

IN THE REALM OF NATURE

Our Paradise Home

*The Earth Made New and the
Restoration of All Things*

By

S. H. LANE



*"The Son of Man is come to seek and to
save that which was lost." Luke 19: 10.*

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Introduction



IN ancient times there existed a kingdom whose king ruled the world. This wonderful kingdom was Babylon. When it had reached the pinnacle of its power, its ruler retired one night, and as he reposed he tried to fathom the future. Inspiration says of him, "As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what shall come to pass hereafter." Dan. 2:29.

Every individual thinks at times of the future, and wonders what it holds in store for him, what its development will unfold. All are curious concerning it, and await with earnest expectation the transpiring of events.

The wealthy man wonders how his property will be distributed at his decease. Will his heirs carry out the provisions of his last will and testament? or will they disagree, and resort to the courts for settlement, and perchance the lawyers secure the greater part of the estate?

The poor man, battling manfully with the perplexities of life, meditates concerning the future of his helpless family. Who will care for and support them should he be removed by the hand of death?

Some minds grasp broader views of the future than merely the contemplation of worldly attainments and prosperity for themselves and their descendants. Some think of the future destiny of society, the church, the state, the nation, and of the very world itself.

Is society always to be composed of the good and the bad, of the virtuous and the corrupt? Is the world itself evermore to rest under the curse of sin? Will mankind always live upon it?

Will the race become extinct? If so, what will become of the earth itself?

What was the design of our Creator in forming our world? There are but few persons who do not enjoy living in it. Its towering mountains, beautiful landscapes, flowing streams, thundering cataracts, blooming flowers, dark green forests, broad prairies, and wide oceans, are so charming that all are constrained to confess that although sin and death mar the face of nature, its beauties far outnumber its deformities.

Some holy motive must have prompted our heavenly Father in creating the world. In the book of Isaiah we have His motive revealed: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is none else." Isa. 45: 18. This scripture certainly sets forth in a plain, direct way the purpose of the Lord in creating the world. He formed it to be inhabited by a race of noble beings who should conform entirely to His holy will, and thus, through them, manifest to principalities and powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God. How long were they to inhabit it? For a few generations, covering a few thousand years, and then was the race to become extinct?—Certainly not. If such is to be the case, it assuredly seems in vain to have created it.

It is recorded of our Saviour that "by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth." Col. 1: 16. When He dwelt among men, He stated His mission to the world in such explicit terms that none can mistake the nature of it. He declares in Luke 19: 10, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Certainly His mission to a fallen world was one of salvation and restoration. Note the expression used in the scripture just quoted,—"*is come to seek and to save that which was lost,*" not *them* who were lost. "*That which was lost,*" is a clause which is very comprehensive, more so than *if* it read, "*them* who were lost." The word "*them*" would include only the individuals involved in the ruin,

while "*that which was lost*" would include *all* that was ruined in the fall.

What was lost as the result of man's transgression? This question naturally suggests itself. When man sinned, through the transgression of God's law (1 John 3: 4), he forfeited his life; "for the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6: 23. He lost not only his life, but his dominion over the earth. When our heavenly Father created him, He said, in consultation with Jesus Christ, "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Gen. 1: 26. Thus man was given dominion over all things in the world, both animate and inanimate.

"The wages of sin is death." If Adam had never sinned, he would now be living—the king of this world. Our heavenly Father created for our first parents a beautiful Edenic home—the headquarters of the federal pair of the human race. Through sin and death, Adam lost paradise and the dominion of the world, and passed into the prison house of him who has the power of death—the devil. Heb. 2: 14. Thus the dominion passed into the hands of the usurper—Satan; for, "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. 6: 16.

When Adam and Eve transgressed God's requirements, the floodgates of human woe and misery were unbarred, and the world has become filled with every species of sin as humanity has spread over the face of the earth. When the cry of sin reached heaven, it fell upon the ear of Jesus, and his great heart of pity was moved to execute the plan of salvation for man, which shall finally redeem him from iniquity, and restore the world from the curse of sin.



I

DOES the reader question why sin was permitted? In answer we can only say, sin can never be accounted for. Could a sufficient reason for it be given, that reason would be an excuse for its existence, and sin would cease to be sin.

There are some things which are primary, and some which are secondary. That is primary which is first, or original,—that which does not owe its existence to anything else.

That is secondary which depends on something else for its existence. That which grows out of anything partakes of its nature. To illustrate: The arm, which grows out of the body, is secondary to it, yet partakes of its nature and material.

That which is original with God is as eternal as Himself. That which He creates by His word is primary. In creating the heavens and the earth, "He spake, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. 33:9. Being original, the heavens and the earth will stand forever.

Sin is secondary, the result of the transgression of the law of God. Being secondary, it can not exist eternally.

Government is law maintained, and is founded upon law. If the law is perfect and eternal, the government must partake of the same nature.

Law is founded upon, and is the outgrowth of, principle. Principles are eternal in their nature. The law of God is an eternal rule of action, growing out of the great principle of love. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. When man sinned, he violated the eternal principle of love. It may be asked if

God could not have created man so he could not sin. He could not, unless he had made him unintelligent, a mere animal machine, incapable of morals, without the power of choice.

Our heavenly Father rules arbitrarily in nature, save in the case of those creatures whom he endows with reason. As soon as He bestows on an individual the power to reason, He links with that power the right of choice, and in that choice He leaves the mind of man untrammelled. Such creatures can obey or disobey. Character is thus formed. Individuals are born with dispositions, but not with characters. Character is made up of every act of life. Acts are born of motives; and as motives originate in mind, God, who created the mind, has reserved to Himself the right to hold men responsible for their acts; hence, when Adam and Eve transgressed, they were responsible for so doing.

Sin is antagonistic to the government of God, and as He in His existence spans eternity,—unmeasured time,—sin must at some period cease to exist; for the time will come when God will be all in all. The law of God is a reflection of His own character, a perfect standard of morality. As sin is immoral, it is the exact opposite of God's law—it is the transgression of law. And as God's requirements are exactly right, His law is righteousness. Righteousness and sin, as such, do not exist in inanimate nature, but are emanations of minds endowed with power to reason. As God's mind is right, and only right, it is the source of all righteousness. And as sin is an emanation from mind, it can not be from the divine mind; for no fountain can send forth both sweet water and bitter.

Sin must have originated either from the original mind, or from some mind created subsequent to it. The latter must be true, from the fact that sin is the transgression of the law. The divine mind gave existence to the law. Consequently sin must have originated in some mind that was created subsequent to God's requirements. And as the individual who possessed the mind had the power of choice to obey or disobey, he alone was responsible for his act, and alone accountable for bringing sin into the fair domain of God.



II

HE who possessed the mind in which sin was first formed, is named in the Scriptures, Lucifer, Satan, devil, the tempter, and the father of lies. Our Saviour, in speaking of the Pharisees who carried out the work of Satan by their sinful deeds, said of them, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44.

It is here stated that he was a murderer from the beginning. The only beginning which we can comprehend is the beginning of the creation of this world. Thus it seems that Satan introduced death into the world in the bright morning of time. This he accomplished when he caused Adam and Eve to sin, and brought death upon the race as a consequence of that sin. And as it is stated that he is a liar and the father of it, it was he who said, "Ye shall not surely die." Gen. 3:4. It is also stated of Satan that he abode not in the truth, plainly indicating that he was once true and loyal. But he chose not to abide in the truth, further proving that his fall came by his own volition. Thus his fall was a wilful one, originating entirely with himself. The Saviour says of him, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Luke 10:18.

In Isaiah, fourteenth chapter, the reason of Satan's fall is set forth. The king of Babylon is symbolized by Lucifer, son of the morning; and what is said of that king is true of Satan,

as he is indicated in that symbol, and Lucifer is represented as saying, "I will ascend into the heavens; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . I will be like the Most High." Verses 13, 14. Thus we are taught that Satan became exalted, and desired to usurp the authority and power of God. In Ezekiel twenty-eight, Satan is also symbolized by the king of Tyre, so that what is said of that king is true of Satan. It is stated that he was in Eden, the garden of God; that he was created, his position being that of a covering cherub, or guardian angel; that he was perfect in his ways from the day that he was created until iniquity was found in him; that his heart was lifted up because of his beauty, and that he corrupted his wisdom by reason of his brightness: it is also declared that he shall be destroyed. Verses 12-19, inclusive.

Thus it appears that Satan fell through the pride of his own heart: and that pride having been imparted to others, has filled the world with sin and suffering. The pitiful condition of man in sin appealed to the Son of God, and he graciously offered Himself to the Father to become man's Saviour. He took upon Himself not the nature of angels (Heb. 2:16), but our own. He appeared in the world robed in human form, clothed in sinful flesh, and by a righteous life condemned sin in the flesh, making it possible for the righteousness of the law to be fulfilled in us. This the law could not do, for it could not change sinful flesh. Christ is superior to law, having united with the Father in its formation. He did not set aside the requirements of the law, but, living a perfect life in sinful flesh, fulfilled the demands of the righteous law, and thus became the Captain of our salvation. Thus the plan of salvation was introduced into the world as a restorative agent, to restore to man the right to life and immortality through the gospel. 2 Tim. 1:10.

As we have before learned, God gave the dominion of this world into Adam's hand. He constituted him the world's first king. Every kingdom is composed of certain essential parts. Thus to establish a kingdom there must be, first, a king; second, subjects; third, territory; fourth, a law; and fifth, a throne. Had man proved loyal to his Creator, Adam would have ruled the

world's territory. The Lord said to Adam and Eve immediately after their creation, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [fill completely] the earth." Gen. 1:28. The world would have been filled in time with loyal subjects, but for Adam's fall. He would have reigned over his descendants as their loving father. The garden of Eden would have been the seat of government; and all would have been loyal to the Lord's requirements.

When man transgressed, all was changed. The territory—the very earth—was cursed. Its king was driven from his Edenic home, and after a life of nine hundred years of sorrow, was at last laid in the tomb. The law of the kingdom was disregarded; and should death continue to prey upon the human family, the grave would mark the resting place of the last human being, and our once beautiful world would become a desolate, uninhabited planet. Should such a sad termination be finally reached, the plan of God would be set aside—would come to naught. Such can never be the case, since God is God.

The apostle Paul, in contrasting man's unfallen and fallen condition in Heb. 2:6-9, says: "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels: thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thine hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

It seems by these statements that in man's original creation he was made a little lower than the angels (margin.—"a little while inferior to"). He was crowned with glory and honor. In his sinless estate, he was honored of God, and surrounded by a cloud, or halo, of glory, so bright that no eye could penetrate it. Through transgression he lost that glory. It faded away, and he became conscious of his nakedness, and sought for artificial garments. He continued to transgress until at length

Inspiration says, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him?" And when the race reached the lowest depths of human degradation, "when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4, 5. "For as by one man's [Adam's] disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one [Jesus Christ] shall many be made righteous." Rom. 5:19. So that which was lost through the earthly Adam will be restored through the heavenly.



LA GUAYRA, SOUTH AMERICA



III

THE apostle Paul in writing to his Ephesian brethren, speaking of Jesus, says: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." Eph. 1:13, 14.

It is evident from this scripture that some possession has been purchased. Heaven can not be referred to; for the possession to be purchased is to be redeemed. To redeem an object is to purchase it back, to regain possession of it. Our world having fallen, and passed into the hands of the usurper, Satan, mankind became his bondservants, verifying the truth declared by the apostle Peter when he wrote, "Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." 2 Peter 2:19. And when man was once in the bondage of Satan, he not only claimed the sinner, but his God-given dominion.

Satan was once an inhabitant of heaven, and after his fall he became well acquainted with the fact that should Christ's earthly mission prove successful, his (Satan's) days were numbered, and his kingdom finished. The great controversy between Christ and His angels and Satan and his angels, which was first begun in heaven, resulted in the expelling of the arch deceiver. Rev. 12:7-9. This controversy was then transferred to earth, and waged with greater vigor than ever on the part of Satan: for on earth, where man fell, was the final contest to terminate, either in the defeating of God's plan in reference to the earth and its

inhabitants, or in the final triumph of that plan in the redemption of man and the restoration of the earth.

After the baptism of Christ, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness of temptation, there to meet the chief of evil face to face to be tempted of him. In worship, the worshiper acknowledges the superiority of the being worshiped. Satan endeavored to tempt Christ to worship him, and thus acknowledge his superiority. Had Christ done this, He would have fallen as man had done, and like him would have become a bond slave to Satan. The devil "showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time," and said unto Him, "All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If Thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be Thine." Luke 4:5-7.

This offering of the kingdoms of the world to Christ is said to be a temptation. Satan must have obtained control of these kingdoms: for no individual could offer to another what he does not possess, and make the temptation a genuine one, especially as the One tempted knew all things. Satan declared, in speaking of the kingdoms of this world, that they were "delivered unto him." This Christ knew to be true, as Adam's claim was prior to that of Satan, and was a gift from the Creator.

Our heavenly Father has never surrendered absolute control of any portion of His creation to any created being. When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, reached the pinnacle of his power, his dominion extended throughout the known world. He became exalted because of his power, and the Lord humbled him to that extent that he made his dwelling place with the beasts of the field, until he should know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. Dan. 4:25. But notwithstanding God possesses all power, he respects his appointments, and recognizes his gifts when once bestowed. God gave man dominion over the earth, and when Adam lost this gift through sin, Christ, by His infinite sacrifice, purchased back the lost dominion. The prophet Micah, foreseeing this, says, "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the

first dominion." Micah 4:8. The word "tower," here, evidently alludes to Christ. He is referred to as such in 2 Sam. 22:3; also in Ps. 18:2.

Dominion of the World Promised to Abraham.

One of the most remarkable characters of the Old Testament Scriptures was Abraham, the son of Terah, a descendant of Shem. He was the founder of the Jewish nation. Ur, a city of Chaldea, was his native place. His kindred were idolaters. Joshua 24:2. Doubtless for this reason God called him from the land of his nativity, so he removed to Haran in Mesopotamia. Acts 7:2-4. He was accompanied by his father, his wife Sarah, his brother Nahor, and his nephew Lot.

Abraham manifested much affection for Lot. He gave him a start in life. The flocks and herds of both Abraham and Lot rapidly multiplied, and there was a strife between their herdmen concerning the finest pastures and best-watered fields. When this contention was known to Abraham, instead of sympathizing with his own herdmen, and criticising the course of Lot's men, he kindly said to Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Gen. 13:8, 9.

The valley of the Jordan was the most fertile region of all Palestine. Its extensive plain, richly covered with verdure, interspersed with beautiful shade trees, seemed almost like a second paradise. Its populous cities were wealthy and goodly to look upon. Infatuated with a vision of worldly gain, Lot overlooked the corruption and degradation he would there encounter; for the inhabitants were "sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Gen. 13:13. The most beautiful and prosperous city in all the plain was Sodom, in which Lot located.

In viewing the land, Lot discovered that the plain of the Jordan was well watered, like the land of Egypt, and he there-

fore chose the plain, and journeyed eastward. Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan. Soon afterward the Lord appeared unto him, and said, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." Gen. 13:14-17.

As Abraham arose, he gazed into the cool regions of the north, as far as his vision would permit, then into the radiant east, studded with its towering mountains; turning still farther, he viewed the hills and valleys of the far-away south country; and again changing his position until the circuit was complete, he surveyed with undimmed eye the mighty west.

As he walked through the length and breadth of the land, God said, "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever," plainly indicating that to Abraham and to his seed was the land to become an eternal inheritance. The apostle Paul understanding the matter thus, and commenting in regard to Abraham's seed, in Gal. 3:16, says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." The promise was to be fulfilled through the seed of Abraham—Christ,—not through "seeds"—Abraham's natural descendants, positively teaching us that the world is to be redeemed through Christ. As the promise was made through the seed, Christ, that promise could not be fulfilled when the children of Israel took possession of the land of Canaan.

Abraham lived to a good old age. His life was distinguished by his integrity, generosity, and hospitality. He was truly "the father of the faithful." He was the ancestor of Jesus Christ, through whom all nations were to be blessed.

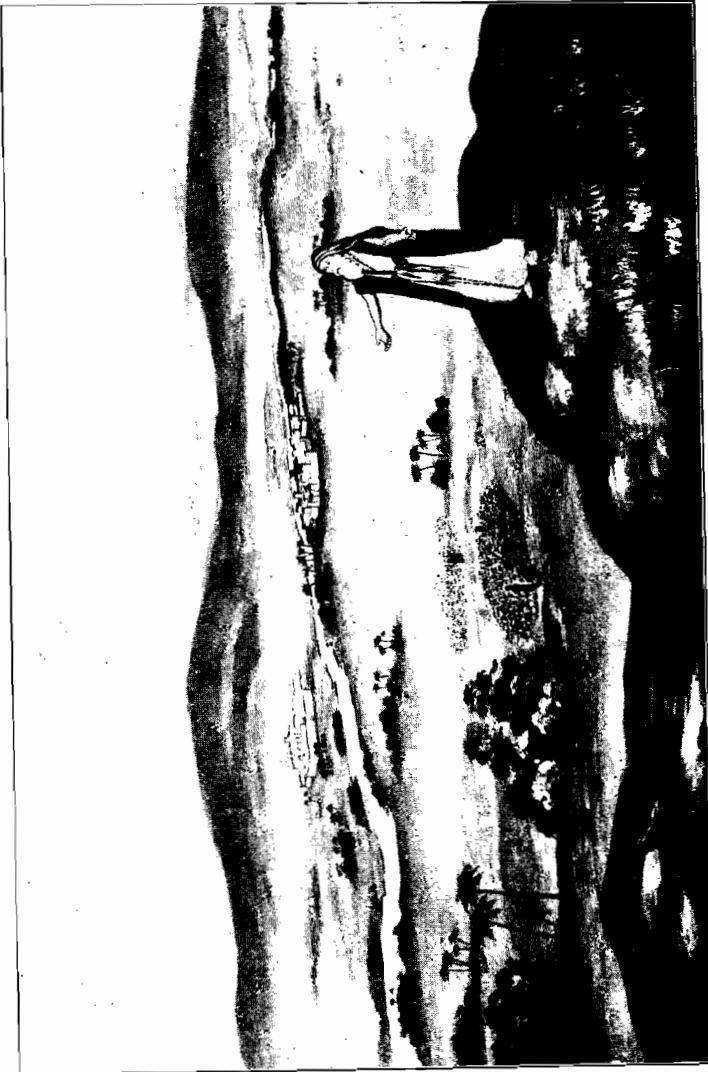
Isaac, the child of prophecy and promise, walked in the footsteps of his devoted father, Abraham. As Isaac was about to emigrate into Egypt, the Lord appeared unto him and said,

“Go not down into Egypt, dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Gen. 26: 2, 3, 4. Thus the promise that God made to Abraham concerning the final possession of the earth, was confirmed to Isaac.

Jacob and Esau were the sons of Isaac and Rebecca. Esau was the favorite son of his father, while Rebecca was partial to Jacob. Isaac was growing infirm through the weight of years, and feeling sensibly that his life force was abating, determined in his last moments to bestow the birthright upon Esau. Jacob knew that to the possessor of this birthright belonged the sacred privilege of being the progenitor of God’s chosen people, that through this birthright should come the promised Messiah, who would bring in the immortal possessions embraced in the covenant which God made with Abraham, and he longed for the blessing of the birthright. Taking advantage of his father’s age and infirmity, he obtained the coveted treasure through deception. To avoid the wrath of his offended brother, he was compelled to flee into Mesopotamia.

As Jacob neared Haran in his hasty flight from the land of his nativity, and the shadows of night gathered around him, he took of the stones of the place and made for himself a pillow, and lay down to sleep. When wrapped in slumber, “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, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.” Gen. 28: 12, 13.

This promise given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is really one promise, and certainly does include the fact that the children of Israel should sojourn in the earthly land of Canaan.



THE CALL TO ABRAHAM

But it is evident, when the promise is fully analyzed, that it comprehends more than the mere possession of the land of Canaan. The Lord said to Abraham, "To thee will I give it [the land] and to thy seed forever." To Isaac he said, "For unto *thee* I will give all these countries;" and to Jacob he declared, "The land whereon thou liest, to *thee* will I give it."

If we attach a literal meaning to these expressions, we must certainly conclude that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with the seed, Christ, will be there personally to possess the land. In order to participate in the blessings of the promise, we must be Christ's, and to be His we must possess His spirit. Rom. 8:9. And if we are Christ's, then are we heirs of the promise that God made to Abraham. This is plainly stated in Gal. 3:29: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." An individual does not of necessity have to be a lineal descendant of Abraham in order to be an *heir* of the promise, but he must be a child of faith. The truth on this point is expressed in Gal. 3:9, "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

Paul is very explicit in affirming that the promise that Abraham should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, or by the works of the flesh, no matter how meritorious such works might seem to be, but through the righteousness of faith. So upon every believer in Christ is conferred the priceless gift of the inheritance of the new earth through the righteousness of faith.

The statement, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," was a very cheering one to the Christian converts in Galatia. Before their conversion they were heathen, strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world. Soon after their conversion Judaizing teachers began to labor among them, who taught that except they submitted to the ordinance of circumcision, which was first instituted in the days of Abraham, they could have no part nor lot in the inheritance. To show the fallacy of such a position, the apostle Paul clearly points out that if they were Christ's, then they were heirs of the promise that God made to Abraham.

The Lord stated to Abraham that he would give the land to him and to his seed "forever." This promise certainly comprehended more than the land of Canaan, for the Lord never gave Abraham any possession in that land. He dwelt in it as a pilgrim and a sojourner. When death robbed him of his beloved wife, Sarah, not owning a single spot in the land wherein he dwelt, he purchased a burial place of the children of Heth, in the cave of Machpelah. This would certainly indicate that the promise that he should possess the land forever was not fulfilled to him in his lifetime. So we may safely conclude that the promise was a failure, or that Abraham must live again, and the promise be fulfilled to him in the future.

We are not left to conjecture in this matter, so far as the case of Abraham is concerned, for on this point we have—

The Testimony of Stephen

Stephen was one of the most remarkable characters of the New Testament. Soon after the ascension of our Lord to heaven, he was chosen one of the seven deacons of the church of Jerusalem. He was the first Christian martyr. His indomitable energy in urging the claims of the Christian religion, the mighty works which he accomplished, coupled with his unanswerable arguments, aroused against him the bitterest hatred of his enemies, and he was compelled to appear before the Sanhedrin to be tried on the charge of blasphemy and heresy. Acts 6:8-12. As he made his defense, he challenged the undivided attention of that august assembly, from the fact that he introduced his address by referring to the history of their forefathers, even to that of Abraham, whom they all held in veneration. He said, "Men, brethren, and fathers, harken: the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And He

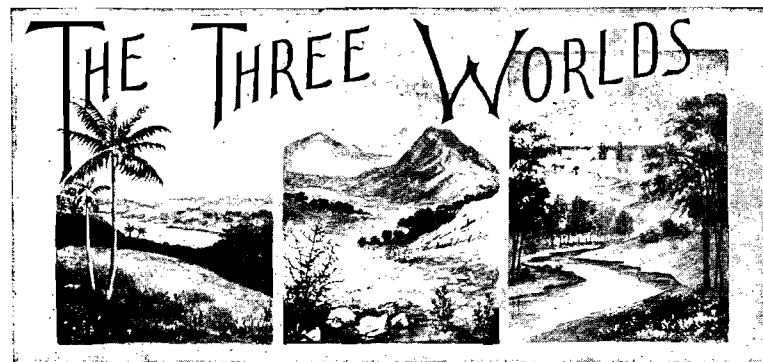
[God] gave him [Abraham] none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet He [God] promised that he would give it to him [Abraham] for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts 7: 2-5.

This scripture teaches us most conclusively that Abraham never in his lifetime inherited any part of the promised land. Yet our heavenly Father declared that Abraham should possess the land forever.

Paul's Statement Concerning Abraham

The eminent apostle to the Gentiles, in discoursing in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews concerning the wonderful achievements wrought through faith, states in reference to Abraham in the eighth and ninth verses as follows: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 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." These verses certainly teach that Abraham did not inherit the land; that when Isaac and Jacob, his son and grandson, lived with him, they were all *heirs* and not *inheritors*. Yet the declaration is made that they were *afterward* to receive the land as an inheritance.

Again the distinguished apostle, in writing to the Roman Christians regarding the promise of God to Abraham, thus asserts: "For the promise, that he [Abraham] should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Rom. 4: 13. Note again the expression, "heir of the world." An heir is one who is to receive an inheritance or is entitled to succeed to a possession. Thus, when the promise is fulfilled which God made to Abraham, he will receive the world for an inheritance. And if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and will possess the world with him in the age-lasting cycles of eternity.



IV

THE Supreme Ruler of the universe is He who created the heavens and the earth. He sees the end from the beginning. The past, present, and future are alike spread out before Him. There is to Him no unknown future; therefore, beyond the present sad scenes of want and woe, He beholds the blessed accomplishment of His own merciful purpose. "His work is perfect; for all His ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." Deut. 32: 4.

The Son of man, Christ our Saviour, was associated with the Father in the creation of the world. He was the active agent in that creation. "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." John 1: 1, 2. He was one with the Father in thought, in purpose, and in action. Man was created upright and intelligent. He was endowed with reasoning ability, which was denied every other animate creature of earth. As an intelligent being, man's happiness depended upon his being in perfect unison with the principles of righteousness. Moral principles grow out of the relationship of moral beings. Law is founded, as before stated, on principles. When the world's Redeemer was associated with men, his declarations of truth were so startling that they often provoked questions from his listeners. Upon

one occasion, a lawyer said unto him, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" Matt. 22:36. Had the Saviour declared that one commandment was greater than another, the lawyer might have consistently reasoned that as God gave all the commandments, therefore one was of equal importance with every other one, and if the Saviour had made a distinction He could not be the Son of God. He therefore introduced the principle that underlies the commandments rather than any one of the commandments. Hence He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Verses 37-39. The principle that underlies the law of God is love. It flows out in two directions—love to God and love to man. "Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:10.

In our imagination we can easily comprehend that there was a time when God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son were associated in the creation of the first angel. As that being gazes upon his beautiful surroundings, and appreciates the value of his God-given life, he recognizes his obligation to love God with all his heart, soul, and mind. In time, a second angel has existence imparted to him. It is his duty also to love God with all his heart, soul, and mind, as much as it was the duty of the first angel. But now as there are two intelligent creatures, both owing their existence to the Creator, and both enjoying the same blessings in common, the sacred obligation rests upon each alike to love each other as he would have the other love him. Our Saviour says that upon these two commandments—love to God and love to man—hangs all the law. One object can not be hung upon another unless the other exists, teaching us conclusively that the law of God depends upon the great principle of love. Every created intelligence is amenable to this principle of love and the law growing therefrom, whether that intelligence be angel or man, whether living in heaven or on earth. When our first parents transgressed the law of God, they ignored the principle, and became sinners.

The earth, as it came forth from the plastic hand of its Creator, was beautiful in the superlative degree. When it stood complete, it was not a vast, level plain; for had it been, the rivers would not have meandered through the land from the garden of Eden. The face of the earth was dotted with mountains, hills, and plains, and embellished with flowing streams and placid lakes. The soil was very fertile, and everywhere produced a luxuriant growth of vegetation. Lovely flowers and trees studded the hillsides. Indeed, from zone to zone, the world was one magnificent palace, adorned for its ruler, man.

Although the whole earth was beautiful, yet the garden of Eden surpassed in loveliness every other spot upon it. It was in this garden that God gave existence to Adam and Eve. They basked in its morning sunlight, they walked among its beautiful trees and its lovely flowers, the rich odors of which freighted the air. They roamed among the animals, and neither were terrified.

But alas for the race! Sin came and changed all. Man was driven from his Edenic home, to wander a pilgrim and stranger in the world. The garden of Eden was not immediately removed from the earth. It contained the tree of life; and in order that man might not partake of it, and thus immortalize sin, God placed angels to guard it. Inspiration, in Gen. 3:22, 24, states the facts as follows: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: . . . so he drove out the man; and 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."

Adam and Eve at their creation inherited no taint of sin, and consequently were unacquainted with disease. Having the elements of strength within their own bodies, they imparted like elements to their children, and they in turn to the next generation. The results of sin were not immediately seen, and it took centuries to bring decrepitude upon the race. Therefore for hundreds of years people were long-lived, strong, and vigorous. The Bible, in speaking of man in the morning of his existence, says: "There were giants in the earth in those days." Adam lived to be nine

hundred and thirty years of age, while Methuselah lived to be nine hundred and sixty-nine.

In those days, living for hundreds of years as men did, the fear of death had but little restraint on them in their course of wickedness. Because of Adam's transgression the Lord said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Gen. 3:17, 18, 19. A life of toil and care was to be man's lot. This appointment of God was in love to fallen man. Had the earth brought forth spontaneously, man would have lived in luxury, indulging his appetite and passions, thus degrading both soul and body. Labor, which is ennobling, was a discipline rendered necessary to place a check upon wrong, and develop in man self-control.

The flood occurred sixteen hundred and fifty-six years after creation. The powerful race then living retained not the knowledge of God in their minds. They glorified themselves, and worshiped the work of their own hands, teaching their children to worship the creature instead of the Creator. Polygamy and idolatry became the prevailing sins of the age. Both the marriage contract and the rights of property were disregarded. Every imagination of the heart was evil, and that continually. As the sad result, violence filled the earth. "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." Gen. 6:3. Noah was instructed of God in regard to the coming flood, and he faithfully warned the world for one hundred and twenty years. The world mocked the preacher of righteousness. Had they repented, the direful calamity would have been averted. But alas, they passed the bounds of God's forbearance, and he swept the world with a flood, that he might cleanse it from its moral pollution.

The apostle Peter, in speaking of the flood, says, "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." 2 Peter 3:6. When the world was created, it seems that the Lord constructed its center so as to form a great storehouse for the waters,

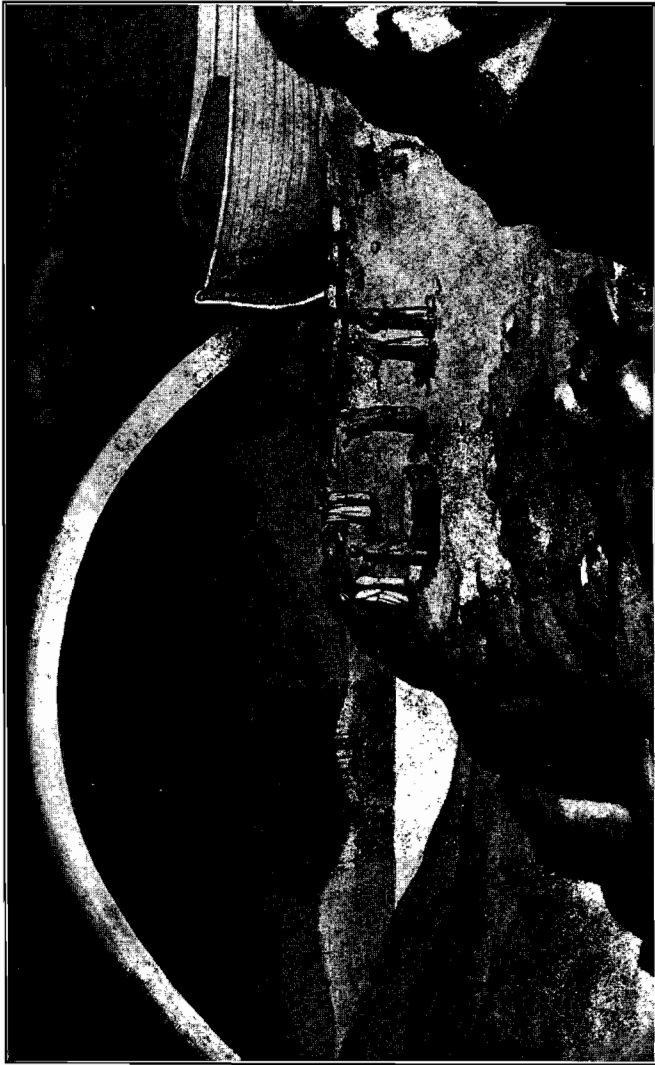
the surface of the earth forming the covering of that vast reservoir. Through capillary attraction the earth was watered. This fact is stated in Gen. 2:6. "There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground," consequently there was no necessity for rain before the flood. At the time of the flood the Lord *caused* it to rain on the earth, indicating that the rain was a direct result of the command of God. "*Cause* is a substance exerting its power into act, to make one thing begin to be."—*Locke*.

In the flood were "all the foundations of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." Gen. 7:11. In that terrific storm, as the waters broke through the crust of the earth and gushed upward, they met the waters in their downpouring from heaven, thus causing the mighty flood that swept the impious from the face of the earth. And when that flood ceased, the Mosaic record says, "The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained." Gen. 8:2. Thus terminated the flood. The waters receded from the earth into vast oceans and mighty seas.

Through the absorption of the sun's rays, the water is carried in the form of mist to the aerial heavens, forming clouds, and when these are overcharged, the earth is watered through the rain. The sun's rays shining upon the falling drops of water paint upon the dark background the beautiful seven-colored arch, the rainbow, and that bow which has appeared since the flood, and not previous, is another evidence that it did not rain before the flood. The Lord declares that when he looks upon it, he will remember the everlasting covenant between him and every living creature. Gen. 9:16. Thus the Creator shows his merciful compassion upon the sinner in placing the beautiful rainbow in the cloud as a token of his covenant with man.

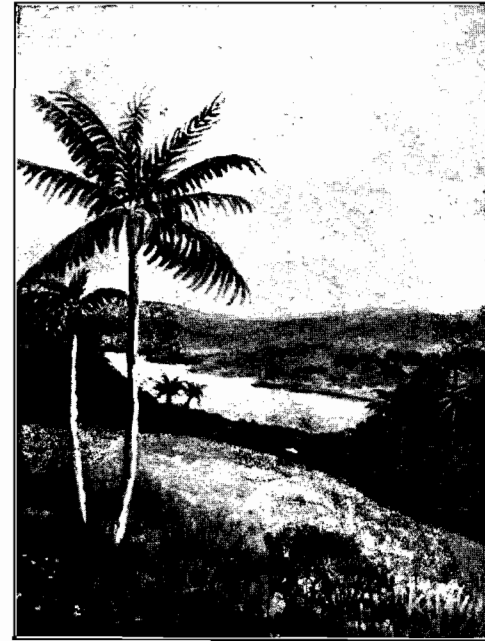
The flood changed the face of that fair world, and since then its beauty and grandeur live only in story. We will designate the world before the flood as number one. It was not annihilated, but perished,—perished as a beautiful world. It bore little likeness to the world in its present state of existence.

The apostle Peter, in discoursing further concerning the world,



THE BOW OF PROMISE

says, "But 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 3:7. The apostle is here speaking of the world as it has existed since the flood, and we are living in the same world to-day. At the time of the flood a twofold curse was resting on the earth in con-



THE WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD

sequence of Adam's sin and the murder of Abel by Cain. Gen. 3:17; 4:11, 12. In every succeeding century the effects of the curse have been more and more visible. Inspiration, in noticing its decadence, declares, "And, thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish: but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou

fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." Heb. 1:10-12.

The destiny of the world in its present state is clearly foretold in this quotation. We are informed that the world shall wax old, and the method by which this is accomplished is stated, "as doth a garment." A garment when first worn shows little change, but as it is worn from day to day, the changes become more marked. In places it becomes threadbare, in other spots its threads are broken, and the edges frayed, while other parts may be comparatively good. So with our world to-day. The curse has become so prevalent that the whole world "groaneth" for its final change. Rom. 8:22, 23.

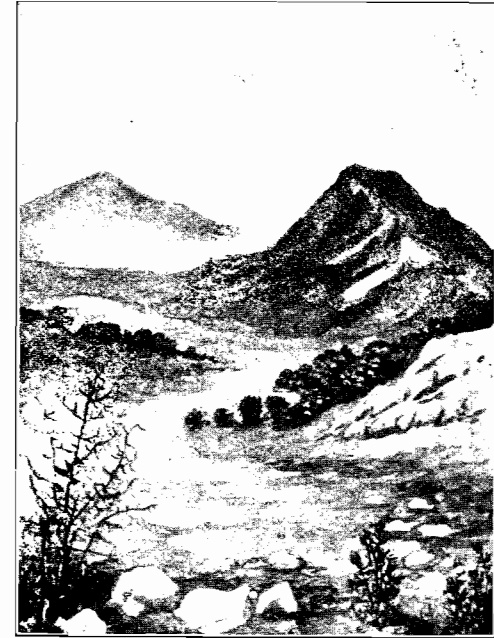
The forest groans, and tosses its branches in seeming agony when twisted by the whirlwind and trampled by the cyclone. The heavens groan in the voice of the thunder when veiled in the thick clouds of darkness. The mountains travail with the agony of their burden of pent-up fire, and darken the heavens with great clouds of dust, pouring hot lava upon the surrounding country. The earth itself moans as it rolls the sea landward, washing hill and mountain, carrying death and destruction all along its border. All these things are indicative of that final change which awaits the world.

However, we do not wish to take a pessimistic view of things, for notwithstanding the visible marks of the curse on every hand, the beauties of the world are so numerous that life is enjoyable, though lived in the midst of a multitude who sin. There are deeds performed by noble, self-sacrificing individuals that are worthy of imitation, which are soul-ennobling, and make life worth living.

The word of God declares that "as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah 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. 24:37-39.

There is certainly nothing wrong in eating and drinking

temperately of that which is proper. There is nothing improper in marriage or being betrothed. But in the days of Noah they carried these things to an extreme. The Saviour further declares that as it was in the days of Lot, "They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and



THE WORLD SINCE THE FLOOD

brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:28, 30. They bought, sold, planted, and builded. There is certainly nothing amiss in any of these things. The wrong committed was in engaging brain, bone, and muscle to acquire the things of this perishing earth to appropriate to selfish ends. The prevailing sins of Sodom were fullness of bread, idleness,

intemperance, and licentiousness. Thus it was in the days of Noah and Lot. And the Saviour says it shall be so again just prior to his second coming.

As we look around us to-day and view the state of society, socially, religiously, and politically, do we not see the same state of affairs? James says that the last days will be a period in which men will accumulate vast fortunes in a remarkably brief time. He further declares, speaking of men who have acquired fabulous wealth, "Ye have heaped treasures together for the last days." James 5:3. This is being accomplished by the combination of wealth through trusts, which is affecting the welfare of the laborers, until they are beginning to feel that forbearance has ceased to be a virtue, and strikes are becoming the order of the day. Wealth may combine, and more serious complications be encountered. Are these things meeting their fulfilment at the present time? Let us pause and consider this question seriously.

The sins of the antediluvian age are being enacted over all the land to-day. Because of these things, the flood came upon the impious. In like manner, because the same sins are practiced to-day, the world in which we now live — world number two — will soon be wrapped in the fires of the last days. The water, which was the element of destruction in the time of the flood, was stored in the heart of the earth. The element of destruction in the future is to be fire, which God has also stored in the heart of the earth, as every smoking volcano testifies. And when the nations of the earth have filled up their cup of iniquity, when every individual has sealed his own destiny by rejecting light and truth, when the last sermon has been preached, and the last prayer offered, then shall justice awake, and the earth shall melt with fire, and the wicked shall receive their just recompense of reward.

This terrible retribution would have long since fallen to the lot of the wicked but for the long-suffering of God. The apostle declares, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness: but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. The Lord is anxious, all heaven is waiting, and good men are laboring, that the sinner shall come to repent-

ance. But the moment will surely be reached when "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also,"—also what? Answer. Shall melt like the elements — not burn up. What then



THE NEW EARTH

shall be consumed? Answer. "The works that are therein shall be burned up."

Thus it is evident that the sad results of sin so visible everywhere, blighting the face of all nature, shall be burned up. This conclusion is strengthened by verses 11 and 12. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall

melt with fervent heat?" Wonderful question indeed! Surely he who believes that the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and that all terrestrial things, save the earth itself, shall be swept away by the fires of the last days, should be chaste in conversation, sobriety should characterize his every word and act.

The restitution of all things will be complete by the ushering in of the new heavens and the new earth — world number three. Peter, viewing this wonderful change with the eye of faith, declares: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (verse 13), or wherein the righteous shall dwell. The apostle, being filled with the thoughts of the grandeur of that beautiful world, the home of the saved, exhorts us as follows: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." Verse 14. This perfection of character, which is a condition of eternal life, exists only in Christ, and is imparted by him to every true believer.



Sugar Loaf Mountain
Hudson River



V

THE world has been darkened for ages because of the reign of sin. That darkness at times has become so dense that no ray of light could penetrate it, save the "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. The prophets of old were inspired of God to foretell future conditions, and to give instruction relating to the plan of salvation. The apostle in noticing this fact says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11. They studied diligently the plan of salvation, and were rewarded by the Spirit of Christ opening before them the future. They foresaw the amazing sacrifice that Christ would make to redeem man, and the infinite price that He would pay for the restoration of the world.

It has been the design of God in every age that His people should diffuse the knowledge of His truth to earth's remotest bounds. If they did not willingly do so under favorable circumstances, He has through the revolution of the great wheel of providence scattered them into heathen lands, where they must either present the truth or be untrue to its claims.

Hezekiah, a pious king of Judah, began his reign about seven hundred and twenty-five years before the birth of Christ. At one time he was afflicted with a sickness so sore that he hovered

between life and death. He prayed most earnestly that his life might be spared. The Lord in mercy heard his supplication, and said to Hezekiah through Isaiah the prophet, "I will add unto thy days fifteen years." Isa. 38:5. The news of this wonderful miracle spread abroad to other nations, and Baladan, son of the king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah, congratulating him on his recovery. This marked attention of so mighty a monarch greatly flattered the Judean ruler, and to show his appreciation of their esteemed visit, he showed the distinguished envoys the "house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not." Isa. 39:2.

In this Hezekiah made a grave mistake, for when the ambassadors of the king of Babylon discovered the amount of the wealth possessed by the king of Judah, and saw the strength of his armor, they were not slow in perceiving that the riches and wealth of the Babylonian kingdom were far superior to that of the kingdom of Judah, and that with but little difficulty they could defeat the armies of Judah, and capture Jerusalem.

Hezekiah lost the golden opportunity of bringing the knowledge of the true God to those idolatrous ambassadors, and of magnifying before them His power, and might, and His loving-kindness, and His willingness to save the children of men. The opportune hour was his in which he might have told them of a loving Saviour to come "to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found." Had he thus done, these ambassadors would have carried the glorious news of salvation back to Babylon, and in the royal courts would have been proclaimed the power of the gospel to save from sin. Thus the blessed truths of the gospel might have been spread over the fair domain of Babylon. But instead of proclaiming the glories of Christ's kingdom, he displayed the perishing vanities of his own. This displeased the Lord, and the prophet Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the Lord of hosts, Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store

unto this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord." Isa. 39:5, 6.

The wheels of God's providence sometimes seem to revolve slowly, as far as time is concerned, yet when God declares that a thing shall be fulfilled, that event will come, though it may seem long deferred. A little more than one hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem was foretold, as brought to view in the above quotation, that city was besieged by the Babylonian army. "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand, with a part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god: and he brought the vessels into the treasure-house of his god." Dan. 1:1, 2.

Nebuchadnezzar at this time worshiped the god Bel, who occupied a richly adorned temple, and was the guardian god of the city and kingdom of Babylon. As the army left Babylon to besiege Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar requested Ashpenaz, a leading general, to bring on his return from Jerusalem certain young men of the children of Israel, some of whom should belong to the king's family. They were to be well favored, skilful in wisdom, and cunning in knowledge; in short, persons capable of being trained in every kind of literary and scientific accomplishment. These young men were to be placed under training for three years, and at the expiration of that time they were to stand before the king as counsellors.

In accordance with the request of the king, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were taken to Babylon, and given in charge of Melzar, who attended to their food and clothing. They were to be fed from the king's table, the food consisting of the king's meat and of the wine which he drank. The royal diet was often so highly seasoned as to be almost indigestible. Daniel, realizing this, purposed in his heart not to partake of the food, and requested that he might not defile himself by its use. The request was granted. At the end of an appointed time he and his companions were in countenance fairer and in flesh fatter than those

who partook of the king's meat. On this account they were permitted to partake of a simple vegetable diet. When they communed with the king, there were none found so wise as these young men. And indeed the king found them in wisdom and understanding far better informed than any of the magicians and astrologers that were in his realm. Daniel had understanding in all matters pertaining to visions and dreams. A record of these facts may be found in the first chapter of Daniel.

One night Nebuchadnezzar had a remarkable dream. When he awoke, it had faded from his mind, yet he realized that what he had dreamed was of great importance. Immediately he summoned into his presence the wise men of the nation. They asked the king to tell them the dream, and they would interpret it, but the king answered that the dream had departed from him, and declared that if they could not tell it, they should be destroyed. If they could interpret it, he would impart to them a rich reward, and crown them with high honors. They utterly failed to make known to him his dream. These great men professed to tell the future by magic, astrology, and sorcery. And when the king could not tell them his dream, some of the wise men declared that there was not a man on earth that could show the king's matter; that that power was only vested with the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh. At this reply the king became very angry, and commanded the men to be destroyed. These wise men professed to interpret dreams through supernatural power. The king believing their claims to be genuine, very logically concluded that if such were the case, the same power which enabled them to give a correct interpretation of a dream, could enable them to reveal the dream itself.

Daniel and his three associates being among the younger of the wise men, were sought first to be slain. He inquired of Arioch, the captain of the executioners, "Why is the decree so hasty?" Then Arioch explained the thing to Daniel, and he boldly went in before the king and desired that he would grant him time, and he would give him the interpretation of the dream. Daniel went to his associates, and they unitedly prayed to God that they might be able to interpret the dream, and not perish.

In the visions of the night, the Most High revealed to Daniel the secret which he had been pleading so earnestly to know.

Daniel went immediately to Arioch, requesting that he might be brought in before the king. As soon as this was done, the king captiously inquired, "Art thou able to make known the dream and the interpretation?" Daniel replied, "Can not your own able men, assisted by the power of your gods, relate the dream?" indicating to the king that it would be unsafe to depend on wise men or worship false gods.

The young prophet then declared, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. . . . Thou, O king, sawest, and behold, a great image." Dan. 2:28-31. He then stated that this image's head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his sides and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay, and finally that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Verse 34. The king still observing farther, saw that the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold were all broken to pieces together, and were driven away like chaff before the wind, and no place was found for them. Verse 25.

"This is the dream," said Daniel to the king, "and we will tell the interpretation. Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art [or thy kingdom is] this head of gold. And after thee [or thy kingdom] shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron. . . . And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be 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." Verses 40-42.

This scripture may be briefly explained as follows:—

A great image. Representing four great kingdoms.

Head of fine gold. The Babylonian kingdom.

Breast and arms of silver. The Medo-Persian kingdom.

His belly and thighs of brass. The Grecian kingdom under Alexander the Great and his successors.

His legs of iron, and his feet part of iron and part of clay. The Roman kingdom in its undivided and divided conditions.

When the prophet brought the great metallic image to the king's notice, and presented the fact that it represented four great kingdoms, stating to him that whereas the feet and toes were part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom should be divided, he said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Verse 44. These particulars are brought to view in the second chapter of Daniel.

This great image, as we have learned, symbolizes five universal kingdoms. Four were of an earthly nature, founded by men: namely, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome. These four kingdoms successively ruled the world. The fourth, or Roman kingdom, was to be divided into ten parts. These ten kingdoms were made by the invasion into the Roman empire of northern barbaric nations. The first of these invasions was made in the latter part of the fourth century. There were ten of these nations who succeeded in breaking up Western Rome. Their names, according to the most reliable historians, are as follows: The Huns, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards. There is a connection clearly discernible between these names and the names of some of the modern nations of Europe, as Burgundy, Lombardy, France, etc. The enumeration above is the one given by "Bishop Newton on the Prophecies," pages 209, 210. The same list is given by Gibbon and others. Some able authors place the Alemanni as one of the ten kingdoms in lieu of the Huns. All are agreed, however, that Rome was divided into ten parts. Mr. Scott, the able commentator, in his notes on

Dan. 7:25, says: "It is, however, certain that the Roman empire was divided into ten kingdoms; and though they might be sometimes more and sometimes fewer, yet they were still known by the names of the Ten Kingdoms of the Western Empire."

The prophet declares that in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom. The fifth universal kingdom is to be established by the Creator and King of the universe, which indicates that in its nature it will differ from the four established through human agency. It is to be a spiritual kingdom. It is symbolized by a stone that was cut out without hands, which smote the image, and as a result, the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold (the four universal kingdoms) were broken to pieces, and became like chaff, and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them. The stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. "Without hands" signifies that it is spiritual. We have a similar expression found in 2 Cor. 5:1: "A house not made with hands," meaning a spiritual house or building. This spiritual kingdom is to rule the world, and is to constitute a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. It shall stand forever. This universal kingdom, the fifth, was to be set up in the days of the ten kings, which arose, as before noted, in the latter part of the fourth century; hence the kingdom established by our heavenly Father could not have been set up before the beginning of the fifth century.

Our Saviour speaks of the establishment of this kingdom in the latter part of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. He says, verse 31, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." Before Him are gathered all nations. He places the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then Christ, as King, says: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world is certainly none other than the earth itself. Thus the objective point in the second chapter of Daniel, bringing to view five universal kingdoms, is the kingdom of God, which shall never end.

The prophet Isaiah, in speaking of the manner in which the Lord teaches His earthly children, declares that it is by "precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little." Isa. 28: 10. Thus it is that He teaches the prophecies, line upon line. In the seventh chapter of Daniel the same line is repeated that is given us in the second chapter. In the seventh chapter, however, there are many specifications noted that are not brought to view in the second chapter.

This thought may be illustrated by the method employed in teaching geography. When the first map of the earth's surface is presented to the young pupil, it contains only the names of a few of the most important things to be impressed on the mind, such as hemispheres, continents, oceans, and the larger islands. The page is turned, and a similar map appears, naming the same grand divisions of the earth's surface, and adding the names of lakes, rivers, gulfs, and bays. When the student becomes familiar with the map before him, he turns another page, and lo, a similar map appears with all that has been recorded on the previous maps, and now on this new page are the names of the political divisions, kingdoms, empires, states, cities, and towns. Had but one map at first been presented, and all the names placed on that map that the last one contained, the student would have been bewildered, perplexed, and utterly discouraged. But being led along by map after map, he comprehends all, and joyfully learns that which makes him intelligent.

In the seventh chapter of Daniel our heavenly Father calls our attention to the same line of prophecy contained in the second chapter, employing as symbols four great beasts arising from the troubled sea. The first was like a lion, the second a bear, the third a leopard, and the fourth a dreadful and terrible beast, a nondescript, which at first had ten horns; then three were plucked up, and the little horn having eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth that spake great things, took their places.

The angel Gabriel, in explaining the signification of these symbols, said of them: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [or kingdoms], which shall arise out of the earth." Dan. 7: 17. These four kingdoms were Babylon, Media and

Persia, Grecia, and Rome. Speaking of the fourth beast, the angel said, "And the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth." Verse 23. As the fourth beast was the fourth kingdom, then the first, second, and third beasts must represent the first, second, and third kingdoms upon the earth. Daniel saw the career of the last kingdom, how it carried on an impious warfare against the government of God, making war with the saints until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Again bringing to view the same fact, in verse 26, the angel says, "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion [the dominion of the fourth beast or kingdom, Rome], to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him [Christ]." Thus the objective point of this prophecy is the destruction of all earthly kingdoms, and the establishment of Christ's glorious kingdom.

When the four great kingdoms ruled the world, the territory of each was the world itself, and when the fifth is established, God's everlasting kingdom, the territory will not be transferred to the regions of some other world, but it will be located in this one; not in the sad condition it is to-day, but, redeemed and restored, it shall be resplendent with brilliant luster, as when God first gave it existence.



VI

The Kingdom of Grace

THE "kingdom of heaven" is an expression often employed in the New Testament Scriptures. Sometimes it signifies the reign of grace in the world, while at other times it refers to the reign of Christ on earth after the restitution.

We are exhorted in Heb. 4:16 to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." A throne of grace supposes a kingdom of grace. If a kingdom of grace, there must exist a king, subjects, territory, law, and throne of grace.

Grace is free, unmerited love and favor of God, the spring and source of all the benefits both material and spiritual which men receive. Immediately after the fall, our loving heavenly Father declared, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3:15. In this text is embodied the entire gospel plan of salvation. From the moment the promised seed, Christ, was offered to and for man, all heaven has been interested to see the time come when the news of a free salvation should be published to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

These glorious truths were revealed to Cain and Abel. By faith in Christ "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous."

Heb. 11:4. When Abel built an altar, and led a little lamb to its side; when he placed his hands on its head, and confessed his sin thereon, he saw in that innocent creature a fit symbol of the coming Saviour to bear the sin of the world on Calvary's cross. As he confessed his sins, those sins in type were transferred to the lamb, and it became the sin bearer. As the wages of sin is death, the sin bearer must die. Through sin life was forfeited; and as the blood is the life, the lamb's blood must flow. As Abel saw the crimson stream, saw the creature trembling, gasping, and dying, he realized to some extent what the sin of the world cost heaven in giving Christ as the world's Redeemer.

Thus it is evident that Christ is the King of the kingdom of grace; that Adam's sinful race are the subjects; that the world is the territory; that the throne of God on which Christ is seated (Rev. 3:21; Mark 16:19; Heb. 8:1), and upon which he is acting as mediator, is the throne of grace; and that the law, the transgression of which has made unmerited love or grace necessary, is the law of the kingdom.

Thus the kingdom of grace stands complete to-day, and is God's masterly plan to save repenting, trusting sinners. It prepares them to inherit the kingdom of glory. We read in Matt. 13:47-49, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just."

Certainly the parable of the net represents the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. Its proclamation results in drawing souls into the fold of the church of Christ on earth. They are drawn from the corruption of sin and iniquity by the truth of God, which is impressed upon their hearts by the Holy Spirit until they are led to accept the offer of salvation, that they may inherit the kingdom of glory.

On one occasion the disciples of Christ requested him to teach them to pray. He said, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy

kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matt. 6:9, 10. The kingdom here spoken of is the one in which, when fully established, the will of God will be done in the earth as that will is done in heaven. This can not refer to the reign of grace, because as long as the gospel net is spread for the perishing, it will gather both the good and the bad. And when the judgment shall have justified the good and condemned the bad, the righteous will then shine forth in the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

The petition, "Thy will be done in earth," should be the earnest prayer of each one, that the reign of evil on earth may speedily terminate, that sin may be banished, and the kingdom of righteousness established. Yet the final inheritance is not given until the end. We are as children not yet placed in control of our inheritance lest Satan should entrap us in sin as he did our first parents in the garden of Eden. Christ is holding the inheritance for us beyond the reach of Satan and his power. Our love for God should make our service a joy, and if such be the case, we shall not serve God in the spirit of fear. We shall obey as sons, and not as servants.

In Matt. 13:44 we read: "Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." In olden times men did not live in populous districts and large cities as at present. They led a nomadic life, remaining but a short time in any one place. They accumulated wealth, which, outside of their herds and flocks, consisted mostly of gold and silver. In Abraham's time, when he purchased a burying place for his wife, he weighed the price in silver, which was the current money with the merchant. At that time men associated together in tribes, and oftentimes these tribes engaged in war with each other. When a tribe was about to be attacked, those who possessed gold and silver, rubies and diamonds, knowing that they were liable to be captured or driven from the field, buried their treasures in order that the victors could not gain possession of them. If the individual whose wealth was buried was captured, his captor could

not obtain the treasure. If its owner was driven from the field, he hoped that at some time he might return and unearth his own treasure. In some instances these wealthy men were slain, and when such was the case, the knowledge of their hid treasure perished with themselves. Years afterward, as the land was cultivated, the plowman would unearth the treasure. At a glance he sees that a fortune is within his grasp. He keeps his discovery secret, fearing that should he divulge it, the owner of the land would claim the treasure. The discoverer, believing that he has a superior right to the treasure, hastens home, and with joy sells everything he possesses to purchase the field. Should the price required be exorbitant, he may be compelled to sacrifice home and all its comforts, and be under the necessity of parting with articles that are sacred because of inheritance or association. Though sometimes saddened that he must part with all these treasures, yet he rejoices when he contemplates the vast wealth that he may possess through his sacrifice. He parts with all that he may gain all.—the treasure in the field.

The Saviour uses this parable to illustrate the value of salvation provided through the gospel. It is a treasure of infinite worth. It is a precious mine, the veins of which run in every direction throughout the Scriptures of divine truth, and in order to be secured, the field must be worked. Hence Inspiration says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me." John 5:39. They testify of Christ, the treasure. When the sinner discovers the value of life eternal, to be secured by faith in Christ, and thinks of the matter seriously, he determines to secure it. Realizing his deep need of salvation, he disposes of all that he has, surrenders fully to God, relinquishes his sins, abandons his evil practices, and accepts the treasure—Jesus Christ. As a result, he is translated by faith into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Col. 1:13. Christ, the king of grace, now sits enthroned in that once sinful heart. The office of the kingdom of grace is to prepare subjects for the kingdom of glory. Through the kingdom of grace God reveals his justice, mercy, love, and goodness toward a race of rebels.

The Kingdom of Glory

Just prior to the first advent of Christ, the angel Gabriel was sent to announce his birth to the virgin Mary. He said unto her, speaking of Christ: "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: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:31-33. The kingdom here spoken of is to be eternal in its nature. Christ is to be its ruler. He shall rule over Israel saved, and as that reign is to be eternal it can not refer to the kingdom of grace.

At present Christ sits upon the Father's throne. Listen to the inspired testimony on this point: "We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Heb. 8:1, 2. He is a priest after the order of Melchisedec. "This Melchisedec, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace." Heb. 7:1, 2.

This quotation proves that Melchisedec held a double office. He was priest of the Most High God, and King of Salem, which, when interpreted, Paul declares to be King of righteousness, and after that, or secondly, King of Salem, which is, King of peace. And Christ, being a High Priest after his order, likewise holds a double office, being at the present time a priest of the Most High God, and King of peace, King of righteousness, the Author of all that is right, and Ruler in the domain of peace. For proof that Christ now holds the double office of priest-king, see Zech. 6:13.

The individual who intercedes with parties at variance, suggesting conditions of peace between alienated hearts, and succeeding in restoring harmony, may not understand that it is

Christ working in him to accomplish the desired result: but nevertheless it is true, because He is King of peace. The one who in life and act points out the way of righteousness may not understand why it is that he is urged on so to do, but could he fathom that unseen power which suggests his course of action, he would not be slow in determining that his conduct is shaped by Christ, the King of righteousness. It is, however, true, for Christ declares, John 12:32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

That drawing power of the Holy Spirit is still in the world, experienced by both saint and sinner. That wonderful power is still drawing men to righteousness, that they may know more of peace. Indeed, the Spirit is life, light, wisdom, power, and righteousness. Only as that Spirit dwells in us can we know anything of the faith, life, love, and righteousness of God. The failure to recognize this, and the fatal fallacy of a professed righteousness, inherent and imparted by pretended co-operation with God by faith, is the cause and origin of the attitude of multitudes of self-righteous formalists. Those trusting to be saved by their own obedience, reject the only salvation by the imputed righteousness of Christ, thus denying the Spirit who alone is righteousness and life. We can only co-operate with our heavenly Father when we make a complete surrender of self. When we have done this, the Holy Spirit will work through us to His honor and glory. We would all comprehend more of righteousness, and experience more peace in our lives, if we looked less on the transient and deceptive splendor of earthly things, and fixed our gaze on Him who is King of righteousness.

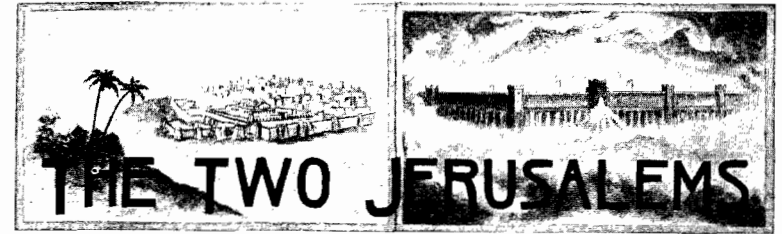
The gentle, persuasive, drawing power of heaven will be experienced as long as Christ sits upon the throne of grace. When all the heirs of the kingdom of glory shall be justified by His blood, having been reconciled to God by His death, and saved by His life. "Then cometh the end, when he [Christ] shall have delivered up the kingdom [of grace] to God, even the Father; when He [the Father] shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He [Christ] must reign, till He [the Father] hath put all enemies under His [Christ's] feet.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He [the Father] hath put all things under His [Christ's] feet. But when He [the Father] saith all things are put under Him [Christ], it is manifest that He [the Father] is excepted which did put all things under Him [Christ]. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him [Christ], then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him [the Father] that put all things under Him [Christ], that God may be all in all." 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

The apostle states that this will take place when the end comes. The end will come when human probation has closed, when the mediatorial work of Christ has terminated, when the fate of all is unalterably fixed, when he that is unjust and filthy shall thus remain, and when he that is holy shall never fall from that estate. The next scene in that wonderful drama is expressed by the revelator in Rev. 22:12: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

As the scene beyond the judgment was opened to the banished seer of Patmos, he saw the transition as the world passed from the kingdom of grace to the kingdom of glory, and speaks of that transition as follows: "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11:15. Thus the kingdom of glory is established. Christ will be its king. The redeemed sons and daughters of Adam will be its subjects. The purchased possession will be its territory. As God will be all in all, his law will be its law. The New Jerusalem will be its capital city, having in its midst the throne of that celestial kingdom.

Reader, that King of grace is saying to you and to me, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 3:21. Are we overcoming day by day?



VII

THERE is no city mentioned in Holy Writ so often as Jerusalem. It was the capital and chief city of the Holy Land, and to the Christian it is associated with most sacred memories. Its early history is somewhat obscure, some historians claiming that the earliest notice of its location is found in Joshua 15:8, and 18:16, 17, while others claim that the earliest identity is that of the Salem of Melchisedec (Gen. 14:18) with Jerusalem, and that it is referred to as Salem in Ps. 76:2. It was afterward called Jebus, as belonging to the Jebusites, and from its two names, Jebus-Salem, we have the name Jerusalem. Its site was made sacred in the days of its earliest existence by Abraham's trial of faith in the offering of Isaac. And as Abraham was the progenitor of the Jewish race, from his time till to-day the entire nation has looked upon Jerusalem with reverence, and has always possessed a longing desire for the prosperity and welfare of the sacred city. When the city was captured by the Babylonians, and many were conveyed to Babylon, they wept when they remembered Zion, and, hanging their harps on the willows, they ceased to sing.

The city was so situated that its geographical position was a very strong one, and when first besieged by the Israelites it resisted their most determined attacks. It was, however, stormed, and captured by David (2 Sam. 5:6, 9), and has sometimes been known as the "city of David." From his time on, it became the religious as well as the political center of the Jewish kingdom, its chief beauty consisting in its glorious temple, in which

was worshiped the one living and true God, and in which He revealed Himself to His people.

Had the inhabitants of Jerusalem remained loyal to God, the city would have stood forever. Jer. 17:25. On account of Sabbath-breaking and its sequence, idolatry, the wrath of God arose against it "till there was no remedy." 2 Chron. 36:16. The Sabbath commandment is based upon the fact that God created the world in six days and rested the seventh, and had that fact always been kept in memory by the observance of the true Sabbath, idolatry would never have existed. It has been Satan's studied plan to obscure the Sabbath, that he might lead men from God and the knowledge of His creative power; thus being led into error, they became idolatrous. The destruction of Jerusalem was completed by the Babylonians, and many of the Jews were taken into Babylonish captivity. After seventy years of exile, they returned, and rebuilt the city, which adorned the world when Christ was born in Bethlehem, a few miles distant. He often visited the city, twice cleansing its temple, healing the sick, causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak, administering blessing to the poor and needy, His love distilling upon them as dew on the meadow, and as constant as the succession of day and night.

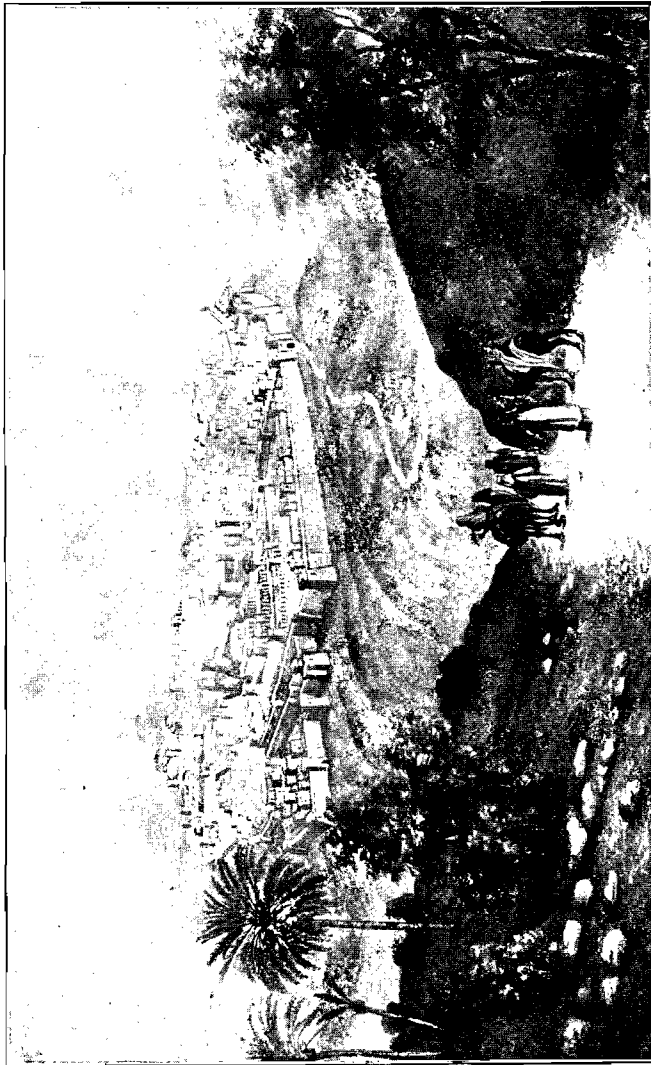
In choosing the Israelites, and making them the depositaries of divine truth, God bestowed upon that nation and people many blessings, which, if they had appropriated, would have made them the leading nation of the world. Understanding that the appointed time had come for Israel to possess Canaan. Moses, the great law-giver and leader of the nation, assembled the people whom he had so lovingly led for forty long years from Egypt's coasts to Canaan's border. He then delivered to them his farewell address, in which he declared that if they would diligently harken unto the voice of God, to observe and to do all of His commandments, that the Lord would set them on high, above all the nations of the earth; that he would prosper them in basket and in store to the extent that they would lend to many nations, and not borrow: that they should become the head, and not the tail; that they should be above only, and not beneath. See

Deuteronomy, twenty-eighth chapter. Moses also predicted that if they disobeyed the commandments of the Lord, they would be scattered, and would become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all the nations where the Lord should lead them.

As Moses was about to close his address, it seems that the Spirit of inspiration caused him to survey the history of ages, and he presented through a vivid word-picture the nation's final overthrow, and the destruction of Jerusalem by the irresistible onslaught of the Roman army. He says: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young." Deut. 28:49, 50.

When the Saviour's youthful feet first trod the streets of old Jerusalem, the doom foretold in the prophetic declaration of the above quotation was soon to befall the city. Comprehending this, our Saviour was anxious that its inhabitants should turn to God, that they might avert the judgments hanging over the city; to this end He worked incessantly. He performed wonderful miracles, and delivered stirring discourses, that He might awaken their sleeping consciences, and plant their feet in the ways of righteousness. He taught them pure doctrines, which, if embraced and heeded, would have changed their lives and cleansed their souls from sin. Alas for Jerusalem, she heeded not. She sinned away her day of grace until the retributive judgments of God awoke to slumber no more until justice was appeased in the destruction of the city. In her pride and exaltation she had said, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow," but suddenly she was overwhelmed in the vortex of destruction.

As Christ's ministry was about to close, he attended the last passover before his death. As he reached Mount Olivet, from its brow He gazed over fair Jerusalem. Entrancing was the scene that the city presented. Zion, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, was filled with Israel's sons and daughters who had come from all parts of the country to offer up the sacrificial lamb at the passover feast. As Jesus looked upon the



OLD JERUSALEM

city, and realized that the flowing of the blood of the paschal lamb about to be slain, was a type of His own blood, and was conscious that the hour was fast approaching when he would be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter," and that when he should die on the cross, the doom of the city and nation would be sealed, he burst into tears, and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke 19: 42-44.

In these words he described the fearful retribution which was to befall the city. His mind then fully grasped the fate of the rebellious, backsliding children of Israel, who had resisted heaven's mercy, lived beneath their privileges, and disregarded their opportunities. Almost overwhelmed with sadness, such as mortals can but faintly realize, His divine pity and grief found expression in the following sorrowful words: "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." Matt. 23: 37, 38.

A few years after this, in A. D. 70, the vast Roman army, commanded by Titus, surrounded the city, a portion of the army encamping on Mount Olivet on the very spot where Christ sat as he wept over the city. Thousands upon thousands perished in the siege, and the Israelites drank the cup of God's wrath to the very dregs. That once powerful nation was scattered, as Inspiration through the great leader, Moses, had foretold; and Jerusalem, though rebuilt, is to-day in alien hands, guarded by armies hostile to the interests of the Jewish nation. Although many Jews exist in it, they, as well as the city, are in a state of bondage, and ancient Jerusalem, the city of the great King,

lives only in song and legend. Had Israel been loyal to God, the nation would have been perpetuated. Christ would have been accepted at His coming as her king and deliverer, and His scepter would have ruled the world in righteousness. But through Israel's apostasy, the plan has been seemingly frustrated, though not set aside, God having provided that the New Jerusalem shall be the capital of the kingdom which the saints shall possess, and of which Christ shall be king when the saints shall possess the kingdom.

In a former chapter we have learned that God promised this world to Abraham for an inheritance, and we have further learned that the promise is to be fulfilled through Christ; therefore Paul declares in Gal. 3:18 that the inheritance is not to be obtained through the law, but through the promise of God. In chapter 4:21, 22, Paul inquires, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem, which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband." Gal. 4:21-27.

This allegory is a wonderful one because of the truth which it illustrates. It clearly sets forth the fact that there are two Jerusalems. One stood on earth in Paul's time, and he declared that it was in bondage, with her children, the Jewish nation; but the other is above, and is the mother of every Christian. These two cities in the allegory are symbolized by the two wives of Abraham. Sarah was Abraham's lawful wife. She was barren and advanced in years; but notwithstanding these conditions, God promised that Sarah should have a son. Her faith did not

grasp the fact that she herself would become the affectionate mother of an innocent child. Yet believing that God would bestow upon Abraham a son, she suggested that her handmaid be given to Abraham; and Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. God was not pleased with the unbelief of Sarah, yet He still declared that she should bear a son, which declaration was verified in the birth of Isaac. Through Isaac, Jacob was born; through him the twelve tribes of the Jewish nation; and through the Jewish nation, Jesus Christ was born. Through Him all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, and a great multitude, as numberless as the sands upon the seashore, or as the glittering stars in the blue vault of heaven, shall finally be saved. Thousands lived in old Jerusalem, but when the New Jerusalem, the mother of us all, shall receive her blood-washed throng, then it shall be seen that the desolate hath many more children than she that had a husband. Paul in writing to Christians, says, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." Gal. 4:28.

Just before Christ ascended to heaven, He said to His disciples, "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 [the new Jerusalem], I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3. The poet very nicely expressed it when he wrote:—

"He is fitting up my mansion
Which eternally shall stand,
For my stay shall not be transient
In that holy, happy land."

Promises Concerning the Earth

The earth will some day be filled with the effulgent glory of God, diffusing light throughout the entire world. The prophet Habakkuk speaks of such a time: "For the earth shall be filled

with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Chapter 2:14. A like promise is found in Num. 14:21, "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." These and several other promises in regard to the earth have as yet never been fulfilled, and can not be previous to the coming of the Just One, from the fact that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." 2 Tim. 3:13. Even in the church, the wheat and tares are to grow together till the harvest, and the harvest is the end of the world. Matthew 13. As the promises respecting the earth have not been fulfilled, and can not be before the close of probation, the time must of necessity come when the saints shall possess the earth, and these promises meet their fulfilment.

We are instructed very thoroughly in the thirty-seventh Psalm in reference to the restoration of the world. As we see the prosperity of the wicked, and note the wonderful power, and the mighty influence they wield, intrenched, as it were, behind a bulwark of riches, we are tempted at times to conclude that their influence can never be broken. The psalmist states the case thus: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree." Verse 35. Sin constantly allures from the path of rectitude, and when once yielded to, it leads into paths mysterious, perplexing, and degrading. The end is ruin and death.

The Creator has ordained that sin shall cease to exist, and when that day shall be ushered in, when death itself shall die, not only shall sin cease to exist, but its unrepentant devotees, who are stained by, and allied to it, shall perish. Although men with sin-stained characters may prosper, yet the psalmist says of the sinner, "Yea, he passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." Verse 36. Seeing that he shall pass away, David exhorts us thus: "Fret not thyself because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb." Verses 2, 3. In the final destruction of sin and sinners, all to whom Christ has

not through faith imputed His righteousness, shall fall before death eternal as grain before the reaper.

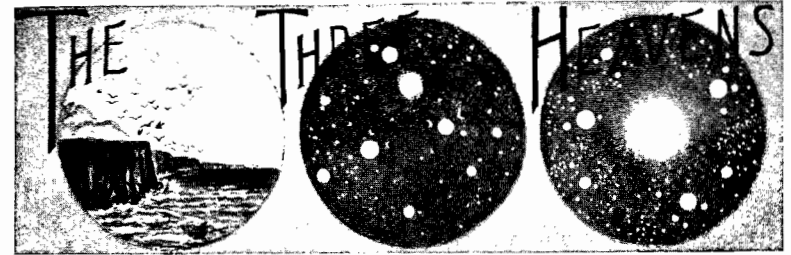
In speaking of the righteous, the psalmist says: "For evil doers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." Verse 9. Continuing the same thought in verse 11, he says: "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Again, in verses 22 and 29 he says: "For such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off." "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever."

The cutting off referred to above occurs at the punishment of the wicked. In verse 10 we read, "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." The method by which they shall be cut off is graphically described in verse 20, "But the wicked shall perish; and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." The entire psalm teaches the fact that the world will some day become the home of the saved.

In Christ's wonderful sermon on the mount, among many other precious utterances, He said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matt. 5:5. This declaration must meet its fulfilment in the world as it exists at present, or in its future state, for the promises of God fail not. A meek person is one that is "given to forbearance under injuries." As we view the present state of society, do we see the individuals who are given to forbearance under injuries possessing the world,—having an inheritance in it? Some who possess the much-to-be-coveted grace of meekness may inherit, or secure, some of its territory, but the numbers are few, and seemingly growing less: for, as a rule, the world is controlled quite largely by those having great ability to acquire wealth, who apparently are happier when they are scheming to defraud others, and to gain that for which others have diligently labored.

It is seemingly the one aim and object of men of means at the present time to pool their individual wealth, to form vast

combines, or trusts, and then secure the ownership of land, or its products. They then set an exorbitant price thereon, and the rich become richer and the poor poorer. There are, however, some wealthy persons who are kindhearted, and liberal to the poor. They endow educational institutions, build orphan homes, and aid in their support. Thus they bless mankind, the world is benefited by their having lived in it, and has cause to be grateful to them, and to bless their memory. But the great mass of the wealthy are, sad to state, given to the pleasures of the world, and some, like the unjust judge in our Saviour's time, fear not God, nor regard man. There are some, indeed many, meek individuals in the world, and yet their number is small compared with the great mass who are rushing madly on, as if urged by the goddess of greed, to acquire the world's wealth; while those who are meek, bear with the inconveniences of poverty and the wretchedness of want, counting not their lives dear unto themselves, that they may gain an immortal inheritance in the glorified earth, in which the will of God shall be done as it is in heaven; when the saints will take the kingdom, and possess it forever and ever. That glorious day is fast approaching. Its dawn draweth near. The day star has appeared, and soon the light of the Sun of righteousness will gild the hills of Zion.



VIII

WE have noticed the three worlds, or the three stages through which our world is to pass before the final consummation. First, the world as it was from the creation to the flood. Second, as it is from the flood to the judgment. Third, as it will be from the judgment to all eternity.

The term "heaven," or "heavens," in the Scriptures does not always mean the same. We often speak of the heavens in which the birds fly, referring to the atmospheric heavens.

Beyond the atmosphere, and stretching from planet to planet, and from sun to sun, is the great measureless heaven of space, so infinite that only the divine mind can comprehend its vastness. We will term this wonderful heaven concerning which we know so little, only that it exists, the heaven of space, heaven number two.

Somewhere in that vast heaven of space, as we term it,—and there is no term that can fitly describe it,— is a place where dwells our Father, the Creator and Sustainer. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Ps. 19: 2.

The great apostle to the Gentiles, in writing to a church the members of which he himself had brought from heathenism to the marvelous light of the gospel, through the blessing of the Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit, thus speaks of visions and revelations: "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a

man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I can not tell, or whether out of the body, I can not tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I can not tell, God knoweth); how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." 2 Cor. 12: 1-4. Paul is here portraying his experience as he was wrapped in holy vision, and carried to the paradise of God, where revelations were marvelously opened to his enraptured mind. He was conveyed into the third heaven (verse 2); whether in the body, or whether the glories of that heavenly land passed before his mind as a panorama of entrancing beauty, he was unable to say; but of this one thing he was certain, that when he was caught up to the third heaven, he had reached paradise. Verse 4. We can safely decide, according to these verses, that there is a third heaven, which is the paradise of God, the garden of delight.

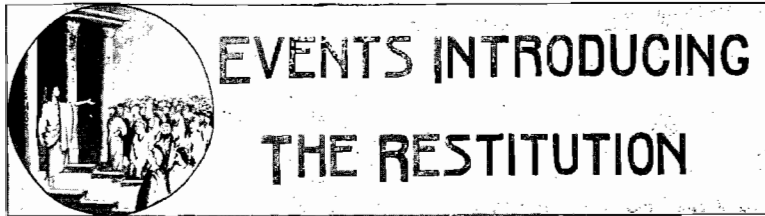
To no prophet of the entire New Testament has the Lord revealed the future to such an extent as to the beloved apostle John, who wrote the book of Revelation. He opened to him the history of the Christian church from its establishment to the close of probation, and the second coming of Christ.

In writing of that stage of the church represented by Ephesus in Revelation 2, the Lord says, in verse 7, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." We have already learned that paradise is in the third heaven, and we are taught in the last quotation that those who overcome shall eat of the tree of life, which is in heaven, the paradise of God. In Revelation 22: 1, 2, we read: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, 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: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Again, noting what we have learned, Paul was caught up to the third

heaven — into paradise. The overcomers will eat of the tree of life which is in paradise, and that tree of life bears twelve manner of fruit. Thus the saints will be translated from this earth to heaven, and eat of the fruit of the tree of life.

Just before the arrest of the Saviour, He stirred the people mightily with the words which He spake and the mighty miracles which He performed. "And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning Him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him. Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while I am with you, and then I go unto Him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye can not come." John 7: 31-34. Note the teaching: Christ declared that in a little while, He would go to the Father, and that those unbelieving Jews could not follow Him there, indicating that no sin-polluted soul could ever go to heaven.

A short time after the conversation with the Jews above quoted, Christ was conversing with His disciples, and He said unto them: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye can not come; so now I say to you." John 13: 33. Here He tells His disciples as plainly as He did the Jews that He was going away, and that they could not follow Him. This filled their minds with wonder as to where He would go. And Peter, who was generally chief speaker among the disciples, "said unto Him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterward." John 13: 36. Again we state that the Saviour was going to His Father. The Father is in heaven, or paradise. Peter could not ascend to heaven when Christ did, but he was to follow Him afterward, clearly proving that Peter and all overcomers shall some day ascend to the paradise of God, associating with the great family of heaven, enjoying its bliss, throughout eternity.



EVENTS INTRODUCING THE RESTITUTION

IX

ONE afternoon, soon after the day of Pentecost, Peter and John attended a prayer service at the temple in Jerusalem. Living not far from the temple was a family, one member of which was a cripple. He had been thus afflicted all his life, and had no power to walk. He was carried daily to the gate of the temple, and laid there in order to excite the compassion of the worshipers. As the apostles were about to pass through the gate called Beautiful, the lame man, seeing them, begged for a pittance. "And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us." Acts 3:4.

It was customary for all who attended the temple service to carry money to contribute to the treasury or to the poor, or both. It was probably because of this custom that the friends of the lame man laid him at the gate of the temple, as true Christianity and liberality are inseparable, and his friends reasoned that the unfortunate man would be benefited by their liberal donations. When Peter said to him, "Look on us," he did so, earnestly expecting a gift from them. "Silver and gold have I none," said Peter. The probabilities are that the cheerful look of expectancy soon began to fade from his countenance; but hope revived, as Peter added, "Such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Taking him by the right hand, Peter lifted him up, and immediately he received strength, and "leaping up stood, and walked,

and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." And when the people saw what had been accomplished by the power of God, they were filled with wonder and amazement, and came running together into the porch of the temple, fixing their gaze intently upon the apostles, as if they by their own power had made the man to walk. A wonderful miracle had been performed in a most public manner and place. And as the people were wondering by what power this cure had been effected, Peter declared that it had been accomplished through Jesus, the Prince of life, whom they had delivered up to be crucified, and whom God had raised from the dead. It was through faith in His name that this man had been made perfectly sound. Then he assured them that although they had put to death the Prince of life, their sin was not an unpardonable one.

As Peter realized that their sin could be forgiven, and that they need not to despair, even though they had put the Son of God to death, he said unto them, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets, since the world began." Acts 3:19-21.

This scripture gives the successive steps which must be taken to reach the kingdom of God. Please note them: first, repentance; second, conversion; third, the blotting out of sin in connection with the times of refreshing; fourth, the appearing of Jesus Christ; and fifth, the restitution of all things.

Although man in his physical life is a unit, yet he possesses a threefold nature,—physical, mental, and spiritual. In the all-wise arrangement of our Creator, it is necessary to nourish these natures or they decay. To sustain our physical nature, we must partake of that kind of food which is best adapted to its sustenance,—the grains, fruits, and nuts.

Dependent upon the physical, and yet superior to it, is the mental nature, which, next to life, is the most valuable of all the Creator's gifts. Only through our mental nature can we

appreciate the blessings of Him who created us. Without it the sun would shine and the flowers bloom in vain. In order properly to sustain it, one must read and meditate upon that which is ennobling, that which will lead the mind higher and higher so that it may encircle the throne of the Infinite as the tendril of the vine encircles and clings to that with which it comes in contact. Anything which exercises the mind for good is excellent mental food. The reading of pure literature, the association and interchange of ideas with refined people, as mind sharpeneth mind, and successfully meeting the social and religious problems in performing the duties of life,—these constitute food for the intellect.

Far surpassing the two natures just noticed, and depending upon them, is the spiritual. It can thrive only upon spiritual things. No food is so well adapted to this nature as the study of God's word, which refines and purifies the soul. His word is not contained alone in the sentences of Inspiration; we can learn of his mighty power by studying the pages of the great book of nature as opened before us in earth and sky.

Sin has defiled and blackened the nature of man. It has darkened his spiritual, marred his mental, and dwarfed his physical nature. Therefore, in order to remove the stain, God has ordained that men shall repent. First, by manifesting a godly sorrow for sin, feeling a deep anguish of soul because he has transgressed God's holy law. Second, by the confession of his sins to God, whose law he has transgressed,—for sin is the transgression of the law,—and by further confessing his fault to the one whom he wronged in committing the sin. True repentance produces a genuine mourning for sin, and an earnest desire to be cleansed from it. It is the fruit of saving faith, and results in a total change of heart and life. Its subjects are sinners. The evidences of genuine repentance are humility, faith, prayer, and obedience. Third, by making reparation for wrong acts as far as lies in his power.

Men are not led to true repentance by the threatenings of divine justice. Such a course often turns the sinner from a desire to repent. But when the willingness of Christ to save is pre-

sented to him, and the love of God in giving the Saviour to die for a race of rebels is set forth, the contemplation of the wonderful love on the part of God leads to true repentance.

The apostle Peter continues, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 3:19. The term "convert" signifies a turning from; in a Bible sense, to turn from a state of sin to a condition of righteousness; a turning to God through Christ, deeply deploring sin, and believing that through the name of Christ sins would be blotted out.

Repentance and conversion now having been experienced, the sins of which the sinner has repented, and from which he has been converted, are to be blotted out. The apostle declares that this shall take place when the refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, just as Christ shall cease to be mediator, and the Holy Spirit shall ripen the harvest in the end of the world. As the early rain of the Christian dispensation fell upon the newly organized church at the sunrise of its existence, on the day of Pentecost, so shall the latter rain, through the Holy Spirit, come in a grand refreshing shower at the close of probation, just prior to the period in which Peter affirms that God shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you. When our Saviour shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28), sins shall then all have been blotted out. Then shall Christ redeem His people from the mildew of sin, and hasten the work of bringing the world back to its Edenic beauty, which will result in ushering in the restitution of all things spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. Then shall we read, as never before, the love of God in all the unfoldings of nature, in every balmy breeze, in every flowering shrub, and in every blooming flower.



THE HOLY SPIRIT ACCOMPANYING THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL



X

WHEN the final day of reckoning shall be reached, and all shall be judged according to their works, every sinner will be left without excuse. It will then be seen that Heaven has done all in its power to save to the uttermost every soul who has had an accountable existence. In bestowing Jesus upon the world, the Creator in that act poured out heaven's choicest treasure. Every day He showers upon us innumerable blessings; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. He has surrounded us with agencies for good, of which we know nothing only through their effect. In order that the gospel, which "is the power of God unto salvation," might be preached to all nations, men have gone to all parts of the world to preach Christ and Him crucified; they have endured privation and want in zones inhospitable, depriving themselves, without murmuring, of the society of dear ones and the comforts of home; all of which they have cheerfully endured that they might present the good news of salvation to a lost and ruined race.

All of man's efforts would prove futile in laboring to save the lost, were it not for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that wonderful unseen agency which accompanies the promulgation of the gospel. Our Saviour, speaking of that mysterious power, says, "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you." "But 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 14:18, 26. Again, in John 16:7, 8, the Saviour adds, "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; 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 [margin, "convince"] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

When the Saviour declared that it was advisable for Him to depart, the disciples must certainly have been astonished beyond measure. How could it be profitable unto them for Him to depart after having spoken unto them as never man spake; after having healed the sick, raised the dead, forgiven sin, and calmed the troubled soul? He explained all by stating that if He did not depart, the Comforter would not come, and that when He should come, He would convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: in other words, a power would be sent into the world from the Father that would awaken the conscience of the sinner whenever sin should be committed. Every living, accountable soul is a witness to the truthfulness of this declaration; for, whatever our station in life, whether rich or poor, free or bond, whenever we do wrong, there comes a rapping and tapping at the heart's door, and a gentle voice says, "You did wrong: you should repent, confess, and reform your life." We may reject its wooings, but it comes to us over and over again, to reprove us of our sins, and urge us to walk in the ways of righteousness.¹

Oftentimes, when the sinner defiantly disregards that gentle voice, and ignores that benign power, then it arrays before him the fearful realities of the judgment, and he deeply feels his deplorable condition, as he exclaims, "I am lost! I am lost!" But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ, it is not so; for as long as the wrong doer desires to be better than he is, and knows that unless he is, he is not prepared for death and the judgment, he has not passed the bounds of mercy. His feeling thus is an evidence that the Spirit is working for his salvation, and that there is mercy for him; but he should fully realize that the opportune time has come for him

to surrender to God, that peace like a river may attend his way. The Holy Spirit not only convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, but it fills other offices, among which it becomes our "earnest," not only of our salvation and a home in heaven, but a pledge of our future inheritance in the final restitution of the earth. One definition of the word "earnest" is "a pledge or payment given as an assurance of earnest or serious purpose to discharge an engagement or fulfill a promise; a token of what is to come." Paul in speaking of what is to come and of what God will accomplish, says that "in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will; that we should be to the praise of His glory who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." Eph. 1:10-14.

Surely this quotation teaches us unmistakably that every time we are convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, that the Holy Spirit is a pledge, or *earnest*, to assure us that we shall gain an inheritance in the purchased possession. A simple illustration will perhaps more clearly convey to the reader's mind the significance of the term "earnest."

Mr. A possesses a fine farm. Its acres are broad, and in a high state of cultivation. Mr. B is anxious to obtain the farm, and approaches Mr. A to ascertain if he will sell, and if so, on what conditions. The two gentlemen talk the matter over. Mr. A agrees to take a stipulated sum. The two men are strangers to each other. Mr. B states to Mr. A that as soon as he disposes of some property he will return and purchase the farm. Mr. A replies, "I have no doubt that you are sincere in your statements, but as you are an entire stranger, I do not know that I shall ever meet you again." Whereupon, Mr. B takes

from his purse gold coin to the amount of five hundred dollars, and passing it to Mr. A says, smilingly, "Please receipt me for the same on the purchase price, and I will return and take possession of the property." Mr. B departs, and the report rapidly spreads that Mr. A has sold his farm; and when accosted in regard to the matter, he confirms the report. Some of his more skeptical neighbors say, "You will never see Mr. B again. He certainly will not pay you the price stipulated, so you may as well be content to keep your place." Mr. A's eye kindles, being lighted by faith, and he exclaims with assurance, "He paid me five hundred dollars as an earnest, or pledge, that he will return, and take the farm. He has too much invested in it to abandon it now."

The above faintly illustrates how the Holy Spirit is an earnest of our inheritance. When man sinned, he lost dominion of the world, and the beautiful planet that then was, passed under the dominion of the usurper, and man became the abject slave of sin. Jesus, pitying his condition, came to redeem not only man, but the world. He invested in our world thirty-three years of his life, wherein he was beset with the same temptations that surround us. He was ridiculed and mocked; his character was maligned, and at last he was falsely accused, arrested by a merciless mob, and crucified. Thus he invested in the purchased possession his time, talent, labor, and life. Having made this investment, he has an interest in it, and some day He will return to claim His own, and the soil which drank His blood will ere long compose the foundation of His throne.



XI

THE ministry of Jesus Christ on earth was drawing to its close, and He felt extremely anxious to give His followers the clearest evidence possible that He was the true Messiah. He desired that their faith might be strengthened in Him, so that it would not be shaken as they should see Him delivered into the hands of His enemies. And further, fearing that when they should see their supposed King die the ignominious death of the cross, they might lose faith in the expected kingdom, concerning which they had hoped so long, He said unto them, "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom." Matt. 16:28.

A short time after this, Jesus chose three of His most prominent disciples, Peter, James, and John, and led them up the steep of a neighboring mountain, away from the sight and sound of human activity. They ascended the mountain for the purpose of engaging in prayer. The day had been well filled by the Master in ministering to the needs of the people. He had taught great multitudes and healed the sick. As they reached their destination the sun was setting, and the lengthening shadows were veiling plain and valley. Still the snows on the upper peaks flashed and glowed in the light of the setting sun as if aflame. Soon the golden light disappeared, and valley and summit were alike wrapped in a mantle of darkness. The Saviour knew that the darkest hour of His earthly pilgrimage was fast approaching, and He prayed most earnestly for strength divine, that He might be able to pass through the coming conflict. His disciples,



THE TRANSFIGURATION

being weary, were soon wrapped in slumber. As Jesus prayed earnestly, His Father heard, and the hosts of heaven were intensely interested. Each member of that vast throng was longing to hear the command from the Creator to visit earth and minister to their beloved Commander. But not one of the angel host was selected. Associated with that vast throng of angels were two persons who had once lived on this earth. One was Elijah, the chief of prophets. He had been translated from earth to heaven without tasting death. The other was Moses, who had led Israel's vast army from Egypt to Canaan. Just before Israel went into the promised land, he had slept the sleep of death, was buried by a divine hand, no man knowing the location of his tomb. Deut. 34:5, 6.

These two glorified men were selected of God and sent to converse with the Saviour in regard to His suffering and death. As they descended, the glory of God flashed through the mountain. By it the disciples were awakened, and they gazed with wonder upon the transfigured Son of God. His face shone as the sun. His garments became bright and dazzling, white as snow, as no fuller on earth could whiten them. As the disciples gazed, they saw two glorified beings in conversation with their loving Master. They were conversing in reference to His suffering, and the agony through which He would pass in His coming conflict. They were not angels, but men, Moses and Elijah, who had lived on the earth, having themselves experienced sorrow and suffering. They could therefore sympathize with the Saviour in His approaching conflict with the powers of darkness. Moses, having passed through death, could comfort the Saviour, and inspire Him with hope, for he himself was experiencing life beyond the tomb. Thus these two men could impart that comfort and strength to Him which the angels could not, as they had not experienced the sad results of sin.

When the kingdom of God shall be fully established, the redeemed hosts will be its subjects. That numberless multitude will be made up of two classes. One class will be composed of those who have passed through the realm of death, and through the resurrection of the just shont victory over death and the

tomb. This class is represented by Moses in the transfiguration on the mount. The other class will be translated from earth to heaven without tasting death, represented in the mountain scene by Elijah. These two classes are introduced by Paul, in 1 Cor. 15:51, 52: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep [die], 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."

The scene on the mountain was a real one. The Saviour, Peter, James, and John were personally there, as well as Elijah, who had been carried by the flaming chariots of God to heaven hundreds of years before. As Moses appeared personally on the mountain, it must have been by virtue of a resurrection from the dead. Elijah could not have represented the translated saints in the future kingdom of glory had not he himself been translated. Did Moses have a resurrection? In Jude 9 we read, "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."

Note that the controversy between Michael (Christ) and Satan was in regard to the *body* of Moses. Death is the mortgage which sin placed upon every member of earth's great family. Christ, in order to remove it, must himself die, and at the time He appeared at the grave of Moses, He had not yet passed through death; therefore Satan contested the right of the Son of God to resurrect Moses. The Lord did not enter into controversy with him only so far as to refer him to God as the author of His power. Moses was resurrected, and appeared on the mountain personally.

Peter was so charmed with the heavenly trio that he desired to create three dwelling-places, tabernacles, one for his dear Master, one for Moses, and one for Elijah, exclaiming in his ecstasy, "Master, it is good for us to be here,"—a feeling which will be shared by all when the meek shall inherit the earth, and the time come when the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess it forever.

The disciples in the mount were enraptured with the glory that enveloped the Saviour, and which had so wonderfully transformed Him. It had entirely swept from His visage all trace of the sorrow and anxiety which clouded His usually serene countenance. A bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." The glory was so great that the disciples with mortal eye could not gaze on its effulgent light, and they fell to the ground and veiled their faces. The glory faded as the bright cloud bore Moses and Elijah back to heaven, and Jesus only was left.

It was believed among many of the Jews that in connection with the coming of the Messiah, Elijah would appear. The scene in the mount had comforted the Saviour, and strengthened the faith of the disciples. The succeeding day was ushered in, and the disciples with the Saviour descended the mountain, cheered with the thought that they were associated with the world's Redeemer, that the kingdom of God would be established on earth, and that they had seen it in miniature.

Years after the Saviour had gone to His Father to complete the plan of salvation for the final consummation, Peter writes to his converts in the Christian faith, thus, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:16-19.

Peter had beheld the glory of God as it will be viewed in the soon-coming kingdom. He had seen the heavenly King, Jesus, as He will appear. He had looked upon the representatives of the subjects of the kingdom as they will be recognized when

glorified, and he knew that when he announced the truth in regard to the coming King, he was not presenting a cunningly devised fable, for he had viewed the reality in the mount; he had been an eye-witness of his majesty. But the eye may mislead. To illustrate: The two rails of a railroad track run parallel the whole length of the line, being the same distance apart all the way; but in appearance, a short distance from the beholder, they seem to be approaching each other, and if one were not aware of the fact that they do not, he would reasonably conclude that they do; but to one who understands the law of linear perspective, the reason for this is plain. But the sure word of prophecy never misleads. Notwithstanding the fact that Peter had seen the glory of the coming One, he declares that we have "a more sure word of prophecy," unto which we do well if we take heed. Thus men have seen, and prophets have written, the never-failing words of God in regard to the kingdom of glory, and there is no fable connected with it.

"We have heard from the bright, the holy land,
 We have heard, and our hearts are glad;
 For we are a lonely pilgrim band,
 And weary and worn and sad.
 They tell us the saints have a dwelling there;—
 No longer are homeless ones,
 And we know that the goodly land is fair,
 Where life's pure river runs."

"The King of that country, He is fair,
 He's the joy and light of the place;
 In His beauty we shall behold Him there,
 And bask in His smiling face.
 We'll be there, we'll be there in a little while,
 We'll join the pure and the blest;
 We'll have the palm, the robe, the crown,
 And forever be at rest."



XII

THAT which man covets and most earnestly longs for, is rest. Had he never fallen, his rest would have been eternal. But as the privilege of that eternal rest was lost, it has been the design of the beneficent Father to restore the enjoyment of it in full, sweet, and all-satisfying measure. Every child of God yearns for a higher and holier atmosphere than earth in its sinful state can offer. When David's heart was sore and faint within him, when fearfulness and trembling came upon him, he said, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest." Ps. 55:6.

When the Lord gave the children of Israel the land of Canaan, it was only a temporary possession, typical of their final inheritance of the earth. Through unbelief they lost it. Had they remained faithful, as we have before learned, Jerusalem would have stood forever, and the throne of David would have been provided with a ruler until the Saviour should have come as the seed of David; Christ's reign would have been established upon that throne, and Israel would have been a nation encircling the world. But they lost their opportunity, in departing from God. Thus the rest which they might have received when Joshua led them into the land of Canaan, they failed to obtain.

God does not permit the failure of men to thwart his plan; so he ordains that the rest for which His people earnestly sigh may be secured through Christ Jesus. Paul, in writing to the Hebrew



AT REST

brethren concerning the rest which Israel through transgression lost, and which may be regained through Christ, says to them as follows: "While it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swear He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Heb. 3:15-19.

Paul continues, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Heb. 4:1, 2. As Israel failed because of unbelief, the Lord "limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus [Joshua, margin] had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Heb. 4:7-9.

Notwithstanding the failure of Israel, there remains still a rest to the people of God. The last king who ruled over the Israelites before they were taken into captivity by the king of Babylon was Zedekiah; and because Israel had corrupted themselves by disobeying the commandments of the Lord, the scepter and the throne were entirely removed from them, and passed into the hands of the king of Babylon. God's people have never since constituted a ruling nation. The Lord declared to Hezekiah through Ezekiel the prophet that such would be the case. He said to him as follows: "And 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. 21:25-27.

The One "whose right it is," can certainly be none other than Jesus Christ. He is the seed "to whom the promise is made." This scripture unmistakably teaches that the scepter was to pass into the hand of some power who was to rule over the people of God. Zedekiah was the high prince, the ruler over God's people, who was "abased." The low prince was the heathen king of Babylon, who was exalted to the position of ruling over God's people. But the scepter to rule the world was not always to remain with Babylon; for the Lord said, "I will overturn, overturn it."

As before stated, the dominion of the world was given to Babylon; from which kingdom it passed into the hands of the Medes and Persians. Thus occurred the first overturn. After possessing the dominion of the world for more than two hundred years, the Medes and Persians were overcome by Grecia, and thus occurred a second overturn. Grecia held the dominion of the world about one hundred and seventy years, when it in time was subdued by Rome, and the dominion of the world passed into the hands of the Romans, thus accomplishing the third overturn. In the days of Rome, Jesus Christ was born of the seed of David, eventually to occupy his throne, to reign over true Israel, world without end.

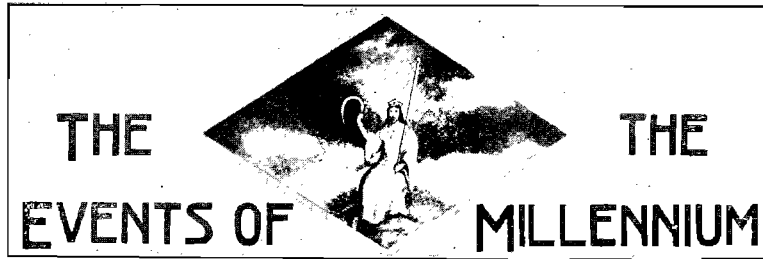
Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia did not at all periods sweep away the dominion of the kings of Judah. But they only reigned at times in a limited sense, through the sufferance of these earthly powers. In Roman history, as late as the time in which the Saviour was born, a king ruled upon Judah's throne, thus fulfilling the dying words of Jacob to his son Judah: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen. 49: 10. When Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem's manger, the right to rule the world was conferred upon Him by its Creator, for Shiloh had come. It is true that He did not then take to Himself His great power, for He said, "My kingdom is not of this world;" yet that power belongs to Him, and at an appointed time shall pass fully into His hands. That time is designated by the seer of Patmos in Rev. 11: 15-17: "And

the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever. And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come: because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."

The falling of the four and twenty elders upon their faces before God, took place as He sat upon His celestial throne, and the voices which declared that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, are heard in heaven. As these events are transpiring in heaven, the prophet glances earthward, and views the nations of earth; and noting what is transpiring among them, he says: "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great: and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. 11: 18.

All heaven is now astir, and earth is in commotion; for soon Michael (Christ) is to stand up, or begin His reign, and the sad story of sin is soon to reach its final conclusion; for God's eternal kingdom is soon to be set up.

"We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time;
In an age on ages telling —
To be living is sublime."



XIII

THE twentieth chapter of Revelation is indeed a wonderful one. It treats of the binding of Satan, of the second resurrection, of the attempted capture of the city of God, and of the final punishment of the ungodly. In speaking of the binding of Satan during the thousand years, and the final judgment, the revelator says: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thou-

³ The reader will pardon a slight criticism. The word *which* in verse four, in the expression "and which had not worshiped the beast," evidently introduces another class. The Greek word *hostes* is defined by Liddell and Scott's Classical Lexicon: "Whomsoever: whichsoever: any one who, etc.:" and by Robinson's New Testament Dictionary: "One who: some one who: whosoever." The clause then would be rightly translated, "and whosoever had not worshiped the beast." As one class, John saw the martyrs; and as another class, he saw those who had not worshiped the beast and his image. See "Thoughts on Revelation."

sand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. 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. 20:1-6.

The thousand years above spoken of are bounded by two resurrections, the first resurrection introducing the period, and the second terminating it. During this time Satan is bound; and while he is confined, the wicked dead are judged by those who sit on thrones. Those who occupy the thrones during the time are made up in part of the saints (martyrs) who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and also of others who had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, nor had received his mark in their foreheads or in their hands; and during the time in which the wicked dead are judged, they live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

The First Resurrection

At what period in the world's history do the righteous dead live? In 1 Thess. 4:14-17 we have an answer to this important question: "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: 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."

These verses teach us that two classes of saints will exist at the time of the first resurrection, the larger class of which are slumbering in the tomb, and that when the archangel's trump shall sound, the righteous dead shall live again. Then the saints which are alive shall be caught up with the resurrected saints to meet the Lord in the air.

Paul declares that the resurrection of the righteous will take place when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. He affirms this same truth in 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52, in which he says: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep [die], 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."

Thus the first resurrection takes place in connection with the second coming of Jesus Christ. As we have already learned, the first resurrection introduces the one thousand years of Revelation 20. The revelator says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection," from the fact that the second death will have no power over them, showing that the first resurrection is a resurrection unto life eternal.

A moment's consideration is all that is necessary to convince one that whenever Christ may come, He will find some on the earth living up to the best light they have. Such will be prepared for the coming of the Just One. They will look up, and exclaim, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Isa. 25:9.

Brightness of Christ's Coming—Its Effect

The wicked are not able to endure the glory which attends the second coming of Christ. This great event will take place under the sixth seal, which is introduced in the sixth chapter of Revelation, in which the revelator speaks thus: "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid them-

selves in the dens and in 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: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. 6: 12-17.

This scripture brings to view earth's last prayer meeting. But it is different from all other prayer meetings in that the wicked only offer up supplications. They do not ask for pardon of sin and for grace divine, but only beg to be shielded from the vengeance of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Alas! none of them are able to stand, and the result of that consuming glory is as stated by Paul in his letter to the Thessalonian brethren, "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: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day." 2 Thess. 1: 7-10.

We are taught in this scripture that the living wicked, at the second coming of Christ, are to be destroyed by the brightness of that coming. Four great events will take place when Christ appears: First, the resurrection of the righteous dead; second, the translation of the righteous living; third, the destruction of the living wicked by the brightness of the second advent; fourth, the binding of Satan. The saints are taken to those mansions that Christ has gone to prepare. John 14: 1-3. With the saints translated to heaven and the living wicked destroyed, the earth is left without inhabitant, and in this condition it will remain for one thousand years.

Will the World Be Converted?

The word millennium is not an expression found in the Bible, though often used in discourses. The word signifies a thousand years, and in a theological sense refers to the thousand years

spoken of in Revelation 20. Some have supposed that just prior to the millennium the world will be converted, and that during the millennium there will be a reign of peace and quiet, and that then the nations will learn war no more. Such a view may be pleasing, but is the position truthful? There are scriptures which seem to forbid such an exposition of this subject.

In Matthew thirteen the Saviour utters a parable in which He states that the kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while he slept, an enemy entered and sowed tares; and when the grain sprang up, and brought forth fruit, then the tares appeared. The servants of the householder came, and said unto him, "Didst thou not sow good seed in thy field?" and receiving an affirmative answer, they said in astonishment, "From whence hath it tares?" His reply was, "An enemy hath done this." The feelings of the servants were stirred, and they said, "Wilt thou that we go and gather them up?" And he said, "No, indeed; for in so doing you endanger the wheat. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will say to the reapers, Gather first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

After the congregation was dismissed, and Jesus had entered a near-by residence, the disciples came to Him, saying, "Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." Granting their request, He said, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one: the enemy that sowed them is the devil; 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 [the world, the territory of the 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." Verses 37-43.

The explanation of this parable is so plain that comment

would seem out of place. However, let us keep in mind that the wheat and the tares were to grow together until the harvest, and that the harvest is the end of the world. This being true, both righteous and wicked will exist in the world until the appearing of the Saviour, teaching most conclusively that the world's conversion can not take place previous to the second coming of Christ.

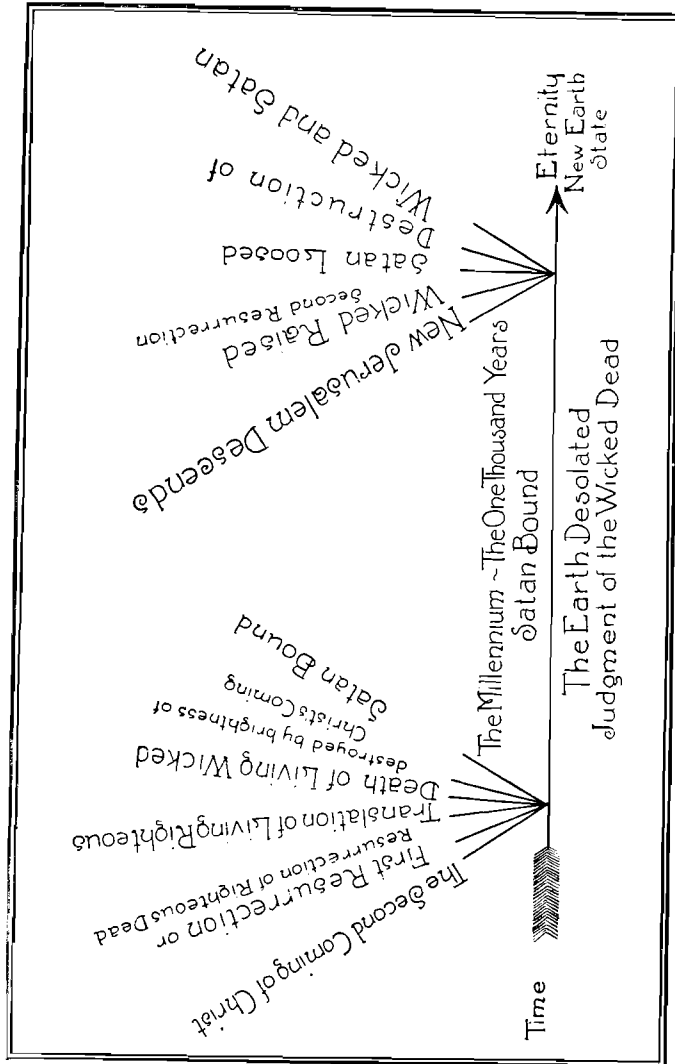
The apostle Paul declares in 2 Tim. 3:1-5 that because men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, truce-breakers, fierce, despisers of those that are good, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, the last days would be perilous ones. The expression "last days" must include the very last day, thus clearly teaching that even to the very last day the times will be perilous. It will be an age of brilliant pretentions, but sad realities.

The Binding of Satan

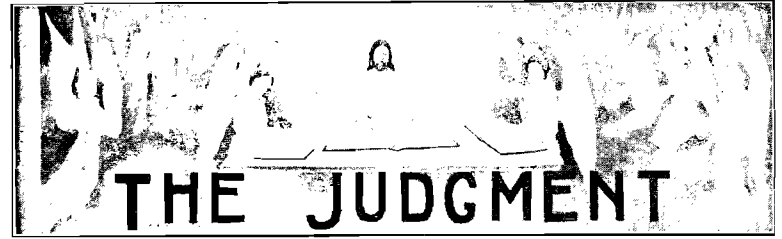
In Rev. 20:1, 2, it is stated that Satan was bound a thousand years, that he was cast into the bottomless pit, that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years were finished, and that after that he should be loosed a little season.

Ever since the fall of man, Satan has been going to and fro in the world like a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour. He has been the deceiver of the nations. He has "made the earth to tremble." Through sin he has caused it to become a wilderness, and "destroyed the cities thereof," and has not opened the prison-house (grave) of his prisoners. Isa. 14:12-17. But Christ has conquered, and will bring the righteous prisoners from their prison-houses (the graves) at His second coming. This wonderful and long-looked-for event is the signal for the binding of Satan.

As already stated, at the coming of the Messiah the righteous dead are raised. With the then living saints, they ascend to meet the Lord in mid-heaven. The wicked are destroyed by the brightness that attends Christ's coming, and Satan is bound. The earth is left without an inhabitant. And because of the great



THE EVENTS OF THE MILLENNIUM



XIV

WE are informed (Rev. 20:4) that during the thousand years the righteous sit upon thrones of judgment; that they are to participate in the judgment. The general belief is that when the Day of Judgment shall arrive, all mankind shall be summoned before the bar of God, and the Judge shall consign the righteous to life unending, and the wicked to eternal condemnation. This can not be true, from the fact that such a course on the part of our heavenly Father would not be a judgment in fact, but simply a pronouncing of sentence without investigation. In the judgment of the great day, not only will *actions* be considered and passed upon, but the *motives* that prompted those actions will be investigated.

The above conclusion is sustained by a declaration recorded in Eccl. 3:16, 17: "And moreover, I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there: and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there. I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work." Thus every purpose and every work will be investigated. Two classes will be judged: namely, the righteous and the wicked. We are also informed that still a third class will be judged. This class is named in 1 Cor. 6:1, 2, 3: "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"

seen were fleeing from the bank, and when arrested and examined, secreted booty was discovered on the person of each. By the decision of the grand jury, Mr. A and Mr. M were cleared from all suspicion, while the other three were bound over by the grand jury to appear before the circuit court, which is to decide how much punishment shall be meted out to the culprits.

We all, having sinned, are summoned to appear before the heavenly bar, and in the investigative judgment,—the hour of God's judgment,—those who have the imputed righteousness of Christ, are pronounced free from guilt, and are subjects for the first resurrection, while the wicked are bound over to heaven's great circuit court, its session lasting a thousand years, between the first and the second resurrections. The saints who have been justified in the investigative judgment unite with the heavenly host in judging the wicked dead and the fallen angels. Who could possibly appear against Satan and wicked men, and present against them so strong evidence as the saint who has been tempted by the one, and persecuted by the other? Thus the saints will aid in judging the world and the fallen angels.

The Books of Record

The Scriptures teach that a record of men's lives is kept, and in the judgment the books of record will be introduced to determine the degree of reward or punishment.

The revelator, in speaking upon this point, says, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. 20:12. Three books are introduced in this verse. It declares that "the books"—plural—were opened. A plural may signify more than two, but not less. So at least two are mentioned in the term "the books." Then the writer adds, "another book was opened," and this book is named "the Book of Life." These same books are spoken of in other portions of the Bible by different writers. In Malachi, chapter 3:16, 17, we read: "Then they that feared

the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord harkened, 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."

These verses bring to view a book, called the "Book of Remembrance." It is stated that this book was written before the Lord for them that feared Him, and that thought upon His name. From this it is evident that some angelic hand is chronicling the acts of those who fear the Lord and meditate on His name. And those individuals the Lord declares shall be His "in that day" (the judgment) when He shall make up His jewels. Thus we may safely conclude that the acts of those who have come in covenant relation with Christ are recorded.

This has been true since the fall of man. Satan introduced sin into the universe, and man, through Satan's wily temptation, introduced it into the world. Sin could never have harmed man had he not surrendered to it. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20. And when the remedy for sin, the gospel, was made known, the right of choice was restored to man. The choice affected his life either for good or bad, and his acts have been recorded by angelic hands. The deeds of those who have professed Christ are written in the Book of Remembrance, while the acts of the wicked, and only the wicked, are written in another book.

When Israel had apostatized from God, the prophet Jeremiah says, "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord." Jer. 2:22. The Lord speaking through Isaiah, and noting the deeds of the self-righteous, which say to their fellows, "I am holier than thou," declared of them, "Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom." Isa. 65:6. Thus we again learn that sin and iniquity are written before the Lord.

The book of life contains the names of all those who come into covenant relationship with Christ, whether they remain faith-

ful, or whether they prove untrue to their profession. This book will finally contain only the names of the redeemed. Some of the names recorded in it will always remain, while other names will be blotted out. This book is often spoken of in the Scriptures. The Saviour, in Rev. 3:5, says in regard to it: "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."

We have learned of three books: First, the Book of Life; second, the Book of Remembrance; third, the Book in which are recorded the deeds of the unrepentant. These books will be investigated in the judgment. Let us notice again as an illustration of the faithful and the unfaithful in the service of God, the case of Cain and Abel. They were acquainted to some degree with the plan of redemption. They had faith in the coming Messiah. Their names were recorded in the Book of Life, and their deeds, both good and bad, were written in the Book of God's Remembrance. They erected altars, and Abel brought to his a lamb without blemish, placing his hands on its head, thus showing his faith in Christ as the world's sacrifice. Cain reasoning that it mattered not in regard to the nature of the sacrifice, offered the first fruits of the ground. As it was a bloodless offering, and showed no faith in a coming Messiah, the sacrifice was rejected of heaven, while Abel's was accepted. Cain was filled with wrath, and slew his brother. During Abel's lifetime heaven had written pardon against every sin Abel had committed, because of his faith in Christ and genuine repentance. Cain departed farther and farther from God, and died without hope.

In the investigative judgment, the case of Abel will be introduced first, as he was the first righteous person to depart this life. Christ will plead that as pardon is written in the Book of God's Remembrance over against every sin which he had committed, Abel's sins should be blotted out through the merits of His own blood, Christ's righteousness having been imputed to him. This being accomplished, his name is retained in the Book of Life.

When the case of Cain is reached, the Book of God's Remem-

brance shows that pardon has not been written against the sins there recorded, because of his lack of faith and repentance. He was ashamed to confess Christ before men; therefore Christ is ashamed to confess his name before the Father and before the angels. Rev. 3:5; Matt. 10:32. As a result, Cain's name is blotted out of the Book of Life; his sins are retained in the Book of God's Remembrance; and his case is passed over to the final tribunal, which sits during the thousand years, between the first and the second resurrections, in which time the wicked dead in their tombs are prisoners at the bar. Satan, the chief of all convicts, is confined in the bottomless pit (the desolated earth), to be led out to meet his final doom, with all the wicked dead who shall live in the second resurrection at the expiration of the thousand years. During the thousand years, Christ being King of kings and Lord of lords, will be judge by virtue of his office. The cases of the wicked dead are not investigated to determine whether as individuals they are to be saved or lost, as that decision was reached in the hour of God's judgment, the investigative tribunal which determined who were righteous. But in the day of judgment the saints and record-keeping angels constitute the tribunal which determines the *amount* of punishment which justice demands shall be meted to each individual sinner. As there are degrees in sin, there must be in punishment.

If we have made our peace with God through faith in Christ, and have confessed and forsaken our sins, our cases will pass favorably in the investigative judgment. If living at that time, we shall be translated at the appearing of our Saviour without tasting death. If resting in the tomb, our sins will be blotted out from God's Book of Remembrance, and our names retained in the Book of Life. If we are numbered among the unsaved, the degree of our punishment will be determined during the thousand years of judgment. At the end of the thousand years, as the prophet says, "Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:14, 15.



XV

Resurrection of the Righteous Dead

WHEN Jesus ascended to heaven after His resurrection, a vast throng of heavenly angels came to earth to escort Him back to the courts of glory. The disciples stood gazing heavenward to catch the last glimpse of their ascending Lord. Two of the angelic throng alighted by their side, and said to them, "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 seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11. The disciples gazed until a cloud, bright and glorious, received Him out of their sight. Then they went back to Jerusalem, not sorrowful and broken-hearted, but joyful and happy in the thought that Jesus is coming again. And that glad refrain has been ringing throughout the centuries, as men have preached salvation through His name everywhere. The coming of the Messiah has ever been and ever will be the joy and hope of the Christian until it shall be consummated in His appearing on the white cloud.

As the cloud bears Him to the earth, accompanied by all the holy angels, He rides forth a mighty conqueror,—not "a man of sorrows," to drink to its very dregs the cup of human woe and degradation: not to be despised, spit upon, and crucified, as in His first advent, but He comes as King of kings and Lord of lords. The very heavens seem to be radiant with angelic forms. Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of

angels accompany him. Human language is inadequate, and words are too tame to picture the heavenly glory connected with the scene.

As the white, glowing cloud nears the earth, every eye beholds the Prince of life. Upon His head rests not a crown of thorns, but a crown of dazzling glory. His countenance outshines a thousand noon-day suns. The heavens depart as a scroll, and the mountains and islands are moved out of their places, while the great men of earth, the kings, rich men, chief captains, mighty men, bond and free men seek refuge in the dens and rocks of the mountains, and shout to the 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. 6:14-17.

The dead then hear the voice of the Son of God. John 5:28. That voice penetrates the deaf ear of death, and amid the lightning's flash and the thunder's roar, the clods of the tomb part asunder, rent by an unseen power, and the righteous dead live again. Redeemed from the prison-house of death, they come forth shouting, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. 15:55.

The living righteous, while the wicked are in confusion, gaze in the face of their Beloved, and realizing that their captivity has turned, and their trials and tribulations are over, that sin's sad story has been told, that the last moment of earth's long dark night is now past, and seeing their loved ones coming up from the grave, they shout, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and he will save us." Isa. 25:9.

All decrepitude is now swept away. The grand procession ascends to meet the Saviour in the air, to pass to those mansions which He has gone to prepare. Soon the pearly gates are opened wide, and the paradise of God is entered. As they surround the throne, Jesus presents the vast throng to His Father: He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied. With their blessed Redeemer, they enjoy our Father's heavenly home. They sit upon thrones of judgment, and entering into the joy of their Lord, they reign with Him a thousand years.

Resurrection of the Wicked Dead

The judgment of the wicked dead terminates with the thousand years. At that time John the revelator declares that the rest of the dead (the wicked) live again. Rev. 20:5. Christ's voice calls forth the countless throng, numberless as the sand upon the seashore. What a scene! They come up as they went down,—many of them filled with rebellion, hatred, strife, and enmity. They went down transgressors of God's law, and come up sinners. Some departed this life cursing the name of God. Others went down thirsting for power and fame; they come up filled with the same spirit. They bear traces of disease and death. In the first resurrection the righteous are clothed with youth, beauty, vigor, and immortality. The appearance of the wicked is characterized by weakness and decay.

As Christ descends to resurrect the wicked dead, His foot rests upon the Mount of Olives, that wonderful historic mount from which He ascended to heaven, and where the angels declared He should come again. The prophet Zechariah says of Christ: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." "And 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, . . . and there shall be a very great valley. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one." Zech. 14:4, 9. So much of the sin-cursed earth shall then be purified by the magic touch of the Redeemer. The wicked will see the saints of God rewarded. The city of God—the New Jerusalem—appears in all its surpassing glory, descending from God out of heaven, and rests on the plain prepared for it. Jesus and His redeemed saints now enter it. All the inhabitants of the world, both the saved and the unsaved, bow before Jesus, the righteous through reverence, and the wicked through fear. Thus every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. Phil. 2:10, 11.

During the thousand years, when the wicked nations were slumbering in death, and the nations of the saved were in heaven,

Satan was bound, having no one to deceive. When the second resurrection takes place, the wicked live again, and John says, "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." Rev. 20:7, 8. He now has subjects to deceive, and is therefore "loosed."

The company inside of the city is very small compared with the great multitude outside. Satan, the great deceiver, inspires the vast, wicked host with the thought that they can capture the city, possess its throne, and gain the dominion of the world. There are men in that great army who never lost a battle, men who through their pride and ambition had carried on warfare so successfully as to cause nations to tremble and kingdoms to fall. With Satan at the head of that immense multitude, they surround the city of God to capture it. The last crowning act on the part of the wicked in the world's drama is now reached, and the great controversy between Christ and Satan is to terminate favorably for the cause of right.

Just as the final blow is to be struck by the attacking army, lo, "fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them [the wicked]. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night¹ forever and ever." Rev. 20:9, 10. The term "forever and ever" can not mean to all eternity, from the fact that it is limited by the expression "day and night."

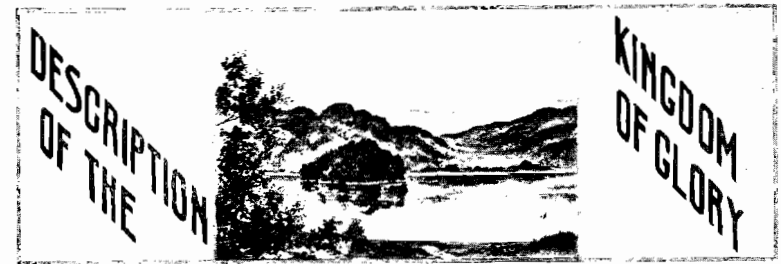
The expression "forever and ever" seems to indicate the surety of Satan's final extinction. But day and night will succeed each other long enough to witness his annihilation.

Satan, the great rebel chieftain, suffers on and on, long after

¹ The expression doubtless means that Satan and his followers will be tormented as long as the present system of day and night shall continue. In Isa. 30:25 we are told that in the eternal state there will be a new system of day and night, very different from the present one. And Job 26:10 explicitly states that the present arrangement of day and night will come to an end.

the wicked are devoured, fulfilling the prophecy recorded in the last chapter of the Old Testament, Mal. 4:1: "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." Here the symbol of a tree is introduced to the mind, consisting of root and branch, and when cast into the fire the branches (the wicked) are first devoured, while the root (Satan) is the last to be consumed. The final scene is described vividly by John the revelator in Rev. 20:14, 15: "And death and hell [the grave] were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

The wages of sin is death. Sin and sinners are now swept away. Rebellion will never more menace the government of God, nor mar His fair universe. The fire then purifies the earth. The same hand and power that guided and sustained Noah's ark when it passed through the flood that destroyed the ungodly, preserves the city of God amid everlasting burnings. From the wreck and ruin of the old world, all remolded and reglorified, shall appear the new heavens and the new earth.



XVI

FOR since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him." Isa. 64:4; also 1 Cor. 2:9.

It seems by this quotation that at the beginning of the world men did hear by the ear, did perceive by the eye, the glory that arrayed the world, but since the fall, the glory has departed to that extent that the eye of man has not seen the original glory of the world as it was; but God ever gazes upon it, as He sees the end from the beginning, and not only views that glory as it was, but views it as it will be.

The human eye has beheld some wonderful things. There are dazzling sunsets and rosy sunrises, mountain glories and ocean marvels, so beautiful that, once seen, their impression clings to memory during life. The ear has listened to wonderful harmonies, and the music of the sweet song has thrilled us. Into our hearts have entered spiritual visions of sunny plains and seas of bliss, but we have never correctly pictured the golden streets, the pearly gates, the broad river of life, or the glorious tree of life. When we shall at last view their splendor, we shall exclaim, "The half has never been told!" Thank God that He has revealed them unto us by His Spirit, "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2:10.

In meditating upon the delightful garden of God, we array it in imagination with the highest degree of beauty we have

observed in this world. We clothe it with golden sunlight, bright flowing streams, graceful hills, verdant plains, sparkling lakes, balmy air, blooming flowers, and singing birds. But in our highest ideal, we only see through "a glass, darkly." 1 Cor. 13:12. When viewing the sun through a darkened glass, we may obtain a correct outline of its disc, but its glory is veiled. By giving heed to what God has revealed through His Spirit and Word, we may get a clearer view of what the kingdom shall be when fully established, and yet obtain but little comprehension of the glory that is better experienced than explained. At most, the beauties of this world are only faint glimmerings of the glory which shall be revealed in the world to come.

The prophet says, Rev. 21:5, "Behold, I make all things new." Note the expression, "all things new," not all new things. This being true, the world renewed will constitute a recreation instead of a new creation. In order that sinners may be fit subjects to live in a renewed world, they themselves must be renewed and recreated through the Holy Spirit by faith through the creative power of God.

The psalmist, in speaking of the world, declares, "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands. . . . Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." Ps. 102:25, 26. There are many texts of scripture both in the Old and the New Testament that predict, like the above quotation, a glorious eternal future for our world. In Isa. 65:17 we read, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Not that we shall never think in the world to come of this present one. But in its appearance it will be so changed, so arrayed in its surpassing glory, that there will be nothing in it which will bring to mind this one. We shall certainly know the Saviour, and when He raises His hands, nail-pierced, in benediction, we shall remember that we were blood-bought and washed from sin in a fallen world.

Isaiah continues farther, speaking the words of the Lord: "I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice

of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." Isa. 65:19. The revelator, in viewing the world redeemed, expresses the same fact thus, "And 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. 21:4.

When our heavenly Father dries up the fountain of tears, He does so by removing the cause. The saddest of all tears that flow, roll down the cheek of a young, fond mother as she bends tenderly over the death couch of her firstborn. Could some mighty healer, some tender-hearted friend, say to the death-claimed son, "Awake, thou that sleepest;" and if those eyes should open, and the cheeks flush, and the lips part, and in sweet tones he should say, "Mother!" the cause of her tears would be removed, and quickly they would cease to flow. So when God shall forever destroy sin, He will then have removed the cause of tears.

The prophet in speaking still further of the new earth, says, "And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat." Isa. 65:21, 22. To some minds this may seem altogether too literal. Inspiration seems to be contrasting the things of this world with the things of the world to come. In this one, man's work perishes; in the world to come, his work shall abide. Here men build and plant. Though the building be palatial or humble, yet he who constructs it knows not that he shall ever live in it. He who plants knows not that he shall ever eat the fruit of the vineyard. But in the world to come it will not be thus. Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden were commanded to dress and keep the garden. In their unfallen state their labor was recreation and joy combined. So it will be in paradise regained.

The dominion which Adam lost in the fall will be restored to man through Jesus Christ, who has purchased it through the infinite sacrifice of Himself. His cross should be seen inscribed on all the things with which we have to do. In the garden of Eden the animals were docile and useful, as their nature was

harmless. And in the restitution Isaiah says: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." Isa. 65:25.

As the animals shall exist in the new earth, they owe that existence either to a resurrection or a new creation. The psalmist seems to indicate the latter. In Ps. 104:28, 29, 30. David, in speaking of the animals, says: "Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; Thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the earth." Thus the animals that shall exist in the new earth will be created when the face of the earth is renewed. Isaiah, in speaking of them still farther, says in the eleventh chapter, verse six, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them,"—another evidence that the ravenous disposition of the beasts shall be taken away.

To Isaiah, above all the prophets of the Old Testament, were revealed the glories of the world to come, and he gives us a vivid description of it as it shall exist in the future ages. He devotes the whole of the thirty-fifth chapter to a narration of it. He says in the first verse: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

This scripture seems to teach that the time will come when the desert shall be clothed with verdure. A wonderful change indeed, compared with that which the eye of the traveler now sees as he passes over the sandy plain of the vast Sahara, stretching hundreds of miles in length, and so broad that it takes days to cross it. No green trees or green fields greet the vision. But in the restitution, the verdant fields and grand forests will spring forth, for its barrenness shall be obliterated.

The prophet continues: "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." In ancient times the forests of Lebanon were renowned throughout the Eastern world. They were stately and beautiful in appearance, and when all shall be brought back in the restitution, those beautiful forests, such as Lebanon once produced, will grace the desert waste.

Mount Carmel, for the most part of the year, is entirely covered with green. On its summit are pines and oaks, and near its base the soil is covered with olive and laurel trees; bursting from its sides are numerous springs, giving rise to many crystal brooks that flow hurriedly along between banks thickly overgrown with vines of every class.

Sharon is a plain adjoining the seacoast of Palestine between Carmel and Joppa, some sixty miles in length. The soil is highly productive. The uncultivated parts of the plain in the spring and early summer are covered with a rich profusion of flowers. The prophet says that all the verdure, fertility of soil, and the lovely flowers of Carmel and Sharon shall be bestowed upon the wild desert in the future restitution. Amazing transformation!

Thousands have perished in crossing the great desert of Sahara. The bones of men and beasts are bleaching on its arid wastes. Vast caravans are crossing, year by year, at the present time, and as they look at the burning sand, and barely escape being buried beneath its drifting clouds, could they realize the change that awaits it, they would long for the time to come when it shall be adorned with its promised beauty. In view of the glory and grandeur that is to array the world at last, the prophet says in verses three and four: "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."

Possessing such a hope as this, connected with the thought of seeing the King of that country in His beauty, patriarchs and prophets, apostles and Christians of all ages, have endured the crosses and losses of life with a fortitude that has astonished

those not actuated by such a glorious hope. The apostle Paul states the case clearly when he declares: "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, for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

The things with which we have to do here, are, as the apostle says, temporal. We live amid changing seasons, changing temperature, changing associations: indeed, mutation is written upon everything earthly. Nothing seems to be substantial except the changeless stars; and our heavenly Father has seemingly hung them out like golden lamps in the sky to flash across our pathway the sublime truth that "the things which are not seen are eternal." The glories that shall robe our sin-cursed planet are not temporary, but real. He who realizes this shall be strengthened, though his hands may be weak and his knees feeble.

A further description by the prophet is contained in Isa. 35:5, 6: "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: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."

Bodily infirmities affect the mind. Many a blind man has gone through life sad and disconsolate because he could not view the golden sunrise, and the glorious sunset, because he could not see the towering mountains and gaze upon the verdant plains, or look far out upon the blue ocean. Hearing of these beautiful things, he sighs, and exclaims, "How I wish I could see!" A blind woman one day reading with her index finger the raised words, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened," lifted her sightless eyeballs, as if to gaze on her seeing friend, and said: "Has this scripture yet been fulfilled?" When the negative answer was given, and it was explained that some day in the renewed world she would see, her eyes filled with tears, and smiling through those tears, she said, "I must be there through the grace of God."

The deaf man, though blessed with eyesight to view the beau-

ties of the world, never hears its melodies. The human voice, sweet and musical, he hears not. The singing birds he heeds not, and music, soft and melodious as a far-away windharp, he does not recognize, but in that "some sweet day" he will hear saints and angels sing the harmonies of the better land.

"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart." The hart is a species of deer, celebrated for its elegance and grace. It is also noted for its fleetness. Such will be the characteristic of the lame man in the world to come. Here, leaning hard on cane or crutch, he is inspired with ambition to keep pace with his friends, yet mortified as he realizes that he is impeding their progress. Behind him he hears the quick step of strangers, and feels that he is in their way. He is soon outdistanced. He then longs for the day to come when he can leap as a hart.

The prophet says farther: "The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. . . . And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; . . . nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon." Verses 7, 8, and 9. The statement is not that there shall be no beast there, but no *ravenous* one. Isaiah then presents to us a picture of the peace and happiness that shall grace that land by penning these words: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa. 35:10.

One more quotation from the prophecy of Isaiah in relation to the condition that shall exist in the renewed earth, and we will notice what some other inspired writers have to offer in regard to the same soul-inspiring subject. In Isa. 55:13, we read, "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Thorns are a part of the curse, as we learn in Gen. 3:18. They are to be removed when the Holy Spirit shall renew the face of the earth. When God spake the world into existence, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Gen.

1:2. As the result, order was born of chaos, and the earth appeared so beautiful that when the Creator beheld it, he pronounced it "very good." Gen. 1:31.

The same almighty power, the Holy Spirit, is now at work operating upon human hearts, rearing up characters so pure that Satan well understands that he can not successfully overthrow them, and when that work shall be completed, then they who shall possess those characters, in Christ Jesus, shall become the subjects of the kingdom of glory. Then shall the earth be renewed, and become the eternal home of the righteous.

We are soon to exchange worlds. Indeed, we are already treading on the borders of the better land. The dimming veil that screens us from the glory of that future world is very thin. Reader, shall you and I be ready? Are we manifesting in our life the same gentle disposition that the Saviour did in his? It is said of David that an excellent spirit was in him. This was because he had the mind that dwelt in Christ. Phil. 2:5.

As the revelator views the glorious consummation of the plan of salvation, he says: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, 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. And 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. 22:14.

The above scripture declares that the New Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven. Heaven itself does not descend to earth, but the New Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven. The city becomes the metropolis and capital of the new earth. It is the city that Abraham looked for through faith, when he sojourned in the land of promise: for "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:10.

The new earth will be arrayed with beauty and glory which can not be fully described. Its scenery can not justly be compared with any ever gazed upon in this world since the fall. Every turn will develop some new revelation. Each scene will be robed in its own peculiar freshness and characteristic, and present a new picture of beauty. The artist will never lack a subject for a sketch, and the lover of nature a theme for contemplation. The gently sloping hills and beautiful plains will be made joyous by the sound of babbling brooks and rippling rivulets, while the air will be richly freighted with the perfume of never-fading flowers, and musical with the notes of merry songsters; and over all, flooding hill, glade, and plain with light clear as crystal, streams heaven's light in all its beauty and brightness.

The tabernacle of God will dwell with men, and God Himself shall dwell with His people and be their God. The ills and pains of mortality are then in the past. There shall be no more tearful eyes, no sickness, no sorrow, crying, pain, or death, for the former things are swept away, because He that sitteth on the throne has made all things new. There will be no graveyards, no funeral trains to greet our sight or sadden our hearts. There will be no cyclone's blast to spread death and desolation in its track; no belching volcanoes, causing fair cities to become cemeteries; no earthquakes to rock the dwellings of men, and turn hearts faint with fear; no floods or tidal waves to cause mountains of water to rush landward, submerging cities, and sweeping thousands into untimely graves. But in that blest land, life unending shall be the portion of all, actuating all nature, both animate and inanimate, flowing from the great Author of life, as the cool, sparkling water gushes from the perennial spring, sweeping away sorrow and sighing. The wide-spreading plains will swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits heavenward. And among those hills and on those lovely plains, God's redeemed people, so long pilgrims and strangers in a desolate world, will find an eternal home. That blissful abode will constitute all that which is most

enduring and satisfying, and will represent all that which is pure and excellent. Jesus Christ will be King. The radiance of His beaming countenance will be the joy and delight of the countless throng who have been changed from mortality to immortality.

“We speak of the realms of the blest,
That country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed.—
But what must it be to be there!
We speak of its pathway of gold,
Its walls decked with jewels so rare,
Its wonders and pleasures untold.—
But what must it be to be there!

Do thou, midst temptation and woe,
For heaven my spirit prepare;
And shortly I also shall know,
And feel what it is to be there.
Then o'er the bright fields we shall roam,
In glory celestial and fair,
With saints and with angels at home,
And Jesus himself shall be there.”

The word of God begins with man in paradise. It records the story of his shameful fall, and follows him in his sad pilgrimage through a world marred and scarred by sin. It does not leave him without hope, but constantly points him, through a crucified and risen Saviour, to the better land. Throughout its sacred pages it sweetly and earnestly declares the story that this world shall be redeemed, and concludes with an invitation to all to prepare themselves for an inheritance therein.



XVII

THE apostle John, in writing to one of the seven churches, says to those who had been struggling with sin and Satan, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.” Rev. 3: 12.

In this quotation, the New Jerusalem is called the city of God, indicating that He is the founder of it. John connects this glorious city with the new heavens and new earth. After he saw it located as the capital of the kingdom of glory, an angel came to him for the purpose of showing him the New Jerusalem, and in doing so the prophet says: “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; on the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; and on the west, three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth four-

square, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal." Rev. 21: 10-16.

In these verses we have a vivid description of the city. In verse eleven the statement is made that it possesses the glory of God, and that the light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal. Among precious stones some are more valuable, even of the same species, than others. Their true value is in proportion to their being free from flaws, and of their being of uniform and brilliant transparency. A crystal is perfectly clear. The oriental jasper is a beautiful sea green. The jasper spoken of above is that which is clear as crystal, or in other words, transparent jasper, and therefore most precious of its species. This is indeed a wonderful description. And as the Lamb is the light thereof, therefore the light of this city will be throughout eternity intense and splendid. The prominent colors, green and blue, the colors of earth and sky, will predominate in the world to come.

The city has a wall great and high. There are twelve gates, three on each side, as the city is laid out in a perfect square. The measure of the city, John declares, is twelve thousand furlongs. Reckoning eight furlongs to a mile, the entire distance around the city would be fifteen hundred English miles, or three hundred and seventy-five miles on a side, covering a larger area of territory than England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and the adjacent islands; larger than the States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois combined,—a city compared with which London, Paris, and New York City sink into insignificance. Indeed, its size must be enormous, as all the nations of the saved bring their honor and glory into it.

The statement is made that the length and breadth and height of it are equal. The word "equal" may be used to convey proportion, thus indicating that the height was in proportion to its length and breadth. This idea is sustained by the fact that the wall is only one hundred and forty-four cubits high. Rev. 21: 17. The ancient cubit—was reckoned at twenty-two inches. Thus the

wall, according to this measurement, would be two hundred and sixty-four feet high. The height of the buildings of the city probably is to be judged by the height of the wall. One learned writer, in speaking of the dimensions of the city, says thus: "It has been inferred from the above text, that the New Jerusalem city is to be as high as it is long, and that its length will be twelve thousand furlongs, or fifteen hundred miles. It seems to us entirely unnecessary to place such a construction upon the language. The word "equal" does not always mean the same as to dimensions or position; it is frequently used in the sense of proportion. If we were to say that the length and the breadth and the height of the city were in proportion, we should not violate the language." Taking this view, the city would be perfect and symmetrical in all its proportions.

The prophet in his further description says: "And the building of the wall of it was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass." Verse 18. The oriental jasper is exceedingly hard, and almost indestructible. Columns of this stone have lasted thousands of years, and have been scarcely affected by the ravages of temperature or time. "And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass," so transparent that its inner glory could be discerned by all who should gaze on the city, even though located outside its confines.

"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones." Verse 19. The foundations "were garnished with all manner of precious stones." Let us examine the foundation stones of that wonderful city, through whose gates of pearl the redeemed will soon pass.

First, *Jasper*. Jasper is a stone, of a beautiful sea-green; sometimes, however, of various colors, as purple, with red veins. There are many varieties.

Second, *Sapphire*. A stone of a very fine sky-blue color, next in hardness to the diamond, and transparent.

Third, *Chalcedony*. A species of agate or onyx of different colors, the yellow and red being the most beautiful and valuable of its species. It is seldom discovered.

Fourth, *Emerald*. A stone of a very bright green color without any mixture, and is one of the most beautiful gems known. It is also rare.

Fifth, *Sardonyx*. A species of agate, and in color sometimes red, and sometimes of a flesh color.

Sixth, *Sardius*, or sardine stone. A precious stone of a blood-red color.

Seventh, *Chrysolite*. A transparent precious stone, having the color of gold, with a mixture of green, possessing a fine luster. It is sometimes termed the "gold stone." It is a species of the topaz.

Eighth, *Beryl*. A very hard, transparent gem of great luster and beauty, in color bluish green.

Ninth, *Topaz*. A highly valued gem of wine-yellow color, with occasional pale tinges of green or red. It was one of the twelve gems in the high priest's breastplate. Ex. 39: 10.

Tenth, *Chrysoprasus*. Its color is green, inclining to gold. It differs from the chrysolite only in having a bluish hue.

Eleventh, *Jacinth*. A precious stone of a dead red color, with a mixture of yellow. It is the same as the cinnamon stone.

Twelfth, *Amethyst*. A very beautiful gem, generally of a purple or violet color, composed of a strong blue and deep red. It is seldom uniform in color, and is generally cloudy, and spotted with zigzag stripes.

One writer says of the blending of the colors in the arrangement of these stones in the wall: "In looking over these various classes, we find the first four to be of a green or bluish cast, the fifth and sixth of a red or scarlet; the seventh, yellow; the eighth, ninth, and tenth of different shades of the lighter green; the eleventh and twelfth of a scarlet or splendid red. There is classification, therefore, in this arrangement: a mixture not dissimilar to the arrangement in the rainbow, with the exception that it is more complex."

We read that the Lamb is the light of the city, and because of this there is no need of the light of the sun or of the moon to shine in it. As the Father and the Son sit upon the throne,

the light that emanates from them, the source of light, will shine upon those transparent walls, and reflecting back, as a result there will encircle and shine above the throne a beautiful rainbow. Rev. 4: 3. The prismatic colors will tinge the verdure of the landscape, and every twig and bud will be as brightly adorned as the rosebud encircled with dew. The redeemed of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people shall walk in the sunless glory of one perpetual day, basking in the glory of God's smiles.

However, when the world shall be redeemed, the sun and moon will exist to lighten it, as before the fall. In the wonderful change which results in transforming the sin-cursed world into a paradise, the very atmosphere which surrounds it will have become so thoroughly purified that it will be clear as crystal. The prophet Isaiah, as a view of the scene was presented to him, says: "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Isa. 30: 26.

The rays of the sun are God's pencil, with which He paints flower, field, and forest with their many-hued colors; and as the sun is to shine with sevenfold more brilliancy, therefore, every green leaf and every flower, and each blade of grass will greet the eye with sevenfold more beauty, grace, and glory than in the present world.

"And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Rev. 21: 21. Modesty seems to forbid a comment on this description. As one reads this verse, he does not wonder that it is said, "The tabernacle of God is with men," or that it has been written, "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." 1 Cor. 2: 9. Doubtless the prophet had in mind the city of God when he exclaimed, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand

of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Isa. 62: 3.

Some have questioned whether these gates could be composed of one solid pearl, or whether of pearls thickly set in some material. Such an objection can only exist in the mind when we forget the mighty power of God, who is just as able to create a large pearl as a small one. Any objection which limits the power of God is unworthy of our consideration. True happiness is born of genuine faith, and when the apostle declares the gates were of pearl, we can rest assured that such will be the case.

The apostle closes that wonderful chapter, the twenty-first of Revelation, by declaring that the nations of the saved shall bring their honor and glory into the city. This will be fulfilled as the people of the different nations dwelling in every part of the earth come up to worship God and the Lamb. That service will be one in which God will delight, and in its performance the saints will rejoice far more than they will in the material glory and grandeur with which they are surrounded. They shall know as they are known, and the faculties which God has planted in the soul shall find the sweetest and truest exercise. The communion with one another and with the holy angels will be pure and undefiled, and "the whole family in heaven and earth" (Eph. 3: 15) shall exist as one throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. The wonderful love of Jesus as manifested in the plan of salvation will constitute the song and science of that better land. We shall never tire of singing the song or of studying the science.

The Tree and the River of Life

The Revelation concludes with a description of the tree of life and the river of life, within the paradise of God. The prophet says: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, 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; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Rev. 22: 1, 2.

The tree of life, and the river of life issuing from the throne of life, are themes, which, if we contemplate them in the light of Him who is the author of life, will enable us to gain that heavenly home. The tree of life is in the midst of the street. Murdock's translation of the Syriac New Testament reads, "In the middle of the broad avenue," and it is also on either *side* of the river of life. The throne of God is at the head of this broad way. Thus the tree of life grows into a magnificent arch over that wonderful stream, spreading its branches far on every hand. Let none think that the tree is diminutive, or that the street and the river are narrow; but on the other hand, let us bear in mind that the city itself is three hundred and seventy-five miles on each side, and the river and the street and the tree must bear a proportionate relation to all parts of the city in order to preserve its symmetry. The tree of life bears twelve kinds of fruits; that is, it fruits twelve times a year, as is immediately explained, "yielding her fruit every month."

There will be held in the city general assemblies from time to time. As our heavenly Father presented the future of our world to the prophet Isaiah, he noticed these gatherings. He states as follows in regard to them: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord." Isa. 66: 22, 23.

The day, the month, and the year are natural divisions of time. The day is caused by the revolution of the earth upon its axis; the month is measured by the changing of the moon; and the year by the revolution of the earth around the sun. The week, a division of time recognized by all civilized nations, is not marked by any occurrence in nature, yet as a division of time

it is established and well known throughout the world. It owes its origin to the fact that the Lord made the heavens and the earth in six days, and rested on the seventh. The weekly recurrence of that seventh day from the creation until the present, has determined the week, and will thus continue to mark it through time and eternity, for it will ever be true that the Lord made the world in six days, and rested the seventh.

The prophet declares that in the new heavens and new earth, from one Sabbath day to another, and from one new moon to another, all flesh shall come to worship before the Lord. They will assemble on the Sabbath, because that is the day set apart for God's worship. The day will be one of devotion and praise to Him who hath redeemed us, and every member of the church of the First-born above will find his heart in full accord with the prayer of praise, and the song of adoration.

One manner of fruit from the tree of life ripens each month. As all flesh partake of it, their association constitutes a great monthly convocation. Thus there will be weekly and monthly assemblies in that better land.

"And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations;" literally, the service of the nations. We can not suppose the term "healing" refers to any sickness that shall exist among the inhabitants of the land, for before they are taken to heaven, immortality has been conferred upon them.

The term "healing" does not necessarily mean the restoration of the body from disease to soundness. But it may be applied to the bringing back to original conditions. We read in 2 Kings 2:21: "Thus saith the Lord, I have *healed* these waters," signifying the bringing back of the waters to their original condition. With this idea in mind, we may inquire, What was man's original condition before he sinned? Physically, he was strong and symmetrically developed, and had not sin introduced the curse, every man and woman born into the world would have attained the same stature in physical development which belonged to Adam and Eve before the fall.

Degeneracy has marked each succeeding generation more and

more lamentably. Adam must have been as large as any man that has since lived in the world. If not, the stream has risen above the fountain-head, which is impossible.

That which will be employed to restore each individual back to the condition in which he would have been had not sin existed, will be for the service, or healing, of the nations. Every person possesses a certain identity, and by those things which are peculiar to him we identify him. Thus there are certain conditions which surround an individual that identify him as a young person. Other things exist which identify a person as aged. We recognize a person by his characteristics. If a mother is parted from her prattling infant for years, she carries a mental picture of him as he appeared when she last saw him. Should fifty years elapse, could she at the end of that period see him as he was when they separated, she would recognize him immediately. But should both live fifty years, the identity of each would have so changed that they would not recognize each other. The hair having turned gray, and the face become wrinkled, they meet as strangers rather than as mother and son.

In the resurrection, the infant will come up as it went down, and what is true of the infant is true of each individual. The mother may have changed, but as the infant comes up in the resurrection, she recognizes it.

At the resurrection everything like disease will be swept away, and from that time to all eternity decay and death shall invade no living temple. But should all be raised bearing the same physical stature they would have borne had it not been for the effects of sin, the identity of each would be swept away, and the pleasure of knowing each other would be impossible.

This can not be, for Inspiration declares, "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. 13:12. Thus we shall know one another — we shall identify one another.

The mother knows her children because she is constantly with them as they grow up. So in the resurrection the members of the saved family of earth will always be associated together;

and as each man and woman grows to the equal stature of Adam and Eve before the fall, the identity will be preserved, so that we shall constantly know one another, and the difference in stature caused by sin will be swept away. This will be accomplished through the virtue contained in the leaves of the tree of life. Thus will they be for the service, or healing, of the nations.

This scene was shown to Malachi, as recorded in the last chapter of the Old Testament. It is stated that the day will come when all the proud and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and they shall be burned up, and neither root nor branch of them shall be left. And when that shall be accomplished, the prophet says, speaking of the righteous, "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." Mal. 4:2, 3. This growing up like the calves of the stall is a physical growth, and is accomplished after the destruction of the ungodly.

As we associate together in this life, we see the strong and the feeble, the ruddy and the pale, the tall and the diminutive; but when all shall grow to the same stature as the first pair, then will the last trace of the curse be obliterated. Then the healing which began when the Spirit's power first convinced of sin, shall eventually terminate in the restitution of both soul and body, morally and spiritually, in the kingdom restored.

In speaking again of the new earth, the writer says, "And 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." Rev. 22:3. The expression that the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, intimates that the Father and Son will be one in reigning over the new earth, when the curse shall be no more. The death-dealing miasma and the terrible scenes of desolation and decay shall then have passed away. Every breeze will be life-giving, and every scene one of beauty. Every sound will be soul-thrilling and melodious. The formula which will enable one

to gain a home in that world to come is given in verse 14: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The tree here spoken of is that tree whose fruits are twelve, and whose leaves are healing, the trunk of which stands part upon one side of the river and part upon the other, whose branches unite at the top, forming an arch so symmetrical and beautiful that its presence graces even a world of glory. Under its spreading branches, before the throne of God, will be formed a temple from which praise and adoration shall ascend to Him that sitteth on the throne forever and ever.

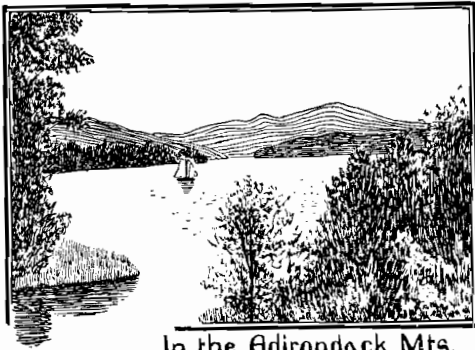
The prophet then closes by declaring, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. The last exhortation of the Bible is, Come. The time is now at hand when every one everywhere should earnestly repeat the glorious invitation, Come. If you desire to live in a realm where sickness, sorrow, pain, and death can never invade, Come. If you would gaze upon those gates of pearl, and those pellucid jasper walls, if you would gain an entrance into that city of glory, Come. If you would see the King in the beauty of His holiness, Come. If you would see the blood-washed throng, and join in the song of cherubim and seraphim, Come. If you would exchange sorrow for joy, poverty for riches, and death for life, COME.

Why resist Heaven's tender appeal longer? Why not make a full surrender of self now, just now? The church and the city of God, the bride, are sending us loving invitations to enter those mansions which Christ has gone to prepare.

In the words of another, those mansions are described as, "a city never built with hands nor hoary with the years of time; a city whose inhabitants no census has numbered; a city through whose streets rushes no tide of business, nor black-robed hearse creeps slowly with its burden to the tomb; a city without griefs or graves, without sin or sorrows, without births or burials, without marriages or mournings; a city which glories

in having Jesus for its King, angels for its guards, saints for citizens; whose walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise."

Toward the heavenly land and the city divine, patriarchs, prophets, and Christians have looked with an earnest hope of gaining the realms of the blest. This hope has cheered and comforted them, lifting them above earthly temptations, and shielding them from a thousand snares. In the soon-coming sweet by and by, some eye will see that glory-land, and some ear will listen to its enraptured song. May God through his infinite mercy, dear reader, grant that it may be yours and mine, when paradise shall be regained, and Jesus shall be its King, and God shall be All in All.



In the Adirondack Mts.