcomes, will reap as a reward, a never-ending life in the kingdom of God.

"For Little Ones. A Gospel Lesson" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made of life."

You remember we learned last week that "in Adam all die," because all his children have his own sinful nature. You know that in the beginning God set Adam over all the works of his hands.

But that he might be *multiplied* and not live here alone with none of his own kind to associate with him, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, and took out of his side a rib which he made into a woman and brought to Adam. So all the human family has come from the one man whom God first set over the earth.

We learned also that Jesus has won back by His perfect obedience to every word of God, the dominion that the first Adam lost through disobedience. The word of God, speaking of Him, says: "Unto Thee shall it come, even *the first dominion*." And again, God promises to give to His Son "the uttermost parts of the earth" for His possession.

But the first Adam did not want to rule the kingdom alone, nor does Jesus, the second Adam. Not for His own sake, but for ours, He became man, that He might win back for all the children of men their lost inheritance and character and life.

And now see how the Gospel was taught to Adam in a beautiful figure even before He sinned. For the deep sleep which God caused to fall upon Him was a type or figure of the sleep of death into which the second Adam for our sakes was cast, when He laid down His life upon the cross, that He might give birth and life to a great multitude who should for ever share with Him the restore dominion.

Then, too, the opening of the side of Adam while he slept, that other beings might be formed from his body, what did this teach or signify?

The Apostle John who stood by the cross of Jesus after He had fallen asleep upon it, bears this record of what he saw: "And one of the soldiers with a spear pierced *His side*, and forthwith flowed there out blood and water."

His heart's blood, the water of life, a healing stream, flowed out that all the children of men might drink and be healed of all their sins and diseases, and share His own everlasting life.

"Whoso drinketh death of the water that I shall give him," He said to the woman at the well, "shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into *everlasting life*."

The fountain of His precious everlasting life has been opened that by drinking of Him we may become a part of Himself, we may share His Divine nature, and become just like Him.

Adam said of the woman taken from his side, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." And this is just what Jesus says of all who share His life; for "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

Remember that He is the Seed that God promised, and except the seed "die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." Like the seed that is cast into the ground, Jesus *died* that He might be *multiplied*.

And as in the beginning to the first Adam, the king of the earth, God the Father brought the woman whom He had taken out of His own pierced side, so at last to Christ the second Adam, the King of the earth, will He bring the company that have received the life that He poured out for them from His own body.

They shall be presented to Him "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing," but "holy and without blame before Him."

Are you not glad that you may be one of this beautiful and glorious company, and live with Jesus for ever in the happy home that He has bought back for us? Drink every day of the cleansing, healing stream that flows from Him, the fountain of life, and this will make you His own child, a "partaker of the Divine nature."

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

-Wireless telegraphy has been adopted by the Royal Navy and in America, the tests in the latter country being of a very satisfactory character.

-The weight of water passing over the Niagara Falls is estimated to exert about 7,000,000 horsepower, more than the whole human race is capable of exerting.

-A watchmakers' trust, that will include all the watch-mount manufacturers in America has just been formed. It represents the sum of \$6,000,000 capital.

-In an unaccountable manner, jewellery to the amount of \$25,000 was recently stolen from the South Kensington Museum. As yet no clue to the robbers has been made public.

-In 1898, strong drink to the value of only \$66 was sent from America to the Philippines. During the first five months of 1899, the export of liquor to that locality from America reached the sum of \$17,360.

-The Premier of New South Wales has just publicly announce the draft of a Government measure of compulsory early closing of shops. In metropolitan areas shops will be obliged to close at six on four days of the week, at one o'clock on one day and at ten on one day.

-The British War Office has under practical consideration the question of adapting bicycles to warfare over rough country. A practical test was so highly satisfactory, that it is understood the Government will provide these for use in the. The bicycles are to be built on a somewhat different plan from the ordinary safeties, being made with springs specially to allow over a rough surface without discomfort.

- A number of cases of plague have occurred in Lisbon and Oporto, the last victim being the distinguished Dr. Pestana, Director of the Bacteriological Institute at the former place.

-A has been signed in Washington submitting to the arbitration of the King of Sweden the claims arising out of the bombardment of some of by British and American warships.

-A disastrous civil war has broken out in New Guinea. Eleven villages have been obliterated with heavy slaughter of the inhabitants. The missionaries whose lives were in danger, escaped by the exercise of tact.

-The Hamburg-American liner *Patria*, from America to Hamburg, caught fire in the channel of Deal, and was totally destroyed. The passengers and crew got off in safety, but without any of their personal belongings.

-Some time since, we noted the existence of smallpox in Hull. There appears to be no abatement of the disease, for from November 11 to 19 one hundred and forty-seven person suffering from the disease were removed to the hospitals.

-Since 1890, according to a late report, there were in the United States 230 train robberies, in connection with which fully eighty persons were killed all right, about as many wounded, and property to the amount of many millions was secured.

-Aldershot has just been experimenting with a gigantic steam plough, which can cut a trench four feet deep, and throw the earth aside, so affording perfect covering for into tree, who can follow immediately in its wake. Several of three implements are to be sent out to the war.

-The London *Daily Mail* secured from the poet Kipling a poem called "The Absent-Minded Beggar," which it published, also selling the right to publish to others, all the proceeds going to the war really fun. To date, over ?12,000 had been realised, with no abatement of interest in the poem.

-From Pekin it is learned that at a small seaport town of China to petty French officers were seized by the Chinese and be headed. In retaliation a French warship shelled and destroyed the native village in captured a Chinese worship. It is apprehended that the affair may lead to grave consequences.

-It is reported that a cyclone has just passed over Negapatam, India, resulting in terrible havoc. Thousands of native dwellings were levelled to the ground, the railway station, the churches, and nearly every substantial build was unroofed. Fortunately no lives were lost, and the damage done is very great.

-In 1820, when missionaries first went to Hawaii, there were either schools, nor books, nor a written language; legal marriage was unknown, and frequently the aged and infirm were thrown from a press as by their children. Education is now general on the islands, the instruction in the public schools being in the English language. There are at present 195 schools with 14,000 pupils.

-On November 15th the Queen was present at Bristol to attend the exercises incident to the laying of a quarter stone, and the occasion was made a gala day, in which the children particularly took part. It is estimated that 800,000 people witness the pageant, and that night 12,000 poor people were entertained to sea, all of whom were alive when Her Majesty began her reign. Their ages range from sixty-two to nine-nine years.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

"That which may be known of God is manifest," not only to all men, but in all men. Rom. i. 19, 20. Do you know the Lord? If not, why not?

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower." Prov. xviii. 10. Therefore they that know the Lord will put their trust in Him. Ps. ix. 9, 10. You do not need to take this truth at second hand. Trust Him at all times, and you will know from experience that He is "a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble."

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." James i. 17. Remember this: that every good gift that heaven possesses has come down. If we will but walk in the light of God's countenance, we shall never be among those who complain they ask, "Who will show us any good?" Ps. iv. 6.

The *Daily Chronicle* says that when the Emperor Menelik, of Abyssinia, visits Paris next year, the French Anti-Tobacco Society intends to confer upon him a diploma of honorary membership, because he is not only opposed to the use of tobacco in any form, but he goes to the length of prohibiting smoking among his subjects. He certainly deserves any honour that may be given him for his good sense and firmness in this respect. We believe in the fullest possible liberty of the individual, yet we really cannot see why the Government may not prohibit the use of the abominable weed, at any rate in public, on the same principle that it muzzles dogs. If this proposal were made, however, there would be a general outcry against such an interference with the rights of the individual; and yet very little protest is made against compulsory vaccination! People who have no objection to being compelled to be poisoned would protest against being prohibited from taking poison and poisoning the others.

"The Bible and the Catholic Church" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

We have no quarrel or controversy with any person or any society or church on earth, neither is it our province or desire to criticise anybody. Our one work is to preach the Gospel, "as the truth is in Jesus." In the process of setting forth that truth, however, it sometimes becomes necessary to call attention to errors, not for the purpose of refuting them, -since the presentation of the simple truth is the true and only refutation of all error, -but to show the fulfilment of God's Word of truth, which has foretold the fact that apostasy would take place in the church, and would assume such proportions as to seem to be the church itself.

When the Catholic Church is charged with being opposed to the Bible, and with purposely keeping it from the people, in order that it may not stand in the way of their receiving the unwarrantable traditions of men, it is sometimes thought an uncharitable assertion. Accordingly we call attention to some statements that appeared so recently as September 29, in the *Catholic Times* by a priest, the Rev. John Freeland.

The article occupies more than a column, and is partially devoted to a comparison of the so called Authorised Version and the Douay Bible. The writer calls attention to the fact that it is not the rhythmical language of the common version that makes it so popular,-for it was a long time before it displaced other versions,-but that its hold upon the people is the prevailing idea that it is the source of authority in religion. He admits that the Bible is by no means a rendering of the Hebrew Bible, but of the Latin Vulgate, and says that the church is bound to the Latin, so that no new Catholic translation would be likely to be an improvement on what already exists. Instances are cited, which show how entirely different the way Bible is from the Hebrew Bible, which is the only Bible there is, so far as the most ancient portion is concerned.

The fact is apparent, therefore, that the Bible which the Catholic Church provides in the English language is at best a mixture of the human with the Divine original. The Catholic writer declares that "the Latin Vulgate, whose praise is in all the churches, is a monument of vulgar Latinity, of partly Hebrew, partly Greek idiom, and of bad grammar." But this is not all: even this is not recommended to the people, but quite the contrary. The following extracts which contain the essence of the article referred to, show this.

Having asked the question if there is really any desire on the part of Catholics generally for a different and better translation of the Bible, with a view to making Bible-reading more popular, the writer says:

"My experience has been that the Catholic laity are positively unwilling to read the Bible, and I certainly have not found that this unwillingness arises from any great dismay experienced from finding that the Douay version is wanting either in simplicity of diction or majesty of language. The Bible as a book is one in which they feel very little interest."

"The rest of the difficulty is not that of the inferiority of the Douay version as a translation; it is that the attitude of the Catholic Church with regard both to the act of reading the Sacred Scriptures as well as to the place it should hold in our public services, is infinitely different from the attitude of Protestantism. . . . The principle that 'the Bible, and the Bible only,' is the religion of Protestants, and the centre of attraction which that principle has caused the Sacred Scriptures to be, is answerable for all the love which the English-speaking races feel for the version which for nearly three centuries has been read and heard at church and in the home. Once grant that principle (and no Catholic would grant it for one minute in connection with his faith), or once order the public reading of the Bible at our Sunday services, (and I fail to see how this is to be accomplished in these days), and it matters very little what edition is used, it is bound in time to make its way into the heart and to become as music to the ear."

After calling attention to how the way has been prepared for the adoption of the "Authorised Version," the writer proceeds:-

"On the other hand, the Douay version has had no such circumstances as these to make it, so far as the laity are concerned, a success. It was published at a time when the evils of Bible-reading in the vernacular were evident even to the least observing. It was formed for a down-trodden body of men who justly felt that the perusal of the sacred text in their mother tongue was largely responsible for

all their woes. . . . The fact is, the Douay Bible has never had a chance of becoming loved and cherished. It has never even been read in the churches as the 'Seventy' and the Latin Vulgate have been; and I certainly have no very particular wish that it should be."

Here we have the plain statement of the case, in the official organ of Catholicism in England, and here we may leave it. The time is close at hand when every man in this country will have to decide for himself whether he will be guided by the Bible or by that power which sets itself above the Bible; and to this end it becomes everybody so to yield himself to the Lord, body and soul, that he will be in a position to decide;-for "if any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. The Gift of the Spirit. Isa. xliv. 1-8" *The Present Truth* 15, 48.

E. J. Waggoner

(ISA. xliv.1-7.)

"But hear now, O Jacob, My servant;
And Israel, whom I have chosen;
Thus saith Jehovah, thy Maker;
And He that formed thee from the womb, and
will help thee;
Fear thou not, O My servant Jacob;
And, O Jeshurun, whom I have chosen;
For I will pour out waters on the thirsty;
And flowing streams on the dry ground;
I will pour out My Spirit on thy seed,
And My blessing on thine offspring.
And they shall spring up as grass among the
waters;
As the willows beside the aqueducts.
One shall say, I belong to Jehovah;
And another shall be called by the name of
Jacob;
And this shall subscribe his hand to Jehovah,
And shall be surnamed by the name of Israel.
Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel;
And his Redeemer, Jehovah God of hosts:
I am the first, and I am the last;
And beside Me there is no God.
Who is like unto Me, that he should call forth
this event,
And make it known beforehand, and dispose it
for Me,
For the time that I appointed the people of the

destined age?

The things that are now coming, and are to come hereafter, let them declare unto us."

THE "CHOSEN"

How often in these chapters we find the word "chosen." God has chosen Israel. But who are Israel? Israel is the prince of God, the one who overcomes. Does the Lord then choose as His favourites only those who have made a conspicuous success in life? Oh, no: the choice must necessarily be made before the struggle is ended. As we well know, Jacob was chosen before he was born. We are chosen in order that we may overcome. God has blessed us in Christ, "according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Eph. i. 3. All are chosen; we have only by submission to His will to make our calling and election sure.

WHY GOD CHOOSES US

It is evident that Israel means more than one man. The man Jacob, who was by the Lord named Israel, was dead hundreds of years before the prophet Isaiah wrote these words; they apply to all the children of Israel. And here appears some more of the comfort of God. God has taken away every ground for discouragement, in this promise to Israel. Notice that He uses both names, Jacob and Israel. Jacob is the supplanter, the deceitful schemer, the one whose character is anything but attractive. The Lord indicates that He has chosen Jacob from his birth. That means that He has chosen us from our birth. But we have a bad record. No matter, so had the original Jacob. He has chosen us, that He may make us better. So we need not mourn over our early life; God makes all that pass away in Christ. Every inspired prayer is a promise of what God will do; and in Ps. xxv. 7 we read: "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions." That this is what God promises to do, we have already learned from the preceding chapter, where He says, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgression for Mine own sake, and

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will not remember thy "sins." He has chosen us, "that we might be holy and without blame before him." Eph. i. 4.

LITTLE CHILDREN

"Fear not, O Jacob, My servant; and thou Jeshurun, whom I have chosen." The word "Jeshurun" occurs only four times in the Bible, the three other times besides this one being in Deut. xxxii. and xxxiii. It is a diminutive, such as people use as pet names, and is equivalent to "the good little people," or, "the dear little people." It is applied to the whole people, just as a mother uses a term of

endearment to her child. It reveals the tender affection of God for His people. It corresponds to the "little children," so frequently used by the Saviour.

THE WATER OF LIFE

The Spirit of God is the water of life. This is seen from the following texts: "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive." John vii. 37-39. Remember that this promise in Isaiah is to the same ones who in the preceding chapter are said to be witnesses, and the Spirit is necessary in order that they may bear witness, "and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one." 1 John v. 7-8, R.V. God, who is the Fountain of living waters, is Spirit. John iv. 24. The Spirit "proceedeth from the Father," the stream flowing from the fountain head.

COOLING STREAMS

Nothing gives a more complete idea of satisfaction than cold water to one who is thirsty. God promises not merely to give the thirsty ones a drink, but to pour water upon them. He giveth liberally. If any one has ever known what it is to be faint from thirst in a dry place on a sultry day, he will appreciate this. He longs not merely for a drink, but to plunge into the water. He does not want simply a cupful of water, but a stream of it; and when he sees the stream in the distance, how he runs to it, and, throwing himself down, buries his head in it, or immerses himself in the refreshing liquid. Even so can the soul who thirsts for the living water find satisfaction.

THIRSTING FOR GOD

Recall the expressions of longing for God, that appear in the Psalms. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God; for the living God." Ps. xlii. 1-2. "O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee; my soul thirsteth for Thee; my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Ps. xliii. 1. All are familiar with the expressions, and yet much of their force is lost because they are considered as only figurative, when as a matter of fact they are very literal. The psalmist does indeed use a figure, but it is only to express his longing for God. The thirsting after God is not the figure; that is the fact. As the hart pants after the water brooks (this is the illustration) so his soul panteth after God. This is the thing illustrated. The thirst which God satisfies is real thirst, and He satisfies it as really as the brook satisfies the panting deer.

DRINKING THE LIFE OF GOD

Recall the passage which says that the glorious Lord will be to us a place of broad rivers and streams. Isa. xxxiii. 21. Remember that the river of water of life clear as crystal, proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Rev. xxii. 1. That the water which proceeds from God and the Lamb is real water, such as will satisfy literal thirst, we are taught by the experience of the children of Israel in the desert. Ex. xvii. 1-7. Christ is the Rock of Israel, and He stood upon the rock which Moses smote, and we are told that the people "drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them." 1 Cor. x. 4. From the spiritual Rock comes spiritual water; but spiritual water is very real. It was real enough to satisfy the thirst of the whole company of Israel, and also all their cattle. It is of this water that comes from the throne, that God says He will give all the thirsty ones freely. Rev. xxii. 17. It is from this stream, flowing from the throne of God, that the thirsty land is watered and made fruitful. "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it; Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; Thou preparest them corn, when Thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; Thou settlest the furrows thereof; Thou makest it soft with showers; Thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness; and Thy paths drop fatness." Ps. lxxv. 9-11. When we remember that two-thirds of the human body is water, it is easy to understand that water is our life; and then when we learn that the water which comes from heaven and gushes forth from the earth in springs comes direct from the throne of God, we can see that we live by the life of God.

GOD ALONE CAN SATISFY

It is a fact, therefore, that men may literally thirst after God. Indeed, whenever they thirst for pure, fresh water, it is for God that they are thirsting, although they do not know it. Every desire, every unsatisfied longing, is but an expression of the soul's need of God. He alone satisfies the desire of every living thing. "None but Christ can satisfy," even though the soul does not recognise the fact. Sometimes a man tries to satisfy his thirst with alcoholic liquor, but that never satisfies; it only creates a worse thirst; instead of building up, it tears down. That spirit is not the Spirit of life, but of death. Satan, who tries to make people believe that he is the Lord, and that his work is Divine, has stolen the name of the water of life for his spirit, calling brandy *eau-de vie*. That is what pure water is, while the spirituous liquor is the water of death. The exhortation is "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Eph. v. 18.

THIRSTING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

"The Spirit is life because of righteousness." Rom. viii. 10. The water and the blood, which agree in one with the Spirit, are also life, and consequently righteousness. We know that the blood of Christ is righteousness, because it cleanses from all sin. Drinking of the water of life is therefore drinking of the

blood of Christ which is righteousness and life. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Matt. v. 6. Everything that gives us real life is from God. Whenever we take in that which builds up the body, we are receiving of the life of God, the blood of Christ, the water of life. If therefore we recognise God in His gifts, we may actually take in righteousness with every drink of water that we take. All our thirst is but a longing for that which only God can bestow; but we do not, however, always thirst after righteousness. Instead, we try to satisfy the longing with everything except

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God. It is not popular to acknowledge our dependence upon God. Men have no hesitation in letting it be known that they are thirsty, but they would never think of admitting that they are longing for the life of God. That is why so few become filled with righteousness. Nevertheless God sheds the Spirit upon us abundantly, even though we do not recognise the gift. He gives to the unthankful as well as to the thankful. If we but recognise the gift, and thank Him for every renewal of it, righteousness will be ours as surely as God lives. How easy and plain is the way of righteousness and life!

December 7, 1899

"Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons. Fruits of Right and Wrong Doing. Mal. iii. 13-18; iv. 1-6" *The Present Truth* 15, 49.

E. J. Waggoner

We make no apology for printing the whole of these passages of Scripture, for nothing that any man can write is comparable to the word inspired by God; moreover we are persuaded that but few would take the trouble to turn to the passage in their Bibles, and read it while reading the article, and without the text before the eyes, or in the mind, the talk upon it is of little profit.

"Your words have been stout against Me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against Thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. Then they that feared the Lord spake with one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up

as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.

"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord come. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," or, "with utter destruction."

A few general notes, to enable the student to read the passage understandably, are all that space will allow, and all that are necessary. If everybody knew how to read the Bible, and would read it, there would be no need of any such paper as this. Indeed, there would be little need of religious books of any kind; for to know how to read the Bible is to know the Lord; and to know the Lord well is to be in a position where one needs no other instructor. The promise to God's children is, "they shall all be taught of God;" and when the time comes that all know Him, from the least to the greatest, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." Jer. xxxi. 34.

One should read the entire book of Malachi, in order to get a good understanding of the portion contained in this lesson. It is short, and will not take much time. From the reading it will appear that the service of God had degenerated into a mere form among priests and people, and that the people were weary even of the form. Not only were "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith," neglected, but, offerings, tithes and sacrifices were omitted or slighted.

FALSE WITNESS AGAINST GOD

Yet they could not see that they had said anything against the Lord. They had evidently not been guilty of open blasphemy, and so they boldly asked, when reproved, "What have we spoken against Thee?" They had said that it was vain to serve God, and that there was no profit in keeping His commandments. The Lord regarded these as very "stout" words against Him, and they certainly were. To say that the service of God is vain, and that there is no profit in keeping His commandments, is the same as saying that He is a liar; for He says that His commandments are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, and that "in keeping of them there is great reward." Ps. xix. 10, 11. It is the same as saying that God Himself is nothing. What more terrible charge could be brought against God than to say that His service is vain?

Are you sure that you have never been guilty of speaking such stolid words against God? Have you never become discouraged, and said that you "couldn't see any use in trying to do right"? Have you never envied the wicked, and called the proud happy, and said that "they that work wickedness are built up," and that people who look out for themselves, and do as they please, are better off than those who serve God? Have you never said, or thought, that the Lord did not care for you, and that He had neglected you, although you have given diligence

to be faithful to Him? Have you never felt like "giving up" the Christian life, or at least that which you supposed was a Christian life, because you could not see that there was any profit in it,-no worldly profit, certainly, and no prospect of any spiritual gain? If so,-and who cannot plead guilty to some such thoughts and speeches at some time in his life?-then your words have been exceedingly "stout" against God. You have been echoing the devil's false witness against the Most High. Surely it is time to repent.

SPEAKING GOD'S PRAISE

Mal. iii. 16 is often quoted in meetings for prayer and testimony, as an incentive for people to bear testimony for the Lord. No doubt the speaking one to another includes such occasions, but it is most certain

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that it is not limited to them. They that fear the Lord have conversations with one another about His goodness, and they do not need to be exhorted and urged to do so. Love that is forced, and must be prompted, is not of much value. "All Thy work shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee. They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom." Ps. cxlv. 10-12. And this they will do spontaneously from the fulness of their hearts. The saints of the Lord will praise and bless Him in the same way that His other works do, only to as much greater a degree as they are greater than all things else. The heavens declare the glory of God without any urging to "do their duty." Get acquainted with the Lord, and you will know that His service is not vain, but that is so blessed and joyous that you must tell of it to others. "Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul!" "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

THE LORD'S PROPERTY

The Lord has an interest in this earth. He made it, and He has a desire to the work of His hands. Those to whom He let out His property have sadly neglected it, and have let it run down, and have failed to give Him what fruit it did raise; yet He has not parted with it, and proposes to take the property over at no distant day. When He makes up His property, those who have spoken to one another of His goodness, and have made known to the sons of men the glorious majesty of His kingdom will be acknowledged as His. They are not only His servants, but they are called sons. They serve the Lord, not as slaves, but as sons. At that time there will be no difficulty in distinguishing between the righteous wicked, between Him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not, for the day that burneth as a furnace will burn them up. They will be nothing but stubble in the flame. But to those who fear the Lord the Sun of righteousness will arise, and they will be able to dwell with everlasting earnings.

THE FATE OF THE WICKED

This scripture shows sufficiently, if there were no other in the Bible to the same effect, that there will come a time when there will not be a sinner in the Lord's dominions. Not because all will be converted, for the Lord tells us that the majority will go in the broad road to destruction (Matt. vii. 13, 14), but because at the last day those who have utterly refused the Lord, will be utterly destroyed. The Lord is coming, and His fan is in His hand, "and He will purge His floor, and gather His wheat into His garner; but the chaff will be burned with unquenchable fire." Matt. iii. 11, 12. Then will the wicked "be as though they had not been." Obadiah 16. "The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of the lambs; they shall consume; in the smoke shall they consume away." "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." Ps. xxxvii. 20, 10.

These truths concerning the final fate of the incorrigibly wicked are not arbitrary. They are a necessary consequence of the truth that Christ Jesus came into the world that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16. The utter extinction of those who reject the Lord is not an arbitrary act of vengeance on the part of God, but is the inevitable result of their rejection of Christ, who is "the way, and the truth, and the life." Since they reject "the Author of life" (Acts iii. 15, margin), who is the only life, the One in whom alone men can live, and move, and have any being (Acts xvii. 28), it inevitably follows that they must cease to be. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." Ps. cxxxix. 7-10. And wherever God is, He must reign. Therefore when men say that they will not have Him to reign over them, that they will not be led by Him, and that they will not have His right hand hold them, because they wish to be "free from restraint," and declare that they will not live in His presence, it is plain that there is no place for them in the universe. The only place where they can flee from His presence is to get out of existence. And God, who gives to every man the desire of his heart, will graciously send them there. It is not necessary that He perform any arbitrary act in order to do this, but simply to let them be; when His life is withdrawn from them, according to their wish, they at once sink into nothingness. Outside of God there is nothing.

NEW LIFE AND PERFECT HEALTH IN CHRIST

When the Sun of righteousness arises it is with healing in His wings. He is our life. He who forgives all our iniquities also heals all our diseases. Ps. ciii. 1-4. He redeems our life from destruction. This He does by giving us His own life, which is eternal life. Now the characteristics of eternal life is that it is ever new, ever fresh. Who ever drinks of the water of life that Christ gives, has in him a well of water, ever springing up. John iv. 14. The vigour of this life will be seen to be full

when all things have been created new and sin and sinners have been cleared from the earth by the fires of the last, great day. Then the righteous will go forth, and from very exuberance of life, from the bare joy of being alive, shall leap and gambol as calves let loose from the stall. "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall the waters break out, and streams in the desert." Isa. xxxv. 6. But all this freshness is not to be reserved till the last day. Even now does the Sun of righteousness shine, and we may if we will rejoice in His healing beams. When the lame man at the gate of the temple was made strong in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, he went with the apostles into the temple, "walking, and leaping, and praising God." Acts iii. 6-8. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. xl. 31. The life is manifested, in order that we may have fulness of joy, and joy of the most real kind. The life is life indeed. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning." Lam. iii. 22, 23. It is possible,-and whatever is possible with the Lord is our privilege and duty,-for men to live so fully by the life of the Lord, that His new mercies will make them feel new life every morning, so that they will be glad with the joy of life. This is not sentiment,-it is not a matter of theorising, but comes by consciously taking the life of the Lord as it is manifested in His gifts to us, and of receiving it fresh from the Fountain head, in

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the purest form possible. "Then shall thy health spring forth speedily." The words of God our health to the flesh of all who will live by them. Prov. iv. 20-22. We must not try it for the mere selfish purpose of desire and to feel better physically, but because we wish to live wholly to the glory of God, who gives us life; doing this, we shall find even with the progress of years the freshness and buoyancy of youth.

THE LAW OF MOSES A DEFENCE

The law of Moses is not obsolete. Even down to the very last days, just before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord, it is to be remembered. If the Spirit and power of Elijah the prophet are given in connection with this law, to work a reformation among men, so that the Lord will not be obliged to smite the earth with utter destruction. "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Isa. xiii. 9. "The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." Isa. xxiv. 4-6. But because some will remember the law of Moses, which God commanded him in Horeb, with all the statutes and judgments, and will not say

that there is no profit in keeping His charge, there will be a few men left. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Moved by the Holy Spirit, the Psalmist David prayed: "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness sake, O Lord." Ps. xxv. 7. That therefore is a promise that the Lord will do as requested. What a comfort to know that all the sins and follies of our youth are forgiven, and that we need not be handicapped by them, but can run the race set before us as freely as though we had never sinned.

"Why bowest thou, O soul mine.

Crushed by ancestral sin.

Thou hast a noble heritage

That bids thee victory win."

"For Little Ones. A Child of Promise" *The Present Truth* 15, 49.

E. J. Waggoner

I hope if you remember our little talk together a few weeks ago about the "the Parables of Jesus," and that these are to be found all through the Old as well as the New Testament. Of the one of which we are going to talk to-day, the Apostle Paul especially tells us: "Which things are an allegory."

You have heard, have you not, the story of Abraham,-how God called him out from the heathen country where he had been born and brought up, and promised to lead him to a better country. God blessed him and gave him great flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, many servants, and great riches.

But there was one thing that Abram (as he was then called) and Sarai his wife, would rather have had than all these. God had not given them any children, and this was a great disappointment and grief to them. Yet God had promised Abraham that his seed, or descendants, should be "as the dust of the earth,"-as numerous as the grains of sand that make up the dust of the ground.

One night when God was talking with his friend, Abram said to him, "What wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless?" This seems to have been a gentle reminder to the Lord of His promise not yet fulfilled.

Then God "brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; so *shall thy seed be*. And Abram believed God."

Yet the years passed, and the promised child was not given, and Abram and Sarai were so old that they began to give up hope.

At last one day when Abram was ninety-nine years *old*, long past time when fathers and mothers usually have little children of their own, God appeared to Abram again and said:

"Thou shalt be the father of a multitude." "Neither shall thy name any more be called *Abram*, but thy name shall be called *Abraham*; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee."

"As for Sarah thy wife, thou shalt not call her name *Sarai*, but *Sarah* shall her name be." Sarah means "a princess," and the reason why God gave her this name was; "She shall be a mother of nations; kings of people's shall be of her."

Long afterwards when Paul was writing a letter to the Romans, he reminded them of this promise of God to Abraham and Sarah, and said that God "callethe the things that be not as though they were."

So when Abraham and Sarah had no children and no hope of ever having any, God called Abraham "the father of a multitude," and Sarah, "the mother of nations and of kings." If any man had done this it would have been a lie, but God can call anything just what He wishes it to be, and there is power in the Word that He speaks to make it just what He says.

Abraham knew the Lord, he knew that he is the Truth, and cannot lie; and so when God called him "the father of a multitude," he rejoiced that he was to become so, and his faith made the promise of God a reality to him. We are told that he "against hope believed in hope, that he might be the father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, so shall thy seed be." He was "strong in faith." Faith comes by hearing the Word of God, and trusts only in that Word.

So Abraham did not think of himself, nor of his wife, and of their great age, and how unlikely, or even impossible, it was that they should have a son, but "*looking unto the promise of God*, he wavered not through unbelief."

God's word is "Spirit and life;" it created all things in the beginning, and as Abraham and Sarah forgot themselves and thought of and looked to God's word and promise, by the power of the Spirit that worked through the Word, the long-promised, long-expected son was born. When the fulness of God's time was come, Isaac, "the child of promise," was "born of the Spirit."

Next week we will tell you of another "child of promise" of whose birth the birth of Isaac was the type or shadow, and through whom we too may be "born of the Spirit," and so become, like Him "the children of promise."

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 49.

E. J. Waggoner

-Paris has a place of worship for each 17,000 inhabitants; London one for each 2,000.

-"For every two Christians in Japan there are five Buddhist temples, in all about 263,000 houses of idol worship."

-According to the report, there are at present 1,744 cases of infectious diseases in Glasgow, of which 995 are scarlet fever.

-A Sunday law has been enacted in Dawson City, Alaska, and anyone violating this law lays himself liable to a heavy fine.

-A 20,000 fire at the Brownhill Colliery, Northumberland, on the 27th ult., has thrown 1,000 men of employment.

-By a new agreement, Russia has obtained the prolongation of her monopoly of railway building in Persia for an indefinite period.

-Lady Salisbury wife of the Premier coin rehearse, was buried on the 26th ult., with ceremonies exceedingly simple. She was loved by all.

-A projected new route across the Isthmus of Panama is being surveyed. The distance is only thirty-seven miles against forty-five of the Panama route.

-The London School Board declares that it will take 46,000,000 meals a year to supply dinners to the underfed scholars attending the Board Schools.

-The world's agriculture occupies the attention of 280,000,00 men, represents a capital of ?4,800,000,000.

-Protestant missionaries have been forbidden by General Otis to sell or distribute Bibles or tracts, because the archbishop of Manila and the Spanish priest objected.

-It is estimated that at the present rate of raising money in America for missions, it would take four years to raise a sum equal to the amount spent there in one year for chewing gum.

-Anxious to make some little personal present to her soldiers serving in South Africa, the Queen has decided upon sending a half-pound can of chocolate to each man, with her compliments.

-A whale, measuring 66 feet in length, was captured in the Thames last week near Woolwich Arsenal. The struggle was an exciting one, and there were many narrow escapes before he was grounded on the beach.

-Messrs. Krupp will shortly supply the Turkish army with 108 quick-firing guns, after the model of the guns presented by the Emperor to the Sultan last year. From Messrs. Cramp, of Philadelphia, the sultan has ordered a cruiser, to cost ? 600,000.

-It is reported from Bridgeport, Connecticut, U.S.A., that the law against kissing, enacted in the of King Charles II., is being revived. It prescribes forty lashes, administered on the bare back, for the man, and thirty for the woman caught kissing in public.

-A telephone of a novel character has just been invented in Paris, which receives and registers messages in the absence of the user. Political speeches, business communications, and music-hall songs can, therefore, be stored and taped at will. Experiments between Paris and Marseille are said to augur wide success for the new telephone.

-There is a sensible diminution of the smallpox epidemic in Hull. Since the first appearances of the visitation, there have been 552 cases, of which 13 per cent. have succumbed. During the past three weeks over 30,000 revaccinations have been effected there.

-In several hundred villages on the slopes of the Alps and Appennines, Italy, cannon are fired at a given signal from the weather observatory. The effect is said to be astonishing.

-Nineteen thousand arsenal employes are now busily employed at the Royal Laboratory, Woolwich Arsenal, preparing war stories for South Africa. They have been notified that the Imperial interest will necessitate their working through Christmastide.

-H. L. Hastings, the well-known writer of Anti-infidel literature has just died at Goshen, Massachusetts, U.S.A. His lecture on "The Inspiration of the Bible, or Will the Old Book Stand?" had a sale of over 3,000,000 copies, in eighteen or twenty different languages.

-It is reported that in a recent examination among the students in China, the young Emperor had a question about the "Flood" put in the examination papers.

This caused considerable stir among the people, and said the students in crowds to the missionaries to get Bible so that they might find the answer.

-One question that is before the Vatican for settlement, says an English Catholic authority, is whether "absolution" given by telephone, is valid. As the paper recently decided that the Pope's blessing received by biograph was as potent as when received in the accustomed ways, it would seem that absolution by telephone might be allowed.

-In America there has recently been formed a society called the Anti-Kissing League, the object of which is to save children from being kissed by everybody. We are quite in sympathy with this move, and wish that a similar one might be inaugurated in England. This is one of the most prolific means of communicating contagious maladies, and parents should not permit promiscuous kissing of their children.

-A carpenter in Chicago, has invented a new implements of warfare, consisting of a series of kites, supporting a cable upon which a "trolley" kite was made to travel. The trolley kite carries a bomb of high explosive power, which is automatically released, and will support a weight of twenty pounds. The test made have all been of a highly satisfactory character. Thus one more in should of destruction is added to the long list of life-taking implements of war.

-The Khalifa, who for thirteen years, until the battle of Omdurman last September, has been the ruler of the Dervishers, was killed in a battle with the English on the 25th ult., and 9,000 prisoners taken. As a ruler he ranks as one of the worst in history, having caused the death of thousands of innocent people on the nearest pretext, and his authority was maintained by the wholesale slaughter of recalcitrant tribes. "The Soudan may now be declared open" are the words of the Sirdar.

-All is not peace and quiet in China, even in the face of the promise of the U.S. Government that the Cubans should have their independence, for according to the latest reports 1,000 armed Cubans have assembled in the Pinar del Rio, raised the Revolutionary flag, and are prepared to fight for independence. American military officers are confident that there is serious trouble ahead, and American troops in Cuba are being placed in readiness for action at a moment's notice in case an outbreak occurs.

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E. J. Waggoner

After an interruption of several years, diplomatic relations have again been resumed between the Vatican and the Argentine Republic.

During the past year the St. Giles Christian Mission has provided 21,224 persons with a free breakfast on their release from prison, and has helped 5,998 to reform, nearly all of whom have signed the pledge.

A picture of the Pope blessing the world has recently been made, and is being extensively advertised by the Catholic press. It is said to be the Pope's expressed wish that "those who see his benediction in this picture" should derive

the same advantage from it as if it had been bestowed upon them personally. We have no doubt but they will.

"Our help is in the name of the Lord, which made heaven and earth." Ps. cxxiv. 8. The same One who created heaven and earth also made us, and He is our Helper. He is our Help. He does not help us in the sense of adding His strength to ours, but He supplies all the strength we have. He who creates also redeems.

A newspaper notice of the first volume of *Encyclopædia Biblica*, edited by Professors Cheyne and Black, says: "The reader will turn anxiously to such an article as 'Creation,' to find how the advanced critics regard the first chapters of Genesis," and adds that the result "should be reassuring," inasmuch as they are held to be derived only from Babylonian tradition, and "the writer of Gen. i. handled the tradition in the interests of his great religious beliefs." Of the book of Acts it is said that criticism "leads not only beyond a mere blind faith in its contents, but also beyond the unhistorical assumption that one is entitled to impose upon the author the demands of strict historical accuracy." Paul's "conception of God" is said to be "hampered by Jewish modes of thinking." So it seems that, not content with turning away their ears from the truth, to fables, the leading theological teachers are seeking to "reassure" the people by setting forth the truth itself as a fable. Since the grossest heathenism resulted from changing the truth of God into a lie, we may tell to a certainty what will be the outcome of such "Biblical criticism" as that just noted. See Rom. i. 25-31.

God promises to give us Himself. He says that He will pour water on him that is thirsty, and He is "the Fountain of living waters." Jer. ii. 13. When Christ, the representative of God, the One in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, came to this earth, He "emptied Himself." Phil. ii. 7, R.V. In Him God poured Himself out upon us, so that "of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." John i. 16. Christ "poured out His soul [or life] unto death" for us.

The simplest way is always the best, for truth is always simple, and the more simple a thing is, the nearest it is to the truth. The Vicar of High Wycombe has demonstrated this practically. About £500 was needed, and as he has conscientious objections to bazaars as a method of raising money for the Lord, he asked his people to forgo the pleasure and excitement of such an affair, by which it was estimated that £400 could be raised, and to put the money into the offertory during a week of special services. The result was that within the week £589 13s. 5d. was raised, which was more than the amount required.

That the Bible is the Word of God may be known by any person who can read it, or even by anyone who cannot read, but who can listen to it. It needs no Pope, no council, no "apostolic succession," no society, no man of either high or low degree, to prove this fact to anybody who can read or hear. Indeed, none or all of these could possibly prove it to anybody; for however stoutly it might be asserted, there would always remain a question as to the authority of the one making the assertion. The question is one that must be settled by each person individually. Just as Jesus is not receive testimony from man (John v. 34),-flesh and blood cannot reveal the Christ, the Divine Word (Matt. xvi. 16, 17),-so the Bible does

not depend upon man for proof of its truthfulness. The Holy Spirit speaking the words of the Bible to the heart and soul of a man is the only and the all-sufficient proof that it is the Word of God.

If thankfulness is indicated by heavy feeding, the people of New York must be very thankful. According to market reports for November 30th, which was "Thanksgiving Day," a million and a half Nov. 30, which was "Thanksgiving Day," a million and a half of turkeys, weighing ?22,000,000, and costing 3,000,000 dollars, were sold to families in that city, with which to celebrate the day. Truly there is much need for some one to call attention to the warning of Jesus, "Take heed to yourselves, lest that any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting."

Here is a puzzle for somebody to explain: Why is it that a man who under no sort of provocation would lower himself to the extent of spitting in another's face, and who would be horrified and indignant at the bare suggestion that he could possibly be guilty of so boorish an act as to take wholesome food out of his own mouth and offer it to anybody else, will fill not only his mouth, but his nose as well with vile and poisonous tobacco smoke, and blow it into unoffending people's faces, mouth, nose and eyes, without any thought that he is doing an ungentlemanly thing?

When a cat cannot live on milk, it would seem that is high time for human beings to leave it out of their bill of fare. It seems that boracic acid is now extensively added to it as a preservative, and the effect is decidedly dangerous. Dr. Hill, a medical officer of health of Birmingham, stated before a recent meeting that a kitten fed on pure milk, to which boracic acid had been added in the same quantities as used by the ordinary consumer, got thinner and thinner, and died in five weeks. The use of boracic acid is, however, on the decrease, and its place is being taken by formaldehyde, which is still more powerful. The preservative is added by the farmer, and the retailer often puts in more. The safest course for all is the only food that cannot be adulterated, and that is the diet originally provided by the Creator. Milk is only for babes, and nature provides it them free from adulteration. When teeth appear, that is one indication that the use of liquid food should cease.

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E. J. Waggoner

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Prov. iii. 6.

The exactly literal rendering, as given in the margin of the revision, is naturally much better, as it gives the thought more fully: "He shall make thy paths straight," or "plain." Know Him, recognise Him, in everything, and He will make your way plain and right.

This throws the responsibility on the Lord; not that we should shirk anything, but we should not assume that which is entirely beyond our capacity. "The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. x. 23.

This being the case, he should not try, to plan his own way, or to direct his own steps. God is the only one who can do it, therefore it should be left entirely to Him. In recognising Him at every step, and acknowledging Him, we place ourselves unreservedly in His hands.

In one of David's inspired prayers we have the very same expression as in our text: "Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness because of mine enemies, make Thy way plain before my face." Ps. v. 8. We see that the Lord makes our way plain by making His own way plain before our face; for His way is the way in which we are to walk. He is the way.

The Lord's way is righteousness. "As for God, His way is perfect." Ps. xviii. 30. Therefore it is that the psalmist prayed, "Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness." The assurance concerning the one who hears the voice of the Lord, and heeds it, is that "righteousness shall go before him, and shall make his footsteps a way to walk in." Ps. lxxxiv. 13. Such ones are blessed, because they are "undefiled in the way, walking in law of the Lord." "They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways." Ps. cxix. 1, 3.

God's way is always right. It is not so because He takes pains to make it so, but because He Himself is right. He is, and that is all that there is to be said. He cannot be other than He is, else He would deny Himself, and that He cannot do. In other words, He cannot cease to be.

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Men are prone to judge God by a human standard, and to say that in the work of salvation He could have done differently if He had chosen to, but that in His wisdom He chose to do as He has done. That is a mistaken idea. There is but one right way, and that is the way that God does. Men are obliged often to stop and weigh matters, and to decide between two or more ways that seem to open before them; both ways cannot be right, for if they were there would be no choice between them, but both must needs be followed; for we are in duty bound to do everything that is right; it may be that both of the ways that we are considering are wrong, and we are obliged to pause, because of our ignorance, and because we have in us tendencies to evil, which have to be contended with. There is always before us a choice between two ways: the evil and the good; and because we often choose the wrong way, instead of allowing God to choose for us, we have to say later on, "If I had that to do over again, I should do differently."

Not so with God. He never looks back upon His way with regret. He is never obliged to say, "If I had that to do over again, I should not do the way I did." He does not try experiments. He is right and therefore all He has to do is to act out Himself. By His own word, His own life, He created the heavens and the earth, and when He saw everything that He made, "behold, it was very good." He was perfectly satisfied, and there was nothing that He wished to change. It is for this reason that when sin entered into the world God was not thrown into confusion. His word had gone forth, and it could not be altered; all He had to do was to go on in the same way that He had begun, and to prove how firmly His word was established. The word that created continues its working, and re-creates. Throughout the eternal ages God pursues one steadfast course, without

deviating to the right or to the left, and without needing to stop to think out it is best for Him to act. He lives His own life, and that is perfect. His way could not be changed, simply because His life cannot be other than it is.

God is revealed in Christ, for no one knows the Father save the Son, and He to whom the Son will reveal Him. Matt. xi. 27. There is "one God and Father of all, and who is over all, and through all, and in all." Eph. iv. 6. Christ is the word that in the beginning was with God, and was God, and "the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." Rom. x. 8. Therefore "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Simply let the Word have free course; do not hold down the truth, but acknowledge it; and the Word that was made flesh will be manifest in your flesh even as it was in Jesus of Nazareth. This is what it is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John i. 12. Merely to believe that there was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, and that He was indeed the Son of God, hundreds of years ago, is not to believe on Him. To believe on Him is to receive Him and to acknowledge Him in the life; to allow Him through the eternal Spirit to live in you the same life that He lived of old. This is to acknowledge the Lord, and this will ensure your walking in the right way-the way of the Lord's righteousness.

When we acknowledge Him in all our ways, we shall not need as heretofore, to hesitate between two ways, since for us there will be only one way-His way. We shall know that way, because He has promised that they who continue in His words shall know the truth. We shall never be guilty of saying that our way is right, for we shall know that all our own ways are wrong; in that "we have turned everyone to his own way," we have gone astray (Isa. liii. 6); but we shall not hesitate to declare that God's way is perfect, and that it is God that maketh our way perfect, because He makes His way our way, setting us in the way of His steps. It will most certainly not be the way that we should have chosen, for our ways and thoughts are not His ways and thoughts; but we shall be content, since "He knoweth the way that I take; when He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold."

"Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons. Christ's Coming Foretold. Isa. ix. 2-7" *The Present Truth* 15, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

Who can ever become weary of the grand words of the evangelical prophet of Israel? What a richness, a luxuriance, there is in them, and what rhythm? How easy it is to remember them! They fasten themselves in our memory, never to be effaced. There are but few of them in this lesson, but they are wonderfully comprehensive. Let us read them.

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, Thou hast increased their joy; they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the

yoke of his burden, and the rod of his oppressor, Thou hast broken as in the day of Midian. For all the armour of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be even for bursting, for fuel of fire. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the Government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this."

The lesson begins with darkness, and ends with light. The preceding chapter closes with the statement that upon the earth there shall be "trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish." "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Christ is the light of the world; there is no life but from Him, and His light is the light of righteousness, for He is "the Sun of righteousness." That the prophecy in our lesson refers to the first advent of Christ, is made plain by comparing the first two verses with Matt. iv. 15-17. It was

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when "the Word of life" was manifested, that the light came into the world. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

But God did not leave the world in darkness for four thousand years. Far from it. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light." Gen. i. 1-3. The Word of life-the light of men-was "from the beginning." 1 John i. 1. It was the eternal life, shining for the salvation of all men. And men saw the light-and rejoiced in it-in the far-away olden time. Abraham saw it, and was glad. John viii. 5, 8. When the light shone forth out of the darkness in the beginning, "God saw the light, that it was good," from that time it has been bringing good news. Thus long has "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ" been in the world. "There be many that say, who will show us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us." Ps. iv. 6. From "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6), has all the good come, that has ever been known on this earth. "Turn us again, O Lord God, and cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved." Ps. lxxxiv. 3.

"God be merciful to us and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations." Ps. lxxii. 1, 2. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord in the light of Thy countenance. In Thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Ps. lxxxix. 15, 16. Thus sang the Psalmist hundreds of years before Jesus walked in "Galilee of the Gentiles." Ah, the light that shines forth from Jesus of Nazareth was enlightening the earth ages before the glory of God shown round the shepherds of Bethlehem, and the angel said, in fulfilment of the words of Isaiah, "Unto you a child is born," a Saviour. "And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not."

There is healing in the wings of the Sun of righteousness. He makes people feel whole-"every whit whole." To those that sat in the shadow of death, light has sprung up. The light of life scatters the shadows of death. "The light of His countenance" has in it "saving health." Let "the joyful sound" bring out over all the earth, that He who heals the sick, gives sight to the blind, cleanses the lepers, raises the dead, brings the captives out of the dark prison house, and binds up the broken-hearted, has come to earth, and that His healing presence has never departed.

Then why are not all healed and set at liberty?

Oh, "Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." Yet the light shone for all. It still shines. From those who take the veil off their hearts, the shadow of death will flee away before the life-giving beams of the Sun of righteousness.

And they shall joy according to the joy in harvest. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." Ps. xcvii. 11. The sowing-time is the promise of the harvest. What though the corn of wheat falls into the earth and dies, and the storms of long, dark winter nights howl above it? The promise is sure: "If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" therefore He who sees with the eye of faith may rejoice as much amid the blasts of winter as when the golden light of autumn reveals the glory of the ripened sheaves. So although the rod of the oppressor is grievous, and for a season "for ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations," "the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." 1 Peter i. 6-9. Rich men now oppress the poor; the just are condemned and killed; but the joy of the coming harvest is reflected in their faces, and for very joy they do not resist; but take all patiently. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James v. 6-8.

"The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Matt. xiii. 39-43. All the armour of the armed man-the furies oppressor-shall be only for a burning, for fuel of fire.

Whereby may we know this? By this: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." The first coming of Christ had in it the power and the glory and the joy of the second advent. That little Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger, is "the power of God." A "tender plant" it was, weak as any other babe that ever was born, yet Herod trembled, and raged against it in vain; "for the weakness of God is stronger than men." 1 Cor. i. 25. That Child shall yet

cause all the kingdoms of this world to totter and fall and crumble into pieces that cannot be found, while "of the increase of His government in peace there shall be no end."

Often during His short revelation on this earth did the "Holy Child Jesus" show forth His power and glory. Once was it seen that nothing less than "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" were veiled by the flesh of the Carpenter of Nazareth, and the three disciples in the holy mount were "eye-witnesses of His majesty." 2 Peter i. 16-18. For the light that encircled Him then was not light that shone *upon* Him, but light that shone *from* Him; "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" was always visible to those who could recognise it in the form of "grace and truth." John i. 14. So we see that the mighty power that will be revealed in the shaking heavens and earth at the second coming of Christ, will be but the power of Christ's coming in the flesh. It is the same "power of the Highest" that overshadowed Mary, enabling her to bring forth the "holy thing" that was called the Son of God; and it is the same "power that worketh in us" even now, to form Christ in us the hope of glory.

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There is not so much difference between the first in the second advent of Christ, as people are wont to think. The prophets, as in the instance before us, often mentioned them together as one. The second is but the further unfolding of the first. No man believes in the first, who does not also believe in the second. He who was, is the One who *is*, and who *is to come*." Rev. i. 8. He is not divided; we must take the whole of Him or nothing. If we do not accept Him as the One who is coming again to take visible possession of His own inheritance, then we do not fully realise His power as our present sovereign Lord. Never in eternity will there be any more power manifested in Jesus than was necessary to bring Him to birth in Bethlehem of Judea, and to raise Him from the dead. And that is the power by which He now dwells in every living heart. The power of His coming to Judgment, is the power of His humble birth, and the power of the cross. Only by the cross are repentant sinners saved, and reprobate sinners destroyed.

Therefore lift up your heads and rejoice. The time of tribulation is the time to "joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Rom. v. 1-3, 11. The oppressor may be as cruel and fierce as ever; "your adversary the devil" may be as active as ever; there may be visible oppression; but Christ has promised "liberty to the captives," and the liberty is ours. The power by which He will at the last "rend the heavens," and "come down" (Isa. lxiv. 1), is the same power by which He now rides on a cherub and flies on the wings of the wind to the help of His afflicted, tempted ones. Ps. viii. 1-10. Then why not now rejoice over the conquered foe. Do you expect to be glad when the Lord comes to claim His own? You will not unless you rejoice now, even while surrounded with trials. The crown will be given only to those who "love His appearing;" and none love His appearing who do not know the power of it in His blessed presence. "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." John xvi. 20.

Therefore, "rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, rejoice;" for "unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given."

"Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. A Stupid, False Witness. Isa. xlv. 9-29" *The Present Truth* 15, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlv. 9-20.)

"They that fashion a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and their own witnesses see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed.

"Who hath fashioned a god, or molten a graven image, that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed; and the workmen, they are of men; let them all be gathered together; they shall fear, they shall be ashamed together.

"The smith maketh an axe, and worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with his strong arm; yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and his faint. The carpenter stretcheth out a line; he marketh it out with a pencil; he shapeth it with planes, and he marketh it out with compasses, and shapeth it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man, to dwell in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the holm tree and the oak, and strengtheneth for himself one among the trees of the forest; he planteth a fir tree, and the rain doth nourish it, Then shall it be for a man to burn; and he taketh thereof, and warmeth himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied; yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire; and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; he falleth down unto it; and worshippeth, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god.

"They know not, neither do they consider; for He hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none calleth to mind, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh and eaten it; and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

One must search long to find a finer piece of description than this. True to the life, it is at the same time wonderfully cutting and sarcastic; its accuracy, however, is what makes it so. The passage will bear reading many times, and after the reader has done with laughing at the poor, stupid idolater, who makes his own god, he may turn the laugh against himself; for this image-maker's

descendants and counterparts are found in every country under heaven, and in every society, and every church.

The careful reader cannot fail to notice that the court is still in session. We ourselves are in the court room. The case will be on until the Judgment day comes. Now the witnesses are being examined, and are giving in their sworn testimony. The trial is to decide who is God, whether the Maker of the heavens and the earth, or the things that man makes, and so, really, man himself.

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In the verses preceding the beginning of this lesson, we have the Lord's witnesses again addressed. Indeed, the whole of the preceding chapter concerns them. They are the redeemed of the Lord, those whom He gathers out of every country, who are called by His name, and whom He has created for His glory, and who show it forth. God has blotted out their iniquities, and poured His Spirit upon them in floods, which they have gladly received, so that they may testify to Him. "One shall say I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." To them God speaks, and tells them not to be afraid. He is the first and the last, the only God, and they, as His witnesses, are not to be afraid to lift up their voices with strength, and to declare His name and fame.

"We know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one." 1 Cor. viii. 4. There are many that are called gods, but there is only one God, namely the living God, who made all things. No idol is anything, and "they that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them." Ps. cxv. 8. Therefore the maker and worshipper of an idol is nothing. That is what our lesson tells us: "They that make a graven image are all of them vanity." This word "vanity," is from the Hebrew word meaning "emptiness," "confusion," as in Gen. ii. 1. "The earth was without form." Job xxvi. 7: "He that stretcheth out the north over the empty place." Isa. xxiv. 10; xxxiv. 11: "The city of confusion is broken down;" "He shall stretch upon it the line of confusion." Isa. xxix. 21: "a thing of naught." Isa. xli. 29: "Their molten images are wind and confusion." That is all there is to an idol, and it is all there is to the one who makes and trusts in one. That is, it is all there is to anybody who does not trust in the Lord Jehovah. The Judgment day will prove this, when all who have rejected God will cease to be, so that neither he nor his place will be found. Ps. xxxvii. 10.

"Eyes have they, but they will see not." This is spoken of the idols of silver and gold, which are the work of men's hands. These false gods have their witnesses, even as the Lord has His; but on the principle that everybody is like the object of his worship, "their own witnesses see not nor know." The reason for this will soon be made clear, if the reader has not already seen it. But first, let us contrast these witnesses with the "Faithful and True Witness," and with those who range themselves on His side. He says, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." John iii. 11. Peter and John, two of the Lord's witnesses, said, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Acts iv. 20. God does not desire that His witnesses shall speak anything else. He says, "Go and tell the things which ye do hear and see." A man who

testifies to what he has seen, and what he knows, can answer without fear under any circumstances; but the one who tries to tell what he has not seen, and what he knows nothing about, and what indeed does not exist, will very speedily be put to shame. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching." John vii. 17. There is therefore no need for anybody to be in doubt. The mere curiosity seeker will not find anything; the man who wishes to make an exhibition of his knowledge, will not be able to give any testimony that will bear cross-examination; but whoever wishes to do the will of God,-whoever yields himself to the Lord,-will know. "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John viii. 31, 32.

What constitutes the real difference between the worshippers of the true God and those who trust in the things of naught?-Just this, that the first trust in something, and the others in nothing. Now remember that a man is absolutely nothing of himself. It is only by the Spirit of God that men are made, and by the breath of the Lord that they receive life and understanding. Job xxxii. 8; xxxiii. 4. "All nations are before Him as nothing; and they are counted to Him as less than nothing, and vanity." Isa. xl. 17. All the substance, the reality, that there is to any man is the presence of God. This is the grand truth that all the world needs to learn. Whoever thinks that he is something, when he is nothing, deceives himself. Gal. vi. 3. That is the trouble with the idolater here described as a type of his class. "A deceived heart hath turned him aside." He does not know that there is nothing real but God, and that in Him all things hold together. That is what makes men so proud and boastful. That is the secret of all self-confidence and vain-glory. Now if a man recognises this truth, and trusts in the Lord wholly, yielding his body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, he will be "filled with all the fulness of God," and there will be substance, reality, to him and his words. He will be able to speak with authority. It is God that worketh in him, and it is the Holy Spirit that speaks in him. But when a man who is nothing to begin with, rejects the source of all life and wisdom, and trusts in that which he himself has made, and which must of necessity be nothing, it follows that the whole thing is emptiness. His words and deeds are wind, and he himself is but chaff. His own testimony carries him away; or, as in Isa. i. 31, the strong is tow, and his work is a spark, so that he has nothing but destruction in himself.

"Let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together." Numbers do not make strength. A thousand million ciphers are of no more value than one alone. A lie does not become the truth because ten thousand men testify to it. Men cannot create anything; and that is the root of the whole matter. People who know that a single lie will be of no avail, imagine that very many of them will stand. But it is folly. "Ye have ploughed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies; because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men." Hosea x. 13. "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place." Isa. xxviii. 17. No man can possibly have any more strength than he has with God in him alone. God's presence in another man will not answer for me; so that I cannot trust even in a good man; how much less, then, in a wicked man. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou bear witness in a

cause to turn aside after a multitude to wrest judgment." Ex. xxiii. 2. "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." Prov. xi. 21. Let no one rest in any way that he is pursuing, confident in the thought that "everybody does so," or that it has been the custom for many years. Find out for yourself what the Lord says, and then you will know that you have the truth, and that your way will stand. His Word is the only real foundation. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. iii. 11.

Anyone who reads this, anybody who can read the Bible, can see at once the folly of the man who makes a god out of a tree. It would seem that no one could possibly be so foolish as to worship a thing that he himself has made, and could say to it, "Deliver me, for thou art my god." Part of the tree he uses for cooking his dinner, and the remainder he makes into a god. Surely he ought to be able to see

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that there is no more power to the portion of the tree which he worships than in that which he burns in the fire. Yet the thing is done by men of as good mental ability as any of us. "The deceitfulness of sin" is amazing; and this deceitfulness is in every human heart. See Jer. xvii. 9.

There is nothing more common in this world than self-justification-the desire to maintain one's own cause, and to demonstrate that one is in the right, and has done no wrong. We have all had experience in this. The tendency is inherent in human nature. "They all with one consent began to make excuse." Luke xiv. 18. That is, they all began to show what they regarded as a good reason for not complying with the summons that the king issued. Now if a good reason, a reasonable excuse, can be given for any course, that shows that the course is right. So every excuse that anybody makes for his acts,-for not serving God,-is a claim that he is all right in himself, without heeding the Lord. In what are we trusting, when we do that?-Manifestly in ourselves,-in the works of our own hands. Then we do not differ a particle from the man who is described in this chapter. A deceived heart has turned us aside, and we are feeding on ashes. If we confess our sins, we shall find mercy from God, because in confessing them we are acknowledging that God is, and that He is in the right; and He is mercy. All that is needed therefore, is for us to confess our sins, not because God stands on His dignity, and wishes to humiliate us, but because only by confessing that we are wrong and that He is right will we trust in Him, who is the only source of life and righteousness. "Go and proclaim those words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, and that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." Jer iii. 12, 13.

"A deceived heart has turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand." How is there a lie in the right hand of the man who trusts in the works of his hands, that is, in anything that he has done,-the man who will not confess to God, but who maintains that he has life and righteousness in himself?-The answer is very easy. Read the preceding verses. The man who proposes to save himself by his own works, "is hungry, and his

strength faileth; he drinketh no water, and is faint." But afterwards he eats and drinks, and is satisfied. But he did not make the food and drink, and he knows it. All the strength that he has comes from what he eats and drinks, that is, from something outside of himself, which he has received. The strength of our right hand is the strength that God has given us, yet we talk and act as if it were our own. Therefore it is evident that there is a lie in our right hands whenever we do so. Yes, we ourselves are lies, for we profess to be something when we are nothing. Every morsel of food that we eat, and upon which we depend for strength to go about our daily work, or which we use in self-gratification, is an evidence that we are wholly dependent on God. The easiest thing in the world to know is God. Anybody who has sense enough to know that eating will give strength, has no excuse for not knowing God. Ah, there are very many stupid people in this world; very many false witnesses. Shall we hearken to the Lord, and be wise, or shall we continue in our folly?

"For Little Ones. 'Christ in You'" *The Present Truth* 15, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

Now the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto the city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came in unto her, and said:-

"Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee."

But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this might be. And the angel said under her:

"Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And behold thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest."

What a wonderful and glorious promise, was it not? And was not Mary indeed "highly favoured"? She thought so; then marvelled greatly at the gracious words. The thought that came first to her mind and lips was, "How shall this be?" How could anything so wonderful take place,-that she should bring forth the child who should be the Son of God and Saviour?

Did you know the Lord has sent a message, a promise, to you, which will make you, if you believe and receive it, just as "highly favoured" as was Mary? Did you know that He wants His Son Jesus Christ to "be formed in you"? This is what the Apostle Paul told his "little children" in one of his letters to them. He said also that this was the whole secret of the riches of the glorious Gospel, the Good Tidings,-"Christ in *you*, the hope of glory." Not Christ born of Mary in the Bethlehem stable,-but Christ in *you*.

Then do you not think that you, like Mary, "have found favour with God"? And surely you will want to know as she did, "How shall this be?" So that you may not do anything to hinder this gracious purpose of God.

Then listen carefully to Gabriel's answer to this question, for Christ can "be formed in you" only through the same means, and by the same power, that He was born of Mary. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the

Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

How much was Mary herself to do to bring this to pass? Nothing at all; all was to be the work of the Holy Spirit of God. And there is nothing of all, dear children, that you can do to form Christ within you, so that His love and meekness, for His weakness, gentleness, and power, shall be seen in your life.

But "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," dear little one. He is with you everywhere; you cannot go where He is not.

"Whither shall I go from Thy presence, and whither shall I flee from by Spirit?" Wherever you go the Spirit of God is there; and wherever He is, the power of the Highest is overshadowing you to form Christ in you if you will let Him.

Only believe His promise, as Mary did, and say like her: "Be it unto me according to Thy Word." Then yield yourself to the sweet influence which His Spirit is shedding round you every moment, and His power will fill you with the new life of the Lord Jesus Christ, and make you a true "child of promise," "born of the Spirit."

Does this remind you of the child we spoke of last week, -Isaac, the child of promise? Perhaps you can see better now some of the beautiful lessons that God was teaching Abraham when He promised him a son, who should be born of the Spirit, and could come in no other way.

He was "preaching the Gospel beforehand under Abraham," showing him how, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ should be born, not only into the world, but formed in his own heart, to save him from his sins.

Like Mary, "Abraham believed God." This was all that he needed, all that you need to do, in order to receive the fulfilment of all His promises.

Another time we will find some more of the Gospel lessons that are hidden in the life of Isaac; but next week we must tell you of the fulfilment of the promise that God sent to Mary by the angel Gabriel.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

-According to Reuter, a serious native anti-Christian rising is announced at Chian-fu, China.

-Nearly 340,000 has been received by the Lord Mayor of London for the Transvaal War Fund.

-The S.S. *Himalaya*, which recently arrived in London from Melbourne, had on board 412,000 eggs for the London market.

-The total results of the self-denial week observed by the Salvationists in Australia amount to 27,100, an advance of 2,000 over 1898.

-The *United Presbyterian* suggestively observes that "the world is practically at peace, except the two great English-speaking nations, who have been foremost in advocating peace."

-It is reported that a price of ?5,000 has been placed on the head of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, which some will be paid to any Boer who will bring him dead or alive.

-The trans-Atlantic steamship *Majestic*, of the White Star Line, has been converted into a transport, and this week, Wednesday, leaves for South Africa with 2,000 troops.

-During the week ending November 30 there were forty-six fresh cases of plague in Mauritius, twenty-nine of which prove fatal, making the total number of deaths from plague thirty-six.

-A firm of solicitors in London, well known in legal circles, fell last week with liabilities amounting to ?300,000 with practically no assets. The crash was so terrifying that one of the members committed suicide.

-There has been a serious outbreak of typhoid fever in one of the principal cities of New York, U.S.A., due to the disease being communicated through milk supplied by a milk and whose wife was ill with the disease.

-A great business block of buildings in Philadelphia, U.S.A., including the premises of the Lippincott publishers, has been destroyed by fire. The damage is estimated at nearly three-quarters of a million sterling.

-The Anglo-American Rapid Vehicle Co. is the name of a new industry that has lately filed the articles of incorporation in America. The capital stock is placed that ?15,000,000, and it is formed for the purpose of combining the most important English and American automobile companies.

-And expressman in New York has a three-year old colt which he has taught to drink beer and whisky and to chew tobacco. The pores frequently goes the rounds of the saloons with his owner, and many persons treat him in order to see him drink. In one evening it is reported that he drank 120 glasses of beer, and was made dead drunk thereby.

-In future mourning envelops are not to be allowed to pass through the post in France. The reason given by the postal authorities is that black-edged envelopes are easily tampered with. They can be opened, and it damaged in the process a little ink will conceal the damage.

-There left for the Transvaal last week on the steamer *Karami*, one of the heaviest cargoes of war material ever dispatched from the British shores. Among the ammunition are forty million rounds of small-arms ammunition in 3,640 boxes; 7,000 rounds of shrapnel and, and shall, and 4,000 rounds of 5 in. lyddite shell into 2,000 boxes; 851 boxes of fuses and forty boxes of pistol ammunition.

-A break for stopping steamships has just been invented by a Liverpool man whereby it is claimed that a vessel sailing at twenty knots an hour can be stopped within a space equal to twice her length.

-The first tests in the United States of the Pollak-Virag system of rapid telegraphy were made a few days since. Between Chicago and Buffalo (1,000 miles) 90,000 words an hour were transmitted. Between Chicago and Milwaukee, 140,000 words were correctly transmitted in the same length of time.

-At a recent meeting of the American Board of Commissary for Foreign Missions held in Providence, U.S.A., it was reported that over 2,000 Congregational churches, more than a third of all, and 4,880 of the 5,500 Sunday-schools, or nearly ninety per cent. of all made no contributions for foreign missions.

-Because of the representations of the German Governor has to the comparative weakness of the Triple Alliance, the Common Government of Austria has asked that the appropriations to the Naval and Military Budget be increased to 6,000,000 florins more than last year. The demand has caused considerable comment.

-The Danish merchants and farmers have to ship to the English troops in South Africa 50,000 packages of butter as a Christmas present. Cigarettes and tobacco seem to be the favourite present, for one tobacco firm has sent 100,000 cigarettes, and to one Lady Anderson and other tobacco man presented 20,000 cigarettes for the use of the wounded.

-Last summer the Canadian Government sent over to Finland Prof. Mavors of the Toronto University to see if he could not divert to Canada some of the Finns suffering from the attorney of the Russian Government. As a result the Government has been notified that 15,000 Finns will come out to Canada next spring and locate on farms in the Northwest.

-Sir Henry Tate, of sugar refiner fame, died in London on the 5th insts. Amassing a great fortune, he spent lavishly in establishing art galleries, libraries, and founding scholarships. He it was who saw in a little device for cutting sugar into cubes, a valuable invention, and to get up after it was rejected by several sugar refiners, and with it made his fortune.

-The *New York World*, in giving an itemised list of expenditures connected with the late *Shamrock-Columbia* yacht race, states that Sir Thomas Lipton expended ?190,000 in building his yacht and carrying out the race with her for America's cup. That is a vast sum to be spent by a single individual on a sport, and is possible only in these days of colossal fortunes.

-The *Denton Grange* from Southampton for South Africa one day last week, having on board quite a remarkable cargo, consisting of thirteen traction engines, two steam ploughs, sixty ambulance vans, forty-two for rich and living vans, twenty ammunition than, 170 buck waggons, 1,000 tons of hay, 1,000 tons of oats and bran, and a large quantity of water-pipes for water stations from Capetown to Pretoria for the use of traction engines. She is expected to reach Capetown in about twenty-three days.

-According to a Vienna correspondent, the Countess Dunen-Borkowaka, a young widow of Vienna, renowned for her beauty, has just met with a horrible death. She had contracted the habit of smoking cigarettes while reading in bed. Yesterday morning the Countess was found burned to death in her bed-room. Only her skeleton remained. Having gone late to bed, she had evidently dropped asleep with a lighted cigarette in her fingers. The pillows seemed of caught fire, and she was doubtless ablaze before being able to cry out for help.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

Two more numbers complete this volume of PRESENT TRUTH. In keeping with our purpose to make every number as good as we possibly can, and steadily to improve, we hope to be able to do much better in the coming year

than in the past. We are planning for some material improvements in the way of better paper, new headings, and better and more numerous illustrations. As to the matter, we trust that the Lord will enable us week by week to give "meat in due season." Have you received a blessing reading the paper? Surely, then, the least that you can do in acknowledgement of it, is to put others in the way of receiving a blessing, by placing the paper into their hands.

In this issue of the paper we have really the last of the Sunday-school lessons for the year 1899, as the next one is a review of all the lessons for the year. Accordingly next week's paper will contain no Sunday-school lessons notes. The next number but one, however, the last one of this volume, will contain the first one of the series for 1900, and there will be no intermission during the year, with. The lessons for next year will be on the life of Christ, and the incidents selected for study are the most striking ones in the Gospels. We hope to have suitable illustrations to accompany the notes, which we trust will be no less interesting and profitable to the general reader than to the Sunday-school teacher and scholar.

The prominence and the praise given to the young buglar who with his own hand shot three Boers at the Elands Laagte, is bearing fruit. The *Daily Mail* has received from a schoolmaster in Suffolk a watch and chain, subscribed for by the children of this school, and accompanied by a letter from the children to the boy trumpeter, of which the following is a portion:-

"Our schoolmaster reads us the war news every morning, and what we liked best was to hear about you, and how you shot the three Boers, and we thought we should like to send you a Christmas present. . . . We are pleased you are our young countryman, and we hope if any of us are ever soldiers we will do our duty like you."

Thus the children are being taught that duty is done and fame is won by killing people. Yet even in battle, the bravest deeds that have been done have been in connection with saving life, and not in taking it.

People are always heedless of warnings of danger that they cannot themselves see. This is shown by the continued free use of milk as an article of food. Speaking a week ago before the Royal British Nurses' Association, the chief inspector of the local Government board, Sir Richard Thorne-Thorne, said that milk is "one of the most dangerous of all foods," because probably 90 per cent. of our cows are tubercular. In view of this, it is surely little less than foolhardy to go on using milk day after day. Why will people deliberately risk their lives when it is not necessary?

Let no one beguile himself into complacency with the thought, "I know where my milk comes from, and the people take the very best care of their cows," or even with, "I keep my own, and so I am sure that the milk is good." It will be admitted that no cows could have better care, or would be more likely to be healthy, than those of Her Majesty's herd, yet it is a fact that not long since out of forty that she had examined, no less than thirty-four were found to be tuberculous, and were immediately ordered to be killed. That is, in the herd of the best house in the kingdom, kept in the best possible condition, in the cleanest

surroundings, 85 per cent. were tuberculous. And yet people will not open their eyes to the fact that the plague is upon the cattle, and upon them heavily.

The gambling instinct-the readiness to "take chances"-is inherent in human nature. So all men gamble with life. A danger to life is pointed out, and although they recognise the danger, they will say, "well, I'll risk it; I've escaped so far, and I take my chances." Now it is true that many people who use tuberculous milk do not get tuberculosis, yet it is equally true that many who think they are "all right" have the germs of the disease in them. One thing is certain: that diseased food, even if it does not produce actual disease, cannot possibly make healthy tissue and build up healthy bodies. At its best, milk is not food for adults; at its worst, no one should think of touching it.

What has the use of milk, whether tuberculous or not, to do with the Gospel? Why devote space to it, that ought to be devoted to the exposition of Bible truths, and to exhortations to godliness? Ah, the Gospel is the promise of life, and "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Life is sacred, it is the gift of God, and belongs to Him, and is not to be trifled with; to Him we must render an account for the way we use it. Even the law of the land recognises the evil of suicide, and punishes the one who attempts it. No man has the right to destroy his life, or to put it in danger unnecessarily. On the contrary, we are in duty bound to develop the life that is in us to the highest possible point, and to keep our bodies in the highest state of health, that we may be able to render in this world the service to God which is His due.

Healing of diseases is coupled with forgiveness of sins. Ps. ciii. 3. The redemption of the body is contemplated in the Gospel just as surely as the saving of the soul. There is every evidence in the Bible that God regards a healthy body as necessary as a sinless soul. "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper, and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 2. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thessalonians v. 23, 24. But just as the forgiveness of sins involves the keeping of the commandments,-the ceasing to sin,-even so the healing of disease by the Lord involves the observance of the laws of life,-the abandoning of everything that tends to cause it. Surely this should not be thought a hardship. We can well understand and sympathise with the child who seriously objects to taking the nauseous mixture which the doctor orders; but it is strange that men should so persistently refuse to adopt a course of life which is in itself good. All the Lord asks is for us to leave off the thing that is injurious. Truly "His commandments are not grievous."

"The Gospel of Isaiah. Abolishing the Enmity. Isa. xlv. 21-28" *The Present Truth* 15, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlv. 21-28.)

"Remember these things, O Jacob;
 And, Israel; for thou art My servant;
 I have formed thee; thou art a servant unto
 Me;
 O Israel, by Me thou shalt not be forgotten.
 I have made thy transgressions vanish away
 like a cloud;
 And thy sins like a vapour;
 Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee.
 Sing, O ye heavens, for Jehovah hath effected
 it;
 Utter a joyful sound, O ye depths of the
 earth;
 Burst forth into song, O ye mountains;
 Thou, forest, and every tree therein!
 For Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob;
 And will be glorified in Israel.
 Thus saith Jehovah, thy redeemer;
 Even He that formed thee from the womb;
 I am Jehovah, who make all things;
 Who stretch out the heavens alone;
 Who spread the firm earth by Myself;
 I am He who frustrateth the prognostics of the
 imposters;
 And maketh the diviners mad;
 Who reverseth the devices of the sages,
 And infatuateth their knowledge;
 Who establisheth the word of His servant;
 And accomplisheth the counsel of His mes-
 sengers;
 Who sayeth to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be in-
 habited;
 And to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built;
 And her desolated places I will restore;
 Who sayeth to the deep, Be thou wasted;
 And I will make dry thy rivers;
 Who sayeth to Cyrus, Thou art My shepherd!
 And he shall fulfill all My pleasure;
 Who sayeth to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built;
 And to the temple, Thy foundations shall be
 laid."

A CONTRAST

What a contrast we have here between the true God, and the god made by a
 man who cannot work a single day without fainting from hunger and thirst, and

who takes a portion of the material from which his god is made, and cooks his dinner with it. These things are to be remembered. This was written for us in this nineteenth century. That man who makes his god out of an ash tree is no more of a heathen than is any other man who does not trust in the Lord.

THE BLESSING OF SERVICE

It is a blessed thing for any man to hear the Lord say to him, "Thou art My servant." To whom does He say it?-To every one who will listen to Him. Jesus tasted death for every man, and all have been purchased by the blood of Christ. As soon as anyone yields to the Lord, to serve Him, that moment he is the Lord's servant. Rom. vi. 16. Then he has all the privileges of the Lord's house. The Lord's servants are all free men. The loosing of them from bondage is the mark of servitude to Him. Ps. cxvi. 16. The Lord's servants, that is, those who give themselves wholly to His service, are known by their freedom.

In verse 21 we have literally, instead of "I have formed thee; thou art My servant," "I have formed thee My servant." God creates man His servant. When God made man in the beginning, man was God's servant. But he was made a king, with absolute authority over all the earth and everything connected with it. So the Lord's servants are all kings by birth. There are many different grades of servants just as there are different degrees of ability; but the Lord has no one in His service, who is lower in rank than king. Men have lost the dominion. Adam lost control of himself, and therefore all his authority was gone; but Christ came to restore that which was lost; in Him we are created anew, and then the authority is restored. We are given complete dominion over ourselves, and the man who can rule himself can rule anything else under heaven.

GOD'S WATCHFULNESS

Surely there is not a more comforting passage of scripture in the Bible than this. It is full of tender, comforting words. "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me." "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." Ps. cxxi. 3-4. How often we hear somebody say that God has forgotten him. Why, the very breath that he uses in saying it, is an evidence that God has not forgotten him. A man is not a mere machine. He is not like a clock which the owner winds up, and then leaves to run down when the spring has uncoiled. If that were the case, then everybody would live at least to old age. No man lives of his own power, for "there is no man that has power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death." Eccl. viii. 8. We lie down, and go to sleep, and we awake, simply because the Lord stays awake and watches. In the beginning He breathed the breath of life into man's nostrils, and He has continued doing that every moment since. If He thought only of Himself; if He gathered unto Himself His Spirit and His breath; all flesh would perish together, and man would turn again to dust. Job xxxiv. 14-15. But God does not forget a single individual; therefore we live. This does not imply that when a man dies it is because God has forgotten him. Not by any means. No; the

God who has so complete a grasp of details that He knows every sparrow, and the number of the hairs upon every head, as well as the names of all the innumerable stars, can never be accused of forgetfulness. Details do not worry Him.

SIN ABOLISHED IN FLESH

Where are our sins?-They are in us, in our own lives, of course. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." Mark vii. 21-23. Then when God says, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins," what does He mean?-Simply this, that by His life He cleanses us from all sin-takes it out of us. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7. The Hebrew word here rendered "blotted out," is the word meaning to wipe off, as one would wipe words from a slate or blackboard. God takes the sins, and obliterates them. Do not make the mistake of saying that there is no such thing as sin, as some people do. There is sin, and it is very real; but it is not in Christ. "He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." 1 John iii. 5. He has "condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. viii. 4. In His own flesh He has "abolished the enmity" (Eph. ii. 15), which is the carnal mind. Although He was in the flesh, the mind of the flesh had no control over Him. But it was our flesh that He took, therefore He has abolished sin in the flesh of every one who will confess Him. It is literally blotted out. He took upon Himself all the sins of the world, yet no person ever saw the slightest trace of a sin in or on Him. In Him the sins were as effectually effaced as if they had never existed.

"COME BACK! ALL IS FORGIVEN"

When the child plays truant from school, he is afraid to meet the master. The youth gets into bad company, and fears to go home. Conscience-a guilty conscience-makes cowards of us all, ever since Adam and Eve hid themselves from the face of the Lord in the garden of Eden, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit. People judge the Lord by their own hard, unforgiving natures, and think that since they have sinned against Him He must be angry with them; this keeps many away from Him; they do not believe that He will accept them if they come to Him. But He says, "Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee." He tells us that the sins are blotted out, so that we need have no fear of returning. Nothing is held against us; all is gone in Christ. More blessed than all this is the fact that in this blotting out of our sins their power is destroyed, so that they cannot have dominion over us. God Himself has provided the way so that we need not come back like culprits, cringing and cowering with fear, but like sons, confidently, expecting mercy, and grace to help in time of need.

THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH INTERESTED

Here is something for the heavens and earth to rejoice over. How often the heavens and earth are called upon, in connection with the work of redemption. In the very first chapter of Isaiah, the heavens and earth are called upon to witness that God has nourished and brought up children, who have rebelled against Him. Now the same heavens and earth are called upon to rejoice, from the utmost heights to the lowest depths, because God has redeemed His people. Why should all nature be called upon to rejoice in this? Ah, there is good reason for it, because all nature was as it were placed in pawn, pledged to man's redemption. God upholds all things: in Christ all things hold together; so when God gave Christ, interposing Himself by an oath, thus pledging His own existence for man's salvation, the whole creation was placed over against the redemption of man. Humanly speaking, all nature was risked by the Lord in the grand enterprise of redeeming man. If the work had failed, if God had broken His word, then His life would have been forfeited, and the universe would have been dissolved. God and all creation, therefore, have a far greater interest in the redemption of man, than any man can have, or than all mankind can have. Their existence depends upon man's salvation. So we can well understand why "heaven and nature" should be called on to sing the grace of God that bringeth salvation, and why they should respond. What a strong ground of faith this gives us. There is not a thing in God's universe that has not an interest in our redemption, and there is nothing that is not calculated to help us in the way of life. Nothing is against us, but everything is for us. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." 1 Cor. iii. 21-23.

GOD CREATES BY HIMSELF

God had no helper in the creation of the universe. The Word was with God in the beginning, but the Word was God. He who by Himself created the heavens, and spread out the earth, is competent to redeem His people. Redemption is but creation anew, and the fact that God is Creator, and that without any aid,-

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when indeed there was no one else to give aid,-He created all things, is sufficient proof that what He has promised concerning man, He is fully able to perform. This is the reason we are called upon in the very last days to give glory to God, and to worship Him as the One who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. Rev. xiv. 6-7.

THE INFALLIBLE WORD IN MEN

That which God does by another is as firm as if done without any agency. He confirms the word of His servant. He has reconciled us to Himself, and has put into us the Word of reconciliation. 2 Cor. v. 18-19. "He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God." John iii. 34. Whoever speaks only the Word of the

Lord, need have no fear that one of his words will fail. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter iv. 11), and he may speak with all boldness. The tokens of liars will be frustrated, and diviners will be seen to be mad, and the worldly-wise will be taken in their own craftiness, and their knowledge shown to be foolishness; but the simple truth uttered by the lowliest follower of God will stand as long as the sun and moon endure.

The last reference in this chapter, concerning Cyrus and his work, will be considered in connection with the first verses of the next chapter, where the subject is continued.

"The Gospel of Isaiah. God, the Ruler of Nations. Isa. xlv. 1-7" *The Present Truth* 15, 50.

E. J. Waggoner

(Isa. xlv. 1-7.)

"Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron; and I will give thee the treasurers of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob My servant's sake, and Israel Mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name; I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me; I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me, that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I made peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things."

When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had a dream describing a calamity that was to befall him, he was told that it was to let him "know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." Dan. iv. 25. In the scripture before us we have a wonderful example of the truth of this, and also an illustration of the fact that nothing happens by chance, and takes God by surprise, but is provided for long beforehand.

Isaiah prophesied "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." Isa. i. 1. Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years (2 Chron. xxix. 1) and as he lived fifteen years after his great illness (Isa. xxxviii.), we know that he had reigned fourteen years at that time. But Isaiah had at that time been prophesying at least forty-six years, for Jotham and Ahaz had each reigned sixteen years. 2 Chron. xxvii. 1; xxviii. 1. We know not certainly how long Isaiah prophesied in the reign of Uzziah, but the sixth chapter seems to indicate that he began in the last year of his reign. The point is that in 714 B.C., which was about the date of Isaiah's special message to Hezekiah, Isaiah had been prophesying between forty-five and fifty years; and that as he did not prophesy later than Hezekiah's

reign, he died before the year 698 B.C. We are therefore safe in putting the date of the scripture which we have before us as not later than 712 B.C.

Of what importance is this fact? It shows the minuteness of God's foreknowledge, and the perfection of His plans for the salvation of His people. Babylon was captured by Cyrus in the year 538 B.C., when he was sixty-one years old. We find therefore that Cyrus was named, and his work was described in detail, more than one hundred and thirty years before he was born, and about one hundred and eighty-four years before the work was done. That is to say, more than one hundred years before the children of Israel were carried captive to Babylon, the Lord had not only foretold their release from captivity, but had named the man who should be instrumental in setting them free, and had given a minute description of the incidents of the capture of the city. In view of this, how forcible are the words "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me."

In order that the exactness of the prophecy may be better appreciated by the reader, we quote the following brief account of the capture of Babylon from Rawlinson's "Great Monarchies." It may be necessary to state, for the aid of some, that Babylon was very large, surrounded by a wall of immense height and thickness, and stored with provisions sufficient to last twenty years. The river Euphrates passed through the city, dividing it into two parts, but there was also a wall on each side of the river, the whole length of its passage through the city, and the twenty-five streets which led across the river were enclosed by huge gates of brass. Having described the progress of Cyrus to Babylon, against which his army began a seemingly hopeless siege, Rawlinson continues:-

"Withdrawing the greater part of his army from the vicinity of the city, and leaving behind him only certain corps of observation, Cyrus marched away up the course of the Euphrates for a certain distance, and there proceeded to make a vigorous use of the spade. His soldiers could now appreciate the value of the experience which they had gained by dispersing the Gyndes, and perceived that the summer and autumn of the preceding year had not been wasted. They dug a channel or channels from the Euphrates, by means of which a great portion of its water would be drawn off, and hoped in this way to render the natural course of the river fordable. When all was prepared, Cyrus determined to wait for the arrival of a certain festival, during which the whole population were wont to engage in drinking and reveling, and then silently in the dead of night to turn the water of the river and make his attack. All fell out as he hoped and wished. The festival was held with even greater pomp and splendour than usual; for Belshazzar, with the natural insolence of youth, to mark his contempt of the besieging army, abandoned himself wholly to the delights of the season, and himself entertained a thousand lords in his palace. Elsewhere the rest of the population was occupied in feasting and dancing. Drunken riot and mad excitement held possession of the town; the siege was forgotten; ordinary precautions were neglected. Following the example of their king, the Babylonians gave themselves up for the night to orgies in which religious frenzy and drunken excess formed a strange and revolting medley.

"Meanwhile, outside the city, in silence and darkness, the Persians watched at the two points where the Euphrates entered and left the walls. Anxiously they noted the gradual sinking of the water in the riverbed; still more anxiously they watched to see if those within the walls would observe the suspicious circumstance and sound an alarm through the town. Should such an alarm be given, all their labours would be lost. If, when they entered the riverbed, they found the river walls manned and the river-gates fast-locked, they would be indeed caught in a trap." Enfiladed on both sides by an enemy whom they could neither see nor reach, they would be overwhelmed and destroyed by his missiles before they could succeed in making their escape. But as they watched, no sounds of alarm reached them-only a confused noise of revel and riot, which showed that the unhappy townsmen were quite unconscious of the approach of danger.

"At last shadowy forms began to emerge from the obscurity of the deep riverbed, and on the landing places opposite the river-gates scattered clusters of men grew into solid columns-the undefended gateways were seized-a war shout was raised-the alarm was taken and spread-and swift runners started off to show the king of Babylon that his city was taken at one end." (Jer. i. 31) In the darkness and confusion of the night a terrible massacre ensued. The drunken revelers could make no resistance. The king, paralyzed with fear, at the awful handwriting upon the wall, which too late had warned him of his peril, could do nothing even to check the progress of his assailants, who carried all before them everywhere. Bursting into the palace, a band of Persians made their way to the presence of the monarch, and slew him on the scene of his impious revelry. Other bands carried fire and sword through the town. When morning came, Cyrus found himself undisputed master of the city, which, if it had not despised his efforts, might with the greatest ease have baffled him."

Note the statements of the prophecy: "I will loose the loins of kings." At the very hour when Cyrus was making his entrance into the city, while Belshazzar was engaged in a wild, idolatrous feast, God caused a writing to appear on the wall of the banqueting hall. "Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." Dan. v. 6.

"And the gates shall not be shut." All the skill of Cyrus, and even his stratagem of diverting the course of the river, would have availed nothing, if the gates leading to the river had not been left open. His army might have marched into the city, and out again if it could have got out, but could have inflicted no damage. But in that night of idolatrous revelry, everything was neglected and the way was open. The gods whom the princes praised gave no protection.

This entire prophecy is devoted to showing that there is none but God. He is the Creator and the Redeemer. He can create, and He can destroy. Nothing takes place without His counsel or consent. Everything works out His will. He makes even the wrath of man to praise Him. Ps. lxvi. 10. Kings and nations think that they are controlling, and are doing their own will, when they are simply working out God's plan. We must not make the mistake of thinking that God

plans all their wicked practices, but however wicked they are, however opposed to His will, they carry out His purpose even by their opposition.

It was God who said to Jerusalem, "Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof." He said it, and Cyrus was His agent in carrying it out. God also said to the deep, "Be dry," and it was He who dried up the rivers. So when Cyrus was digging his channels, and turning aside the Euphrates from its bed, he was simply doing God's work. What a marvelous, awe-inspiring thought-that men are factors in the great plan of the Most High God! And how glorious when they yield themselves willingly and understandingly! All the events of this earth's history, are not for the benefit of those who are enacting them, but for the salvation of God's people. Instead of being afraid when wars and rumours of wars and tumults come, thinking they are about to be overwhelmed, the faithful followers of God may be of good courage, knowing that out of these very alarms, and even by means of them, God is working out their deliverance.

God did his work through Cyrus, "that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me." And how widely was the name of God known in consequence?-Over all the world. The kingdom of Babylon was world-wide. See Dan. ii. 37-38; Jer. xxvii. 4-7. Of course this came under the dominion of Cyrus, and so the decree for the building of the temple ran thus:-

"Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled; the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, King of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also into writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia. The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? His God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is the God) which is in Jerusalem." Ezra i. 1-3. So we see that the one true God was proclaimed by Cyrus throughout all the world.

"What a wonderful tribute from a heathen king!" some will exclaim. Why do you say, "a heathen king"? True, Cyrus was a Persian. He was brought up in ignorance of the true God: but so was Abraham. Joshua xxiv. 2. God revealed Himself to Abraham, and he believed, and so became the friend of God. Cyrus was surnamed by God while he was yet ignorant of Him, even long before he was born, yet he came at last to know God, and he acknowledged Him before all the world, declaring Him to be God, and confessing that he held his title from Him. What more could anybody do? If there was ever a Christian king in any land, then certainly it was Cyrus, of Persia, as well as Nebuchadnezzar, of Babylon. This man, direct from heathenism, did what the Israelites, with a long ancestry of believers failed to do.

Cyrus was, therefore, an Israelite, even by his own confession. Read his proclamation over again. He declared his belief in the Lord of heaven, who had brought him to the throne, and said, "He is the God," and at the same time declared Him to be "the Lord God of Israel." God takes from among the Gentiles

a people for His name (Acts xv. 14), and Cyrus, the Persian, was one of them. It is not the flesh, but faith, that determines who are Israel. "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him."

December 21, 1899

"Drinking to Drown Trouble" *The Present Truth* 15, 51.

E. J. Waggoner

"I drink too drown troubles."

Quite right; I do also, and I find it works admirably.

"Come, then, here's a public house; let's go in and have a drink together."

No, thank you; I don't drink at such places. I drink, indeed, too drown troubles; but I have found that when a person drinks at public houses, or of the liquor that is sold at such places, his trouble not only reappears in an aggravated form, but brings a dozen more with it. The house at which I drink supplies a drink that drowns the trouble so that it is swallowed up for ever, and destroys also the cause of it.

"Tell me about it; for it is truly as you say, the drink does not effectually drown my troubles; the more I drink the more trouble I have. I should like to know a better way."

I will gladly tell you not only a better way, but the very best way. It will not take long, although the subject is vast enough to keep one talking a lifetime. Yet it is very simple.

The secret is simply this: I drink from the fountain of life, while you drink from the stream of death. Life, real life, in its purest form, is freshness, and buoyancy, and gladness. It is not trouble, it makes no trouble, and it renders its possessor so light and vigorous that he rises above all trouble, no matter how great. Look at birds, how joyous and happy they are; they have their troubles, as great for them as any that oppress us, and of the same nature, too; but they are never cast down. They never mourn for anything except the loss of a mate or their young, and even then their mourning does not last for ever, and is music while it continues. For the loss of property, however, for destruction of their buildings, for disappointments and reverses, they never complain for a moment. Notice, too, that they never get up dull and peevish and fretful in the morning, they never seem to have headaches or rheumatism, but sing and hop and fly about as though they could not contain themselves for very joy.

The reason for this? They live near to heaven, and take the gift of life direct from the hands of their Maker.

"Consider the lilies;" give heed to the springing grass and flowers, the sparkling stream, that laughs as it hastens to be lost in the sea, the dew, the rain, the air, and the sunshine; see what a freshness is in them all, showing that pure life is joy and happiness.

Now read: "How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be

abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light." Ps. xxxvi. 7-9. Here we see that the drink that comes from God's house is joy-the joy of eternal youth.

Then listen to the words of the Author of Life: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John iv. 14.

"Where can I find this water of life? How can I get hold of it, so that I may drink it?"

It is all about you; you are surrounded by it. "The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." And we make known this life until you, "that your joy may be full." 1 John i. 2, 4.

"It breathes in the air,
It shines in the light;
It streams from the hills,
It descends to the plain,
And sweetly distills
In the dew and the rain."

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It is "new every morning" (Lam. iii. 23) and is given to us so that we may be "renewed day by day." 2 Cor. iv. 16. It makes our greatest affliction seem but light, and with it even tribulation itself becomes a means for our rejoicing. See Rom. v. 1-11, especially verses 2-4, 11. We are surrounded with the love of God, and His love is life, because it is Himself. He is love, and He is life.

"But surely, since everything comes from God, I get my life from His hand just as directly as you do, or as the birds do. The food that I eat, and even the liquor that I drink, is manufactured from materials that He has created, and given to us."

There is an important item that you overlooked. Let me explain it to you in so few words that you cannot fail to remember them. You not know that the water from the purest fountain may become corrupt and deadly by the addition of poisonous matter, or by stagnation? Do you not see that there is a vast difference between drinking from a spring just as it gushes out of a rock, and from that stream after it has been dammed up, or dead animals and sewage have been cast into it? That is the secret of the whole matter; you drink from the stream after it has been allowed to stagnate, and has been corrupted and poisoned by man's devices; I go to the fountain-head for it; I get my life is directly from God as it is possible to find it, pure, uncomplicated, and unadulterated, and recognise Him in the gift. Thus I taste the freshness of it. This principle should be carried out in every detail.

With God is the fountain of life, for He is the life. He is love, therefore His love is life. Now when the love of God is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit, the free gift to all, you will see "the path of life," and you will find that in God's presence is fulness of joy, and that His right hand pleasures for evermore. Ps. xvi. 11. You will "obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." You will find that the "saving health" of the light of God's face (Ps. lxxvii. 1,

2) makes you "perfectly whole," giving you a "perfect soundness," not only in body, but in soul, forgiving all your iniquities and healing all your diseases, redeeming your life from destruction, and satisfying your mouth with good things, so that your youth may be renewed like the eagle's. Ps. ciii. 2-5. You will find, what De Leon searched for so long in vain, the fountain of eternal youth, and that without leaving home.

Try it! "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" Oh, taste, and see that the Lord is good!

"Putting on Christ" *The Present Truth* 15, 51.

E. J. Waggoner

Text: For as many of you as had been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27.

Without being at all technical, it is worthwhile to understand the words we use; for if we do not, then the text does not mean anything to us. The word baptized-taken in this connection-has a very deep significance, and is very plain too. If that had been fully understood, the perversion of baptism would never have taken place. There would have been no question as to the "motive baptism." *Baptism*, means to immerse, to plunge, to submerge. It was a very common word among the Greeks. When they went to take a swimming bath, a place where they plunged into the water, they went to a *baptisterion*. We use the same word, leaving off the ending. The swimming pool of to-day was the baptistry of the Greeks. Baptism was simply an immersion in any kind of fluid. The smith, having heated his iron hot, would baptize it to cool it off. A dish might be baptized into water or oil. The hands or the whole body would be baptized-plunged-in water, for cleansing. Jesus Christ used the word, in the sense in which it was commonly understood by all the people. So much for the meaning of the word.

The text speaks about being "baptized *into Christ*." When a person is baptized into Christ, it means that he is submerged in Christ. One may take a bath every day-He may baptize himself into water every day of his life,-but that is not baptism *into Christ*. So you see, while the name presents very vividly the *act*, yet the form, the very form described by the name, make be present, and there be no *Christian baptism*.

Faith is the simplest thing in the world. It is the most natural thing in the world. It is the first thing that ever comes to a human soul. The one thing that God has given to every soul of mankind is the power to believe; but it makes all the difference in the world what a person believes-what he has faith in. The very same faculty with which a man believes one thing, he may use to believe another thing. That simple trust which the little child has in the word of its parent, is the faith that saves, when centred in the Lord. It is no new thing that a person must manufacture; there is no way of believing in order to be a Christian; all the difference is in the object toward which his faith is directed. One has but to exercise the faith he has every day, toward another object. So many people say they cannot believe, and then they try to manufacture something they call faith,

and it is not faith at all. What the man should do is to centre his faith on Christ,- the faith that he exercises every day in the ordinary duties of life,-and that will make him a Christian.

Baptism into Christ means changing from one phase of life into another. We might say it is becoming absorbed into something else. The man who heretofore has been absorbed in himself, buried in his own thoughts, plunged into his own ways, is now absorbed into Christ, buried in him, swallowed up in His ways and His thoughts. It is a transformation. The man who has lived in one atmosphere, now changes, and breathes in another atmosphere. He has lived in one world, and now he passes from that into another-which is a passing from death to life,- through death to life.

When we are baptized into Christ, absorbed in Him, the difference between what we were and what we are now is the difference between a dead man and a live

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one. We are all dead in trespasses and sins. We are helpless, we cannot do anything, that is, we cannot do any good deeds. The perfect man is the man who comes up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; brought up to that level where he can reach out and do the things that Christ did. So far as that is concerned, we are dead. Men are utterly helpless, utterly ignorant, unable to do or even to think the things that they should, unable to grasp the things that pertain to the Spirit of God. Men walk before God, surrounded by spiritual things, and yet are utterly unconscious of them, and do not know if there be so much as a Holy Spirit. You talk about spiritual things, and they are foolishness to them.

Now when we are buried in Christ, have put on Christ, then we are raised to life with Him, and we see that He is the reality of all things. There is nothing real except with Him. It becomes very easy for one to enjoy the Lord when one believes and understands that the Lord is every good thing, and that there is nothing good except from Him. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." When we believe that, and believe there is nothing good except from Him, and that He gives only good to us, although it may be contrary to our natural likings, then we can like things which we once did not like, because they are from Him, and they are good because they are from Him.

This Scripture tells us that by nature we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; but in Him is all fulness. In Him are all the riches hid. He is the light, and He gives sight to the blind. He is clothed with light, and He Himself becomes the clothing of those who trust in Him; so as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, are clothed with Him as a garment.

We see the Man Christ Jesus as one single individual in this world, and we see what He was like. He gave an example of a Christian life for thirty-three years. In Him we see what a Christian is. If that were all, however, it would be of no help to us. I used to think about the Lord, and the more I thought of Him and the more I heard of Him the more discouraged I got. Really it seemed to me that I could be a better Christian without Christ than with Him. This seems a paradox, but yet you may have had something of the same experience. That is to say, I would be a great deal better satisfied with myself when I didn't think about the

Lord, than when I did think of Him. When I didn't see the example I could be a good deal better satisfied with myself. Now I remember when I went to school I used to have a copy set at the top of the page of my writing books. I looked at the copy, and wrote one line underneath, and then for the next line I would look at the line I had written and so on down. I felt very well satisfied with my writing-and the best satisfied with the last line of all, until I compared it with the copy at the top, and then I saw how far below the standard it was. So according to my own standard I could be a better Christian; but when I looked at Christ, and saw how far I came from being like Him, I grew discouraged. It was a long time that Christ was not a help to me, and so I was the less a Christian. Now we are to look to Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith; but looking at Him as One afar off, or apart from us, even though near, is nothing but discouragement. When you look to Him as a good man, as the one perfect man, the fulness of God, who in everything pleased God, and who is the pattern, and then say to yourself, "I ought to be like that, and I must be that way," there is nothing but discouragement in it. You actually get discouraged looking at the Lord, simply because the thing is so high that it is unattainable.

I used to look at others and say, "I wish I could do as well as they can-they are not so bad by nature as I am." How many, many people have gone through that same experience. They have been baptized, taken into the church, but they have never put on Christ,-baptized in water, but not baptized into Christ because they do not know Him. I had heard about Him, but as a Saviour, as a Deliverer, I did not know anything about Him. So for a long time I lived the life of discouragement, so far as any satisfaction was concerned, for several years my Christian experience was a failure, until at last I gave up entirely. I said, "I cannot do right, I was not made that way." And truly I had not been made that way, for "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." I had not been made new, and of course I could not live a new life.

As many as are baptized into Christ, must of necessity put on Christ. How can that be? That was the question of Nicodemus, and his objection was the objection of others as well: How can this man give us His body to eat? How can that Man become me and I become Him? Then comes the simple revelation of God in all the things He has made. Everything that God has made shows His everlasting power and Divinity. He gives us breath, and that is a constant proof to us, repeated every moment, of His power to fill us with the Spirit of righteousness and life. Sometimes in taking gymnastics you can feel the thrill of life tingle in your very finger ends. It makes you a new man. Many of us have been made new physically when we have been at the very verge of the grave,-all but dead. Where did that new life come from? From within?-No, but God gave us life-fresh air, good food, pure water;-these are given as a proof of the power of God to lift a man up and make him a new creature.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whether it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." God gives His Spirit as the wind, as the breath He breathes into us, that we may receive the Spirit as freely as we receive God's air. Baptism into the

water is simply the symbol of our plunging into the water of life, the blood of Christ, the fountain open for sin and uncleanness, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is what we are baptized into, for His name is Himself.

You remember when Peter spoke to the Jewish Council when the man who had been healed from an incurable lameness stood there; he said, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in *the name* of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, . . . even *in Him* doth this man stand before you whole." The name of Jesus of Nazareth is Jesus Himself. And what does it mean?-Saviour, Deliverer. The Saving power is in Himself. Virtue, power, went out from Him, and that healed the people. He is life; He is the Saviour, and His name is just what He is,- Jesus. Baptized into the name of Jesus Christ,-into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost,-means taking all the fulness of God's life, and letting all of God's gifts combined come in to lift us up. "And they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee." Ps. ix. 10. Whoever knows the name of the Lord, will put his trust in Him, and will not be disappointed.

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I tell you it is a wonderfully blessed thing to know the name of the Lord. There is power in that name-not in the five letters that compose it,-but in the name itself, for it is *life*. You cannot put Jesus on the wall; you cannot picture Him with chalk; you cannot write Him with ink, but He is written by the Spirit of the living God, in the very being, because He is life and energy.

There were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, who thought they would use the name of Jesus. They were sorcerers. They had seen Paul drive out evil spirits, and so when they saw a man possessed of an evil spirit, they came to him and said, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." But the evil spirit answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" And at that they were driven out of the house, wounded and bruised. Yet when those who had the name and knew it, spoke the name of Jesus, there was power, not only to cast out devils but to heal the sick. "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise and walk." *In* the name the lame man got up; he stood in that name, and the next day you remember Peter said to the rulers that it was in the name of Jesus that the man stood there whole.

There is just as much power in the name of Jesus to-day as ever. Any professed Gospel that does not come casting out devils, is not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The devil is just the same roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, the same wily adversary of souls to-day, that he has been all these six thousand years. This same spirit works in the children of disobedience to-day that did when Christ was here in the flesh. The devil must be driven out of a man in order that Christ may fill him. No matter in what form the Word of God is, it has the same power to drive out devils from man that it ever had, and it will do it just as effectually now as ever. And when you and I are conscious of the devil coming in like a flood, filling our hearts with whisperings of evil, making us feel that everything is a fraud, and our past profession is useless, and that he will hold us anyhow-don't believe him. The devil, you know it is said, goes about as a roaring lion. Lions frighten their prey by roaring. When the lion roars, the timid beasts of

the forests lose their power, and then he springs upon them. Just so the devil frightens people into thinking that they must give up before he has them at all, and then when they become discouraged and frightened, it is an easy matter to get his claws upon them. Now don't let him get that advantage. You need not, for "we are not ignorant of his devices."

"The King of Glory" *The Present Truth* 15, 51.

E. J. Waggoner

"Hark the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King."

Angels rejoiced and sang for joy when this beautiful world was created, and man was formed to be its king. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." But their songs of joy were soon changed to mourning when they saw that earth had lost its king, and the blight of sin had come over the fair world.

How glad, then, they must have been to bear to earth, to the sons of men, the good tidings of the coming King, through whom the curse should be taken away from the whole earth, and of whose kingdom "there should be no end."

This was the message, you remember, sent to Mary by the angel Gabriel. Mary was then living at Nazareth, but the Word of God had said that the King, the Shepherd and Ruler of His people, should come forth out of Bethlehem.

So when the time for the royal birth drew near, the Emperor of Rome sent out a decree that all the world should be taxed, and this made it necessary for Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem. And while they were there, in fulfilment of the prophecy, Mary "brought forth her firstborn Son; and she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

"Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining,
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall
Angels adore Him, in slumber reclining.
Maker and Monarch, and Saviour of all!"

What a sight for the angels to see,-their Maker and Monarch, their Creator and King, a tiny helpless babe "wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger"!

And did they honour Him any less, or cease to worship Him, when they saw His helpless human form? No! listen to the words of their glad song of praise: "*Glory to God in the highest!"*

That little baby lying in the Bethlehem stable with the beasts of the stall was "God in the Highest,"-the Most High-to whom the angels of God were offering deeper love and adoration than ever before. For when God brought the First-begotten into the world He said: "Let all the angels of God worship Him!"

We sometimes sing:-

"Lo, He laid His glory by,
Born that man no more may die;"

but this is not true. He *cannot* lay aside His glory, for it is the beauty and power of His own life and kingly character. Those who lived with Him on the earth said of Him: "We beheld His glory, full of *grace and truth*."

He did not "lay His glory by," but He veiled its bright shining in our weak, human flesh, so that He might come near to bless and save us. But this very veiling only made His true glory, His grace and truth, even more plainly seen.

When He became a little human child, and lived and died on this earth for our sakes, He was showing to angels and to men the depths of shame and sorrow to which He, the Creator and King of all, will go, so that He may help and save any of His creatures who are in trouble, even through their own folly and sin.

So even the angels knew Him better than before when they saw the baby lying in the manger. They saw more of His glory, and sang with deeper gladness songs of praise to God in the highest, to whom belongs "the kingdom and the power and the glory," because He is *the Saviour* of all.

But "earth asleep unconscious lies" while all the angels of God are worshipping the babe "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." How they must have longed to give the message of salvation and to share their joy with those for whose sake the King of Glory had become a poor babe, that they through His poverty might be rich.

But the children of men are wrapped in slumber. Yet not all: "There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night;" and to these was given the high honour of being the first to hear and carry the good tidings.

"And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them:-

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"Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign until you: Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

"And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even to Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

"And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child."

This glad tidings, this beautiful Gospel message which the angel said should "be to *all people*" is for each one of you, dear children. "Unto *you* is born this day a *Saviour* which is Christ the Lord,"-"Christ in you" to be your King, to save from sin, and to make you pure and holy.

Are you not glad, as the shepherds were when they heard this good news, and will you not, like them, carry the joyful tidings to others, and make known what God has made known to you about His Holy Child Jesus?

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 51.

E. J. Waggoner

-Three million sterling has just been ordered to be spent, to bring the metropolis main drainage up to date.

-The Metropolitan police force numbers 15,694, and has charge of 678 square miles, and costs the ratepayer 9d. in the pound.

-American machinery to the value of ?500,000 has just been ordered from that country for the erection of an electric plant at Rugby.

-The Governor of Shantung has been dismissed on account of his inability to deal with the anti-missionary troubles which have been rife throughout the province.

-The Viceroy of India had just made public the fact that 2,205,000 persons are now on relief. Showers have fallen in parts of Madras, but there has been no rain elsewhere.

-Over 100,00 idle miners at the collieries of South Wales and Monmouth resumed work last week at a small advance of wages granted under the sliding scale agreement.

-A lifeboat, containing eighteen lifeboatmen, put away at a signal of distress off Suffolk port, but in the heavy sea was overturned and six of the men became entangled in the rigging, and were drowned.

-Spanish gold to the value of \$19,000 was found recently by some Cuban wreckers in the wreck of the Spanish cruiser *Almirante Oquendo*, which was run aground during the Spanish-American fight near Santiago.

-Mrs. Mary Jones, of Chester, has just died at the age of eighty-three years. She was the mother of thirty-three children, and was recently awarded a prize by a London periodical for being the mother of the largest family in the United Kingdom.

-It has just been ascertained that in Paris a mastiff was trained to assist thieves. It was in the habit of bounding against old gentlemen, and knocking them down, whereupon the owner of the dog would come forward professing great regret at the occurrence, and while assisting the man to his feet, would relieve him of his purse and watch.

-The British War Office has order 960,000 pounds of corned beef from Chicago, the meat to be supplied within ten days. A special summer carries it to the South Africa. It is hoped that it will not prove to be "embalmed" as was so much of the meat furnished the American government by Chicago packers during the Spanish war.

-The transport *Ismora*, laden with horses, ambulance waggons and supplies and artillery pieces, with several hundred men, struck a sunken rock near St. Helena Bay, while on her way to south Africa, and went to pieces. Only twenty of

the nearly 300 horses on board were saved, and all the guns were lost. The horses were trained chargers, and the loss is counted quite serious.

-A special crusade against consumption is being made in Northamptonshire by the newly-formed branch of the National Society. A special appeal is made to agriculturists to aid the movement by taking precaution against the spread of the scourge among their cattle, and the President of the Society has set the example of destroying a large portion of his fine herd of cattle because they were found to be tuberculous. When people come to realise that fully three-fourths of all the causes of tuberculosis are contracted from the use of cows' milk, they will cease its use, and thus remove one of the prime causes of the disease.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 51.

E. J. Waggoner

If every reader of the PRESENT TRUTH would secure one other reader, the circulation of the paper could be doubled with but very little trouble. If you are receiving good, you surely ought to wish others to share in it. Will you not make the effort?

In four days last week there were over eighty alarms of fires in London, and some of the fires were of large proportions. Taking the whole year, the average number of fires is eleven a day, so that last week the number was nearly doubled.

The *Chronicle* says that "the famine in India is growing more acute. The number of people receiving assistance is not a quarter of a million more than was the case last week. And the suffering is not limited to the poor ryot and peasant cultivators, who feels the pinch of actual hunger, but is reaching the small landowners above them, and the traders who have advanced money to both in hopes of a favourable turn in the prospects of the farming community."

Several London hairdressers were recently prosecuted for violating an Act of Charles II., by carrying on their business on Sunday. The magistrate had no option but to convict, but showed what he thought of the prosecution, by fining the defendants only one penny each, without costs. It is but just to say that prosecutions for Sunday labour are not at all popular, being opposed to ruling love of personal liberty; nevertheless the statutes in behalf of the Sunday remain, to be used whenever anybody wishes to give vent to his religious zeal or to bring somebody into trouble. Besides, "public sentiment" has been known to undergo changes.

The *Church Family Newspaper* characterises as "a serious mistake" on the part of those who desire to uphold the sanctity of the Sunday, on the ground that "the Act itself is all but obsolete," and that by the insignificant fine "a whole proceeding was reduced to a farce of a highly injurious character." Speaking of the subject in general it says:-

We regret the growing laxity of Sunday observance as one of the most alarming symptoms of modern modes of thought and conduct. It is very largely owing to the evil example set in high places, and to the excessive pursuit of pleasure by those who have the largest opportunities for self-indulgence

throughout the other six days of the week. Possibly the disregard of Sunday may be also in some measure traced to the omission of the ante-Communion service at a morning prayer instead of its constant reiteration as in earlier days. But if the people are to be brought back to the due recognition of the day it must be through spiritual influence brought to bear upon the higher classes and not by legal prosecutions of the poor. However well-intentioned such proceedings may be, they will assuredly and deservedly failed.

With the last part of the paragraph we are in decided agreement: Let the efforts in behalf of Sunday observance rest wholly on a spiritual basis. That is the only ground that any Christian can take (see 2 Cor. x. 4, 5), and the Bible is the only spiritual guide; if it were made the real basis of all efforts to promote Sunday observance, the case would soon end, for the Bible has not a word in favour of the practice, but to the contrary. 'Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy works; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.'

The two paragraphs that follow are from the *Daily Chronicle*, and are noteworthy as showing how lightly the journal which, above all others, poses as the champion of morality, treats one of the worst vices of the time:-

Stirred by such headlines in the New York newspapers as "Cigarettes made him a Lunatic-A Bright Schoolboy becomes a Chattering Beggar from their Use," and "Made Mad by Smoking-Danced, Raved, and Prayed-Strapped to Stretcher, the Young Tailor was carried Singing to Insane Ward," the *Lancet* (which it must be admitted watches over our national health with maternal care) lately appointed an analytical sanitary commission to look into the composition of American cigarettes.

Of the investigation was on foot half a dozen kinds of the more popular English cigarettes were also analysed. The report of the inquiry is of the most satisfactory character. The tests for opium, phosphorus, arsenic, and mercury-the presence of each of which in cigarettes has been alleged at one time or another, did not yield any results in a single instance. As the *Lancet* says, "there is not a single factor upon which can be fairly based an allegation of the presence of a substance producing injury to health."

Doubtless the *Lancet*, as well as the *Chronicle*, thinks that now all opposition to cigarette-smoking ought to cease; but the fact is that this report, calculated to quiet any fears the people may have, calls for more earnest agitation than ever. For the danger of cigarettes lies primarily, not in any opium, phosphorus, mercury, or arsenic that they may contain, but in the tobacco, of which they chiefly consist, the active principle of which, as the *Lancet* well knows, is a poison more virulent than any of those mentioned. False prophets are they, crying "Peace, peace," when there is no peace.

The *Daily Mail* says: "More than one correspondent traces our recent reverses to the fact that the engagements were begun by us on Sunday." Yet if we remember correctly, the most brilliant victories in the Spanish-American war were one on Sunday. Moreover, whenever anyone loses a battle, the opposing army wins it; if therefore the defeat on one side is to be attributed to Sunday fighting, to what is the gain on the other side do? Would they not be warranted in regarding it as a premium for fighting on Sunday? This shows the folly of trying to

prove a thing evil by certain results. The only standard of right and wrong is God's Word.

"Power Over All Devils" *The Present Truth* 15, 51.

E. J. Waggoner

Power Over All Devils .-When Jesus sent the first disciples out to preach, He "gave them power and authority over all devils." Luke ix. 1. This was great power, but no greater than He still gives to every one of His followers. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James iv. 7. This is positive, if our resistance is such that the devil flees from us, it is very evident that we have power over him. Authority is given us over him, even the authority that Jesus had, when He said, "Get thee hence, Satan," and "the devil leaveth Him." And this power and authority must be "over all devils;" for if there were a single demon over which God's people had not power, that one would effectually prevent them from overcoming, and would wreck their lives. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable."

December 28, 1899

"The Birth of Jesus" *The Present Truth* 15, 52.

E. J. Waggoner

(Luke ii. 1-16.)⁴¹

Many, many times since that night nineteen hundred years ago has the story of Christ's birth been repeated, yet

"The old, old story is ever new."

Everybody is familiar with every detail, yet no thoughtful, reverent person can ever read it without learning something. Indeed, so full of instruction is the narrative, that only a small portion of the Scripture devoted to this week's study can be taken under consideration.

FULFILLING THE SCRIPTURE

"The fulness of time" had come. "And it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled." How little the Roman Emperor thought that he was simply an agent in the Lord's hands for the fulfilment of prophecy, and that his decree would be remembered only in connection with the birth of a King infinitely greater than he. Some hundreds of years before, it had been prophesied that out of Bethlehem should the Ruler of Israel come; Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth, and the time was at hand; doubtless both were expecting the birth of the coming One in their home in Galilee; but "the Scripture cannot be broken," and so the decree was issued, which brought them to Bethlehem. Who shall say that God did not move the Roman Emperor to issue that decree for the sole purpose of securing the fulfilment of His Word! How often men, bent only on carrying out their own will,

have been simply the unconscious agents of God's will. God works all things after the counsel of His own will.

HER FIRST-BORN SON

"And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger." In no particular was Christ separated from mankind. A theology borrowed from paganism would allow Him nothing in common with us. Not only would it have Him so far removed from ordinary flesh that His mother must be born without any trace of sin in her flesh, but He must be so far separated from any connection with humanity that no other infant could ever occupy the same body that He had once inhabited; but all this is contrary to fact. There is no meaning to the word "first-born," if no others are born afterwards. When Christ was buried, He occupied, as was fitting, a tomb in which no man ever had lain; but that did not prevent it from being used again. In all things He was made like His brethren. He was "born

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of the seed of David according to the flesh." His flesh was just the same as that of all other men; He was one with us in all things, except in sin; and even there He is one with us, in that He takes our sin and shows us how to bear it so that it is destroyed.

LOWLY LABOURING MEN

It was eminently fitting that the birth of Him who was to be the Shepherd of Israel,—"that great Shepherd of Israel,"—"that great Shepherd of the sheep," (Heb. xiii. 20),—should be first announced to shepherds in the fields, and that they should be the first to make it known to others. "With the lowly is wisdom." Prov. xi. 2. Of what use would it have been to announce the birth of Christ to the priests and rulers-worldly princes? They would have scoffed at it. "What! that babe in the manger a King! How absurd! What nonsense!" If anybody feels inclined to doubt that the rulers of the Jews would have mocked and scoffed at the idea that the little babe was a King, he has only to glance at the record of Christ's betrayal and crucifixion. Then they mocked Him because of His weakness, and derided His claim to being King. Matt. xxvii. 39-48. They might have had the honour of announcing the birth of the Saviour, if they would have believed it. God always sends His truth to those who are willing to receive it. It has always been the case that reformations begin with what are termed the "lower classes." They formed the bulk of the believers on Christ. The question was asked, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?" as though that proved that He could not be true. He was not in fashion. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." 1 Cor. i. 26. He who despises a doctrine because its adherents are few and poor, would reject Christ for the same reason. "He that despiseth the poor reproacheth his Maker."

"THE SIGN"

"And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Of what should that be a sign?—A sign that a Saviour, Christ the Lord was born. "The Jews require a sign." 1 Cor. i. 22. Well, there they had a sign, and they always had it before them, for the same lowliness was continued through the whole of Christ's life. What a sign! Isaiah prophesied of the Coming One "mighty to save;" God had told David that He had "laid help on One that is mighty;" and now as proof that there had "come out of Sion the Deliverer," the angel tells the shepherds that they will find a little helpless baby, wrapped up in a bundle, and lying in a manger. There He is! that helplessness is the sign. Wonderful! yet even so it was all through His life: "I can of Mine own self do nothing." John v. 30.

"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." 1 Cor. i. 27. He says, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. xii. 9. Therefore the Apostle Paul said, "When I am weak, then am I strong." If that is so, then the weakest ought to be the strongest. Exactly. It is out of weakness that God has established strength, with which He stills the enemy and the avenger. Ps. xiii. 3. A little babe is the best manifestation of the power of God that overcomes the world. Of God's people it is said that they "out of weakness were made strong." Heb. xi. 34. The whole of the Gospel is summed up in the acknowledgment that God is Almighty, and that we are absolute helplessness. God is everywhere, upholding all; therefore, as soon as one who has no strength recognises that fact, the mighty power of God manifests itself.

See how God has removed all possible ground for complaint and discouragement. If He had said, "My strength is made perfect in the power of the ocean, the whirlwind, the tempest, and he who can exhibit the most might, the most endurance, is the one who approaches most nearly to Me," then we might well have expected many sighs of discouragement. Then the complaint, "Oh, I'm so weak, I know I can never overcome," might have been in place. But how is it? Why, He has manifested Himself in the lowliest, humblest, poorest, weakest possible form, and has said that there is the perfection of His power. That is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. It is all the power He asks or expects anybody to have. So whenever a person would begin to complain, or to excuse his failure, by saying, "I'm so weak," he finds his mouth stopped. At the very weakest point anybody can be, there he finds the Lord. God says, "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble." Isa. lvii. 15.

THE FIRST ADVENT INCLUDES THE RECORD

The span of Christ's manifestation in the flesh is from the manger to the cross. In weakness He came, and in weakness He ended His work. "He was crucified through weakness." 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Nevertheless "He liveth by the power of God," and that is how we are to live. Christ is coming again; but His coming in the clouds of heaven, "with power and great glory," will be only the manifestation

of the power that lay in the manger and hung on the cross. The "hiding of His power," is from His side, where once the spear pierced, but where the stream of glory issues. Heb. iii. 4, margin. He is King of glory solely because of His humility. Phil. ii. 8, 9. He is coming to save His people; but He will save at His second coming only those whom He has already saved at the cross. That manger in Bethlehem is capacious enough to contain all mankind: it contained Divinity. The second coming will be only the complete manifestation of the first. In the manger Christ was the Son of God; but it was the resurrection from the dead with power according to the Spirit of holiness, that demonstrated the fact. When He comes again, it will be for the purpose of showing all men that He really lives.

"GREAT JOY"

"Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." What is the joy?-A Saviour!

"Joy to the world! the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room;
And heaven and nature sing."

When Philip went down to Samaria, and preached the Word, so that devils were cast out, and the afflicted were healed, "there was great joy in that city." Acts viii. 8. There is always joy in victory, and God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. God does not wish the world to go bowed down with sorrow. He says, "Look up! Lift up your heads." Christ, the anointed King, came to proclaim liberty to the captives; "to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Isa. lxi. 1-3. This joy is "to all people;" then let everybody be glad and rejoice in the great salvation

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that by the grace of God has appeared to all.

OUR SAVIOUR

For unto you, is born a Saviour. The message is to you, whosoever you are who read these lines, and to everybody else. The Saviour is born to you. "The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart;" that thou mayest do it. Rom. x. 8. Somebody says that a child was born to Mary that night. Oh, no; He was born to you. He did not belong to her, but to the world. He is "the Son of man." He is your Son, and mine. He is our child, and formed within us, He is "the hope of glory."

UNHESITATING FAITH

The shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." They did not say, Let us go and see if this thing is so. Ah, how very cautious

we are when God speaks; we cannot believe until we have tried every test. God comes, making known the most exceeding great and precious promises, such as would make men leap for very joy, and lo, straightway they begin to devise some means to keep from accepting them. They try every way possible to prove that the promises are only a delusion. Men act toward God's promises just as a child does toward bitter medicine. One would think, to see how loth men are to take God at His word, that he is announcing some terrible calamity, something to be dreaded, instead of a blessing to be enjoyed. So they hold it off, until when at last they do hesitatingly embrace it, after every possible objection has been removed, half of its sweetness for them is gone. But the shepherds, as soon as they heard the message of God's great salvation, said, Let us go and see this thing which is come to pass, which God hath made known unto us. There is an example for us. You need not wait to hear the word of the Lord, for it is speaking now. Believe it, and "the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand." Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.

"Let It Shine" *The Present Truth* 15, 52.

E. J. Waggoner

It is not necessary to say to one who really knows the Lord, and the joy of His salvation, that he should let others know of it, for the gladness will not be hid. God has called us out of darkness to His marvelous light, on purpose that we may show forth His excellences. "The life was manifested," and wherever it is cherished it cannot fail to be manifested. Simply let the light shine as it comes to you, that is, let it shine in you, and others will be sure to see it.

"An Offering" *The Present Truth* 15, 52.

E. J. Waggoner

How happy Abraham and Sarah must have been when at last they held in their arms the little boy, Isaac, for whom they had waited so long! We may be sure that they taught him just as soon as he was old enough to understand, all about the promise of his birth, and that the seed of Abraham should be "as the stars of heaven for multitude," and that he was the one through whom this promise was to be fulfilled.

Remember that Isaac was "born of the Spirit," and so the beautiful fruits of the Spirit must have been early seen in his life: "Love, joy, peace, a long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." What a sweet child to have in the home, and how happy he must have made his parents.

But remember, dear children, that you too may be born of the Spirit, just as he was, and that "Christ may dwell in *your* hearts by faith," so that you too may be loving, joyful, peaceful, kind as He was, and be a delight and blessing to those around you.

After many happy years, when Isaac was growing into a strong young man, God spoke again to Abraham; and this time his voice filled the loving father's heart with grief and trouble: "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of."

How could this be, when God had said: "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," and had told him that through Isaac he was to become "the father of a multitude?" And if now he should slay Isaac, how then could the promise of God be fulfilled?

All these perplexing thoughts must have passed through Abraham's mind, as well as the anguish of having with his own hand to take the life of his only and much-loved son. Yet so perfect was his faith in God's word, that he did not hesitate for a moment, but early in the morning he rose up and started off with Isaac to the place that God had told him of.

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, . . . accounting that God was able *to raise him up even from the dead*." Abraham believed in "God which quickeneth the dead," and he knew that God who had given Isaac to him could bring him back again from the dead, which would not be any more wonderful than his birth had been.

As they drew near the place where the offering was to be made, "Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand and a knife." What a picture: Isaac carrying the wood upon which he himself was to be offered, and Abraham bearing the knife and the fire which were to slay and to consume his own son. "And they went both of them together."

"And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father, and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering; so they went, both of them together."

At last, at the place God told Abraham of, the altar was built, the wood made ready, and the time had come for Isaac to learn that *he* was the offering that God chosen. He might have refused to be offered, and could easily have escaped if he had wished to do so.

But no: he had come all the way with perfect trust in his father, not knowing what was to be the end of the journey, and now that this was made known to him they still "went both of them together." Freely Abraham offered his son to God, and freely Isaac gave his life, sharing his father's faith in God's promise.

"And Abraham stretched forth the knife to slay his son; and the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And He said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me."

"And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and behold a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up instead of his son."

What a joyful journey home the father and the son must have had! To Abraham it was just as though he had received Isaac again from the dead, and to

Isaac as though he were newly risen, for the life that he had freely given up had been given to him again.

Before this time God had "preached the Gospel unto Abraham;" but some of its lessons he could never have understood without this trial. And the story of it is to teach us also some sweet Gospel lessons about which we will talk another time.

"Items of Interest" *The Present Truth* 15, 52.

E. J. Waggoner

-A leading member of the French Automobile Club has wagered 100,000 francs that he will ride sixty-two miles in an hour on his new electric car.

-Over £30,000 has been raised by the American friends of Britain and London, for fitting out the hospital ship *Maine*, for service in South Africa. She sailed December 18th.

-The Health Protection Society of Cleveland, U.S.A., have undertaken a campaign against the side-saddle for women, which they hold to be injurious, and they advocate the ordinary masculine position on horseback for women.

-Li Hung Chang, the noted Chinese statesman, has recently been appointed Minister of Commerce, which is regarded as a step in the right direction, as it will doubtless help to greatly improve foreign commercial relations with China.

-In London there more than 100,000 persons of the criminal class known to the police, and three-fourths of these have at one time or another been charged with burglary or housebreaking. During the past year there were nearly 2,000 reported burglaries in London, more than half of these being unoccupied houses.

-The plan of the Emperor to increase the German navy has been formulated and has been submitted to the Reichstag by Prince Hohenlohe, and broadly speaking, entails the expenditure of £17,000,000. Germany has now seventeen battleships constructed or in the course of construction, and this Bill contemplates that the number will be doubled, not for aggressive warfare, but for protection of its acquired interests in other parts.

-From the *Tablet*, a Catholic publication, it is learned that quite a percentage of the Parochial School patronage comes from Protestants, in one school "sixty per cent. being non-Catholics." An interesting item in connection with the report is that in this particular school "every child was presented for examination in religious instruction." "As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined;" so it is not to be wondered at that there is so little difference between much of the so-called Protestant faith in England and Catholicism.

-Mr. Justice Grantham, in his charge to the Grand Jury at the Autumn assizes for the County of Durham, a few days since, made the following observation which needs no comment: "I have been coming among you for many years to assist in the administration of justice; but I am sorry to say that only with the exception of one occasion I have never had to charge the Grand Jury of the county with such a terrible list of crime as we have to deal with on the present occasion. It is a black calendar, and drink is manifestly the cause of the state of things. There are three murders, four manslaughters, eleven of wounding with

intent to do grievous bodily harm, and two of shooting, and, in nearly every case drink is that the bottom of the act."

-One Coroner in East London held fifty-two inquests during last week, which is counted almost as a record-breaker.

-It is reported that an armed company of Kurds recently pillaged the Armenian village Kostur, and massacred about 300 inhabitants.

-A violent cyclone passed over portions of Mozambique on the 18th inst., doing immense damage to house property, with no small loss of life.

-General Henry Lawton, second in command to General Otis, head of the American forces in the Philippines has just been killed by a Filipino sharp-shooter.

-The American liner *Paris* has been purchased from the Underwriters, and it will be reconstructed, and fitted with new engines and boilers, and will bear a new name-that of an American city.

-The *Woman's Missionary Friend* says that according to the last census taken in the presidency of Madras, there were 23,938 little girls under four years of age, and 142,606 between the ages of five and nine years, who were married.

-Severe shocks of earthquake were experienced in different parts of Germany on the morning of the 18th instant. At places houses were shaken to their foundations, but there has been no loss of life reported, and the damage done was not serious.

-An expedition has been organised by Baron Toll, of Russia, to explore the Islands of New Siberia and the Sannikoff country, to which so far as known, no man has yet penetrated. The expedition will set sail from the Norwegian port in June next.

-In the last twelve months no fewer than 17,000 umbrellas were left in London cabs and omnibuses. Some 3,000 purses containing sums up to ?250, left in these public vehicles, were taken by drivers and conductors to the Lost Property Office, Scotland-yard.

-Captain Leary, naval governor of Guam, the largest island of the Ladrone group, has found it necessary to the establishment of his authority in the island, to expel from it all but one of the seven Catholic friars who had practical control of affairs under the Spanish regime, because he states that the friars resisted every decree and effort at reform, no matter of what character.

-A plan is on foot whereby it is represented that India can be evangelised on inter-denominational lines. It is to select Eurasians in India, bring them to England, educate and train them for missionaries, after which they will return to India as native missionaries. The headquarters of the work is to be in London, and the first experiment is to be with eighteen or twenty of these persons.

-The Prince of Wales has accepted the Presidency of the Congress of the National Association for the prevention of Consumption, which is appointed to be held in London in the early spring of 1901. Everywhere the people are waking up to the fact that consumption is indeed the Great White Plague, which is claiming its victims by almost unnumbered thousands, and every effect possible is being made to stay its fearful ravages.

-An old family Bible was recently purchased with other books at an auction sale in London, and when it was opened for perusal some time afterward, there were found pasted between two of the leaves six five pound notes. On the back of one of the notes was a written statement, dated in 1840, to the effect that the writer had worked hard for the money, but having no lawful heirs had made "whosoever shall own this Holy Book her lawful heir." Perhaps this will give a little impetus to Bible reading.

"Back Page" *The Present Truth* 15, 52.

E. J. Waggoner

It must not be supposed that everybody who is in the gutter is there because he loves that place. Many who are in the "horrible pit" and the "miry clay" would gladly get out, but they do not know how; they have not strength to help themselves out, and they do not know of any power sufficient to lift them out.

There are thousands who are bound by the courts of debasing sins, who have nearly worn themselves out trying to break loose, and have not been able. They are looked upon by others as being gross and depraved, whereas they have strong desires for a better life, and bitterly bewail all their own bondage. There are many unjust judgments rendered in this world.

The only right and charitable course is to assume that everybody desires to do better, and then to show the way. Christ is the way. He is the higher, the highest, life. By Him men can not only see the desirableness, the infinite advantages of the perfect life, but can attain to it. "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." He has already descended "into the lower parts of the earth," so that there is no pit so deep but He can lift us out. He is there for that purpose. He has redeemed all who are "snared in holes" and "hid in prison houses." He has proclaimed absolute liberty to all captives. It is true that no one need stay in bondage unless he loves his chains, but the fact that people are in that condition does not necessarily prove that they love it. Show them the light of life, and many will gladly walk in it.

Those who are indulging in sentiment over the closing of the nineteenth century, and the beginning of the twentieth, may have the satisfaction of knowing that they can say all their fine thoughts over again next year, when the century really ends. It takes one hundred years to make a century, and in beginning to count, we always begin with one. It takes nineteen hundred full years to make nineteen centuries. The first century began with the year 1, and the twentieth century will begin with the year 1901.

This beginning and ending of the century is after all only an arbitrary manner. It was long after the birth of Christ before anyone began to reckon from it. And when, after several hundred years, the birth of Christ was used as the date of a new era, the time of His birth was not accurately ascertained, and the date was set three or four years this side of the actual event. Christ was born three or four years after the year, 1 A.D. as a matter of fact more than nineteen centuries have already passed since the birth of Jesus, and we are now well into the twentieth century.

Whoever stops to think of this, will see that there is no special sacredness or importance attaching to the closing year of the century, or the beginning of the new one; for as a matter of fact, the closing of the century, next year, will be just nineteen hundred years since-nothing in particular. Nominally it marks nineteen hundred years after Christ; actually it does not. It is only an instance of how far everybody is off, who tries to celebrate the events in matters of religion. People will sit up till midnight on the 31st of December, to "watch the old year out," calmly unconscious of the fact that to begin the year in midwinter is altogether unnatural and arbitrary, and that even allowing that midwinter, instead of spring, were the close of the year, whoever watched for it at midnight would be several hours too late, since the natural day closes at sunset. So people go on, celebrating things at times when they could not possibly have occurred; and the one thing which God wishes them to celebrate-the Sabbath-they ignore.

Two men, both well-known in the world, yet differing most widely from each other, died on the 22nd inst. One, the Duke of Westminster, one of the richest men in England; the other, Dwight L. Moody, one of the greatest evangelists in the world. While the Duke was known as an upright, honourable man of the world, it is safe to say that the plain, unlettered preacher, of lowly birth, and reared in poverty, will have a hundred mourners to the nobleman's one. There is probably not a village in the world, where the English language is spoken, nay, not one where the Bible is known and Christian literature is read, where Moody's name is not known, and unknown thousands have been helped by hearing his talks or reading his simple writings. The nobleman gave money freely; the preacher gave life.

"If thou be the Son of God." This was one of Satan's strong temptations, and still is. Christ had heard the words from heaven, "This My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and now the devil would make Him doubt them. Everything combined to strengthen the doubt that the devil suggested. Jesus was alone in the wilderness, surrounded by wild beasts, and hungry. No one, not even the members of His own family, understood Him and His work. How natural the thought, "If I were the son of God, I should not be thus forsaken;" but Jesus did not yield to it. He withstood the temptation, that we may also.

For there is no temptation that besets us more frequently than this. True we have all the promises of God, and His assurance that He has accepted us in the Beloved, and that He is our Father; yet the enemy will seek to make us believe that the words which we have heard were spoken to somebody else. We have heard the Lord speaking to our souls, but others have not recognised the voice, and so we have been tempted to think that perhaps we were mistaken. Such a suggestion must not be listened to; it is dishonouring to God. To think that He does not care for us, because we are so weak and poor and unworthy, is to charge Him with being like selfish man. The Father has no respecter of persons. Christ, the emaciated and forsaken in the wilderness was as much the Son of God as when on the mount of transfiguration, and He asserted His relationship. To as many as received Him He gives power to become the sons of God.

There is an abundance of evil in the earth. Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, "deceiving and being deceived;" but it does neither ourselves or

anybody else any good to dwell upon the particular evil deeds that are perpetuated. It is the goodness of God, not the wickedness of men, that leads to repentance. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

¹ (International Sunday-school Lesson for Feb. 11.)

² (International Sunday-school Lesson for Feb. 18.)

³ (International Sunday-school Lesson for March 4.)

⁴ (International Sunday-school Lesson for Jan. 7.)