

The
PRESENT TRUTH
 and
Herald of Christ's Epiphany

WINTER 2016

A.D. 2016 — A.M. 6145

WHOLE NO. 756


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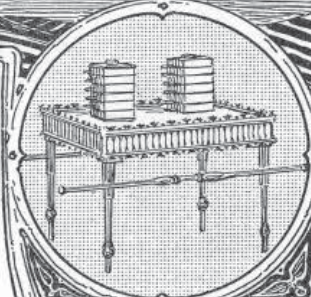
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"The Lamb opened the seventh seal." "Ye have approached Mount Zion, and the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. . . See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh . . . saying . . . 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven' . . . Wherefore, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." "Christ being come an High Priest . . . by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle . . . obtained eternal deliverance."—Rev. 8: 1; Heb. 12: 22, 25, 26, 28; 9: 11, 12.

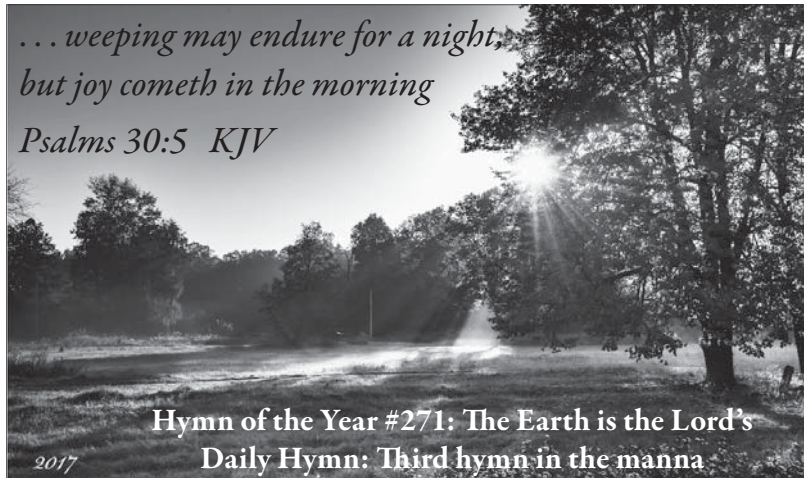


2017
MOTTO
TEXT

“For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”—Psalms 30:5

There are 24 primary, 17 secondary and 14 tertiary graces that are parts of growth in Christlikeness. We will treat of the subject of joy and numerous are the Scriptures that are about this subject, as the following partial list of them proves: Deut. 12:18; 1 Sam. 2:1; Neh. 8:10-12; Psa. 4:7; 5:11; 16:8-11; 19:8; 21:1, 6; 30:11; 43:4; 46:4; 53:6; 63:5-7; 68:3; 89:15, 16; 97:11, 12; 100:1; 149:2, 5; Isa. 12:3; 29:19; 51:11; 61:10; 65:13, 14, 18, 19; 66:10, 11; Jer. 15:16; Hab. 3:18; Matt. 5:11, 12; Luke 2:10; 6:22, 23; John 15:11; 16:20, 22, 24, 33; 17:13; Rom. 5:2, 11;

*... weeping may endure for a night,
but joy cometh in the morning*
Psalms 30:5 KJV



Hymn of the Year #271: The Earth is the Lord's
Daily Hymn: Third hymn in the manna

12:12; 14:17; 2 Cor. 1:12, 24; 6:10; 7:4; 8:2; Gal. 5:22; Col. 1:11; 1 Thes. 1:6; 5:16; Heb. 10:34; Jas. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:8; 4:13; 1 John 1:4; Jude 24.

The above numerous Scriptures and examples (by no means a full list) is evidence of the great stress that the Bible lays on joy, and how nicely this justifies our study of it.

The Bible abounds also in examples of God's people rejoicing, as the following (some among many) instances show: Moses and Israel over their deliverance from Pharaoh (Ex. 15:1-22); Israel over David's victory in his fight against Goliath (1 Sam. 18:6), over the ark (1 Chron. 13:8; 15:16, 25, 28), over the temple (Ezra 3:11-13; 6:16), over the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 12:43) and over their deliverance from Haman (Esther 8:15-17; 9:17-19, 22); Elizabeth, Zechariah and Mary over the birth of their sons (Luke 1:40, 44, 46, 47, 64); the shepherds, angels and Magi over Jesus' birth (Luke 2:10, 13, 14; Matt. 2:10); the disciples over Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, His resurrection and ascension (Matt. 21:8, 9, 10; Luke 24:41, 52, 53) and the conversion of Gentiles (Acts 11:18).

Joy may be defined as *gladness* of heart and mind, *exultation* of heart and mind, and *happiness* of heart and mind. The consecrated child of God will at once recognize the propriety of these definitions; and the passages and examples cited in the preceding paragraphs abundantly prove the Scripturalness of the definition. And all of us who are Disciples of Christ by our experiences of joy know that the above given definitions properly portray our feelings of joy.

For the groaning creation in general, while under the reign of the Adamic curse, for pain, suffering, sickness, losses, disappointments, dying, death, generally speaking are given to sorrow rather than to joy. The groaning creation have been living in the night of sin in which weeping has been enduring (Psa. 30:5). Joy is not the usual and enduring experience of the race under the curse. However, it is the privilege of God's people to be joyous.

Joy is of several kinds. There is the kind of joy that is transient, like the light of rockets and fireworks, which are brilliant for a while and then fade into darkness. How can it be otherwise than that those who delight in unbelief, error, disobedience to superiors, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, slander, covetousness, hatred, evil-surmising, evil-speaking, etc., are

PRESENT *The* **TRUTH**
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Herald of Christ's Epiphany

ISSN: 0032-7700

Published by the
Bible Standard Ministries (LHMM)
1156 St. Matthews Road
Chester Springs, PA 19425-2700, U.S.A.

Published regularly since December, 1918
4 issues a year
(Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter)

Annual Subscription
\$12.00 (single issue, \$3.50)

Editor
Leon J. Snyder

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
Bible Standard Ministries
1156 St. Matthews Road
Chester Springs, PA 19425-2700, U.S.A.
Periodicals Postage paid at Kutztown, PA

Other Publications
The Bible Standard

Foreign language editions
French, German, Polish, Portuguese, Tamil, Malayalam,
Kannada, Ukrainian and Lithuanian

Free from all sects, parties, organizations, and creeds of men, but bound to God as it understands His Word, this magazine stands for —

- The defense of the Parousia Truth, given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as basic for all further development of the Truth;
- The defense of the arrangements, charter and will given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as binding on controlling corporations and associations among Truth people; and for
- The exposition and defense of the unfolding Epiphany-Basileia Truth, as meat in due season for the Lord's people, as He is pleased to provide it.

made miserable after indulgence in these evils?

There is selfish and worldly joy in the indulgence of one's natural selfish and worldly propensities along the lines of self-esteem, the esteem of others, physical comfort, life and food, along the lines of sex, the natural family, home, friends and native land. While such joys are capable of indulgence apart from sin by the better of mankind, at best they are transitory and often disappointing. They can be used as servants of truth and righteousness, and give a higher joy than their indulgence gives the naturally selfish and worldly; but in their best expressions they fall short of the spiritual joys that God gives His faithful children. These are the joys that God calls "the joy of the LORD" (Neh. 8:10-12). They center in our spiritual assets, e.g., in God's and Christ's persons, characters, words, works and offices.

The "joy of the LORD" is the center of our blessings and privileges in relation to (a) God as our Creator, Provider, Redeemer, Teacher, Justifier, Sanctifier and Deliverer, (b) Jesus as our Prophet, Ransomer, Priest, Advocate, Justifier, Head, Savior, Captain, Physician, King, Lord, Judge, Purifier, Refiner and Shepherd, (c) God's family as His sons, brethren of Jesus and the saints, (d) the steps of salvation—enlightenment, repentance, faith, justification, our calling, victory in our battles, (e) the world as their present enlighteners and future deliverers from the curse, (f) the final overthrow of evil principles and their agents, (g) the final triumph of good principles and their agents and (h) the everlasting life and bliss of the good. These are not transient, unsatisfying and disappointing; rather, they are eternal, satisfying and triumphant and bring everlasting joy.

Let us examine the ingredients of Joy, it being a tertiary grace is, of course, the compound of a number of graces. The first of these is faith, which is a mental appreciation of, and heart's reliance on God and Christ in Their persons, characters, words and acts. It arouses joy in mind and heart by the revelation that it gives to the mind and by the peace and satisfaction that it gives to the heart as they rest on these from the four standpoints just given. Hope is another ingredient of joy; for it inspires happiness in the desire and expectation of good. Above all other graces, love, which is in sympathetic oneness with God's justice delights to sacrifice in spreading these; in its very nature is the chief ingredient of joy. Obedience to God and Christ, as good principles require this, has a blissful effect upon the heart and mind and arouses joy. Piety as duty love to God furnishes the chief basis of a just joy, as brotherly love, duty love to one's neighbor, will contribute to joy from the satisfying feeling that it arouses toward others. Peace, too, is an especial ingredient of joy, as it is a necessary basis for its exercise.

God has so designed man that the exercise of every one of our higher and lower primary affections and graces are ingredients to joy; for God so conditioned our affections

that, if rightly and charitably exercised, they arouse joy into exercise, since it is the peculiarity of every one of our affections to make one joyful by the expression of our proper feelings.

The stages of joy correspond to the times and seasons of the Christian life; i.e., joy varies in kind and degree according to the planes of the Christian life. These planes are those of enlightenment, justification, sanctification and deliverance. Each of these has its peculiar joys.

In justification one's joys root in the assurance that God has forgiven him his sins, that Christ has imputed His righteousness to him, that God fellowships with him and grants him growth in righteousness. What a privilege is granted to the consecrated! They can be getting more justified, more justified and more justified, more nearly right every day. How can this not bring joy to the consecrated mind, heart and will?

In sanctification one's joys root in the fact that he is privileged to be dead to self and the world and alive to God, that he is privileged to lay down his life on behalf of the advancement of God's Plan and that in spirit he is enabled to cultivate the affections and the graces in their three kinds, and then strengthen, balance and crystallize them. His joys of sanctification also find their ground in his hopes for the elect and the non-elect and reach their height in his relations to God and Christ.

In deliverance the Christian's joys lodge in the assurance and the fact that Christ leads him to victory in his warfare with sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, as these are manipulated against him by the devil, the world and the flesh, both as to his individual battles and as to the warfare as a whole! The Christian's greatest joy is in knowing that if he remains in harmony with the Truth and its arrangements, this will lead him to victory over death and the grave.

In enlightenment the Christian's joys have their foundation in the Truth made clear to him in its doctrines, precepts, promises, exhortations, prophecies, histories and types. He sees in these teachings truth, clarity, harmony, sublimity and usefulness which make his joys increase in each advancing stage of the Christian life. These qualities will become more understandable to the consecrated child of God with every advancing stage of his life, and as also each stage's joys continue with the joys of the subsequent stage or stages, causing his joys to gather depth and breadth, like a river that ever deepens and widens as new streams enter and unite with it.

It is reasonable that the Christian experiences joy in all circumstances of life. God has provided so that the consecrated child of God can rejoice in view of the stages of the Christian life in which he is privileged to enter and remain. And how unreasonable it is, if he does not rejoice at

and in each of such stages. How appropriate it is for him to rejoice in God as his Father in His nature, attributes of being and character, words, works and offices! How fitting it is that he rejoice in Jesus Christ in His natures, attributes of being and character, words, works and offices! How behooving it is for him to rejoice in his own privileges, in learning, spreading and practicing the Truth and in the faithful endurance of the incidental experiences! How suitable it is that he rejoice in the privileges that his brethren have, the same as he has! How becoming it is for him to rejoice in the assurance that all things work together for good to them that love God “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 4:16-18)!

How proper it is for him to rejoice that, instead of eternal torment being the future portion of the poor blind world, God’s provision for the groaning creation in general is restitution to the original Divine image and likeness to whoever will be acceptable in the Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ! How suitable it is for him to rejoice that eventually all evil will be forever blotted out, and that eventually only righteousness will forever remain, and that in eternal bliss! And, finally, how responsive to the conditions it is that he rejoice at the prospect that every created thing in heaven and earth, even such as had been in the death state and in rebellion against God, will unite in the grand Hallelujah Chorus, ascribing by thought, motive, word, act and condition “blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” (Rev. 5:13)!

The sources of our joy are ultimate, mediate and proximate. To the Christian, God is our Creator, Provider, Redeemer, Enlightener, Justifier, Sanctifier and Deliverer; for all the blessings implied in Him in these seven respects find in Him their ultimate source. We cannot conceive of, or wish for, a proper thing to exist or to be bestowed upon us and others that is not embraced in His acting in the seven features of His works implied in the seven names we gave Him in the preceding sentence, which of course implies that He is the ultimate “Spring of all our joys, the Source of our delights.”

And as all things are of the Father through the Son (1 Cor. 8:6), Jesus is the mediate source of our joys; for God had done, is doing and will continue to do His creative, providential, redemptive, enlightening, justifying, sanctifying and delivering works, which are His ways of giving us joy, through the ministry of our Lord Jesus “The same was in the beginning with God; all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:2, 3; 3:15, 16; Heb. 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:30); so Jesus is the mediate “Spring of all our joys, the Source of our delights.”

And the blessings that God bestows upon us while acting in His seven above-implied offices toward us through the

ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ are the proximate spring and source of our joys and delights.

These three springs and sources of our joys and delights include every good thing and agency that can come into our lives, even the human agents and the natural causes that God often uses to bestow some of the above indicated blessings. Because seen we recognize the appropriateness of the Scripture: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (Jas. 1:17). Joys so centered are the noblest and most enduring. This is what is meant by rejoicing in the Lord.

A scripture that indicates we are to rejoice and is enjoyed by many Christians reads “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice” (Phil. 4:4). This implies the times as well as the circumstances of our rejoicing; for our circumstances are of a certainty bound to time, since we can be in no circumstance detached from time. Our circumstances so far as our flesh is concerned are favorable or unfavorable, easy or hard, pleasant or unpleasant; but to our holy hearts and minds all our circumstances should be regarded as favorable, easy and pleasant. It is true that we cannot rejoice at our difficult, unfavorable, unpleasant experiences and situations “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yeildeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. 12:11); but if we look not at the things seen, the selfish and worldly, but at the things unseen, our present and future spiritual blessings, we can and do rejoice amid, even if not at our difficult experiences (2 Cor. 4:16-18; 7:4; Rom. 5:3-5).

It is, of course, easy to rejoice in our pleasant experiences; but it is our privilege to rejoice in the Lord when everything goes, from the human standpoint, dead wrong; and the strong and instructed Christian does then rejoice; “for he knows that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. 8:28); and if we are wide awake, we will be energetic to rejoice in the humanly unfavorable, unpleasant and untoward experiences. When we do not then rejoice, it is because we look at the things seen, and not at the things unseen, which proves that we are living below our privileges, and are giving room to the devil, the world and our flesh to drive in the wedge of disappointment. Let us, therefore, earnestly strive to be rejoicing Christians at all times and under all circumstances, regardless of whether they are favorable or unfavorable, easy or difficult, pleasant or unpleasant, toward or untoward.

Joy exists in different degrees, yes, even in the same individual differently at various times; so also its expression varies in different individuals. Some, especially those who come into the Christian life by a more or less sudden change from a markedly sinful course, are quite boisterous in their demonstrations of joy; yes, some of such almost never

outgrow such demonstrations. Others, while very joyous, are either by natural bent or by self-control calm in their feelings of joy; still others occupy a middle ground between these extremes in their joyful demonstrations. A healthy growth in this grace ordinarily tones down extreme boisterousness of gladness, until one's feelings become those of habitual calm cheerfulness, which is the ideal expression of this grace.

Joy is necessary for God's sake, for our sake and for others' sakes. We should be joyous, because God exhorts to it, and is pleased with it; for He recognizes it as the proper response that we should make for His sake for His many benefits toward us, since it is unseemly that His children should go around weeping all day long. Our sorrows, except sorrow for sin, do not reflect credit upon God; rather they discredit the family whose Head He is. So, too, it is necessary for our sakes. Sadness chills the genial currents of the soul; but gladness warms them.

All other graces can be helped by the expression of joy. Under the influence of joy we can do our best, as we certainly, at the time at least, cannot do our best in most of our activities when sad. Then there is a spiritual magnetism in joy that makes it helpful to others. Our states of mind have more or less effect upon those with whom we deal; especially is this true if our characters are strong and influential. The strong characters when sad depress others; but the cheerful strong characters influence others to good by arousing the best in them into activity. If we watch the operation of this principle, we will recognize its truth and worth, which will help us for others' sake to practice it. God made joy a part of our characters so that it may exercise in us the office of doing our best Godward, selfward and toward others; for this is just what it is designed to be and to do, to bring out the best in us and to make us do our best unto God's glory and others' profit.

A quality so good as this should be developed, strengthened, balanced and crystallized and made an inseparable part of our characters. Several methods that serve to produce this quality will be presented.

(1) The first of these is to enter and advance in each stage of the Christian life; for as we enter each stage of the Christian life it will arouse in us the joy peculiar to it. Accordingly, as we exercise repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus unto justification there is by God's Word aroused in our hearts the joys of justification. To enter consecration gives us the initiation into the joys of sanctification, the joys resultant (a) to putting self-will and world-will to death and making God's will alive in us, (b) to using our human all in His service and (c) to arising into likeness of Christ's life. Entering into the battles and victories of the Christian life gives one the joys peculiar to deliverance. And as one advances into the enlightenment that belongs to the three foregoing stages of the Christian life, the Truth confers the joys that are peculiar

to the Truth belonging to each pertinent stage. By entering each stage of the Christian life we develop the joys belonging to it and cultivate this attribute.

We increase in the cultivation of joy as we advance in each of these stages. The more loyal one is to the implications of the justified life, the more do the joys of justification increase, whereby this grace is enlarged in him. The more one is loyal in consecration, in remaining dead to self and the world and alive to God in his various consecration experiences, in using up his humanity in consecration and in developing the affections and graces of the Christian life, the more do the joys of consecration increase in him, with the consequent increase of this quality in him. The more loyal one is in his battles for truth, righteousness, love and Kingdom-mindedness within and without him, against sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, as Satan, the world and our flesh endeavor by these to overcome him, the more do his joys of deliverance increase with the consequent increased growth of this grace. And, finally, the more one advances in enlightenment, as he is faithful in the other three stages of the Christian life, the more he grows in the joys of the Truth and the consequent growth of this grace. In a word, faithfulness in entering and advancing in the four stages of the Christian life is the first method of cultivating joy.

(2) The second method of cultivating joy is to count our blessings; for the counting of them will always arouse the joy of gratitude and appreciation in the good heart. The Psalmist (40:5) is right when he says that the Lord's benefits to us are beyond our ability to number; for the Lord is continually showering benefits upon us, especially in rewarding each sacrifice with a hundredfold blessing.

(3) The third method useful for us to cultivate the grace of joy is with loving hearts to count others' blessings. If we are God's children with hearts filled with grateful and appreciative love, such counting of others' benefits will certainly cultivate joy in us. When we with such love contemplate God's nature, His attributes of being and character, His words, offices and works, our hearts must increase in joy in Him. When with such love we contemplate Jesus' prehuman, human and post human natures, His attributes of being and character, His words, offices and works, our hearts must be enlarged in joy.

When we contemplate in such love our brethren as the beneficiaries of God's and Christ's creative, providential, redemptive, enlightening, justifying, sanctifying and delivering works in their varied amplifications, we must thereby grow in this grace. When we contemplate in such love the world and our enemies as the present beneficiaries of some and the future beneficiaries of the rest of these sevenfold works of God and Christ, we will surely develop in joy. And, finally, when we contemplate the grand outcome of God's and Christ's sevenfold works for the elect and the obedient of mankind and angels, as well as the end of the

wicked and evil, we must cultivate joy.

In Psalms 16:11 our supreme Jehovah makes this wonderful promise “Thou wilt shew the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” There are only two general pathways on which people can travel during this Gospel Age, which began with our Lord’s baptism and is not yet fully ended. These are (1) a broad way, that leads to destruction, and (2) a narrow way, that leads to life (Matt. 7:13, 14). For over 6,000 years the human family in general has steadily pursued the broad, downward way to destruction which has led to sorrow, distrust, disappointment and a general hate for their fellow man. Only a few, comparatively, have tried to change their course and retrace their steps, and to climb the difficult way, which is the way Jesus, our Leader and Exemplar trod, and on which God’s Gospel-Age people are to follow Jesus.

While the way for God’s Gospel-Age people to travel is a difficult, upward climb, and the pathway is not smooth, it is nevertheless filled with joys and blessed experiences unknown to others. When we consider how much is said in the Scriptures about joy and rejoicing among God’s people, we are deeply impressed with the thought that our Heavenly Father is very solicitous for the happiness of His children, even in the present life. The worldly minded cannot see this; they look upon the lot in life of God’s faithful people as a hard and joyless one, and upon God as a hard Master, with little or no concern for the happiness of His children. This, however, is because they are unconsecrated natural men; the natural man, not having the holy Spirit of God, “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14). But God’s people, the spiritually minded, have spiritual food and other blessings to enjoy that the world knows not of; and their hearts rejoice with the joy that no man can take away from them.

Does not the word restitution bring untold joy into our hearts! We ponder the great joy we have for those [Ancient Worthies] who consecrated their lives to God before Jesus came and opened the “new and living way” to the heavenly nature and reward (Heb. 10:20; 2:3; 2 Tim. 1:10), noble characters, such as Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Jeremiah, Daniel, etc., “of whom the world was not worthy” (Heb. 11:38); and for those [Youthful Worthies] who consecrated and likewise prove worthy in the end of the Gospel Age after the call to the heavenly nature and reward were closed, both of those classes have not been begotten of the Spirit, and could not become new creatures and attain to a heavenly reward. God has promised a fullness of joy in “a better resurrection” than that which the world will receive (Heb. 11:35). These will be made “princes in all the earth” and will “rule in judgment” (Psa. 45:16; Isa. 32:1; Luke 13:28; Matt. 11:11) during the Thousand-year reign of

Christ on earth (Rev. 5:9, 10; 20:4, 6).

Another great joy has been brought to our attention when Jehovah enlightened us with the understanding of another class since 1954 [Consecrated Epiphany Campers] who like the Ancient and Youthful Worthies are non-spirit begotten. To this class God has promised a fullness of joy in the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14). The Truth as due came to God’s people adapted to their varying providential needs, circumstances and experiences; for the Word of God was so framed by God that it is not only adapted to the needs of God’s people in general, but it is also adapted to their individual needs amid their varying circumstances and experiences. This shows the practicability of God and of God’s Truth. That God arranged His Word so as to be adaptable to the general needs of His people is apparent from Amos 3:7: “Surely the Lord your God will do nothing [in the outworking of His Plan] except He revealed it as His secret unto His servants the prophets” (E 9 p. 20).

As the consecrated child of God enters into the year of our Lord 2017 there is a fullness of joy for God’s consecrated people under His supervision and favor in this life, which it is the privilege of all of them now to enjoy. Our capacity for joy now is not what it will be by and by, but it is possible now to have our little earthen vessels as full as possible of the joy of the Lord. And day by day it is our privilege to realize the presence and favor of God, if, by walking in the path of life, the path of obedience and loving sacrifice, we draw near to Him. “If a man love me,” said Jesus, “he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23).

In such precious company and wonderful fellowship as this for “truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3). Can any Christian fail utterly to realize some measure of joy in the Lord? No, for in the presence of the Lord is fullness of joy, no matter what may be our surrounding conditions and circumstances. As the consecrated Christian enjoys the wonderful blessings of prayer and close communion with the Heavenly Father and Jesus his precious Savior and the thrill of Bible study, which acquaints him with God’s glorious being and character and His marvelous plan of salvation for the Church and the world (1 Tim. 4:10; 1 John 2:2), and as he grows in knowledge and grace, developing more and more the fruits of the Spirit in Christian character under the influence of God’s holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16-18, 22, 23), his joy in the Lord will continually deepen and increase toward its fullness, and his capacity to receive will also be enlarged (2 Cor. 6:13).

The sentiments written in the Psalms by David touch the soul at every turn, in joy and in sorrow. King David’s strong persuasion and confident faith gave him much joy in the midst of all his tribulations. His faith laid hold upon the promises of God with a strong and steady grasp! God’s love

and gratitude impelled him to prompt obedience to the will of God and ardent zeal in His service. This blessed privilege is ours also, if by faith we enter fully into the Lord's will and favor. And with a blessed realization of the abiding presence of our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus at all times, and of Their love and favor, and a faith that lays hold of the precious promises of God and properly applies them, what soul may not rejoice and be glad, even in the midst of deep sorrow or great tribulation? In the Lord's presence, no matter where we are, is fullness of joy.

Although God has been and still is allowing mankind in general to go down into the destruction of the Adamic death, this is not to continue indefinitely. After the Gospel

Age is fully ended and the Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ has begun, God not only will no longer turn mankind into this destruction, but also will say, "Return [from this destruction, through the awakening of the dead, when Jesus calls them forth John 5:28, 29], ye children of men" (Psa. 90:3). Both the living and the awakened dead will then have the privilege of going up on a new way that will be opened, called the Highway of Holiness, to a joyful entrance into everlasting life here on earth (Isa. 35:8-10; 62:10; Matt. 25:34). Although it too will be an upward pathway, it will be smooth, and not narrow and difficult: "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. 30:5).

GIVING THANKS UNTO THE LORD

"O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever"—Psalm 136:1.

INGRATITUDE is one of the least excusable sins; but, alas, it is everywhere manifested. Rich and poor, learned and unlearned, all, generally speaking, appear to be growing in the spirit of ingratitude, unthankfulness, discontent, murmuring, etc., and this in the face of the greatest blessings that the world has ever known. With the dawning of the New Era, the Millennial reign of Christ, God seems to be opening His hand and showering His blessings everywhere. "He openeth His hand and satisfieth every living thing"—except rebellious man. The more blessings that come to mankind in general, the more intelligence they attain, the less they seem to recognize the Fountain, the Source, of these blessings and favors. It seems paradoxical, but yet it is true, that the day of the greatest blessings and favors the world has ever known is also the day of the greatest ingratitude and discontent that it has ever known.

We can learn lessons from the brute creation. It looks up to man as its god—and properly so; for this is the Divine arrangement, that man should be a god to beasts, fish and fowl. Man was created in the image and likeness of his Creator, who is the God of the universe (Gen. 1:26-28). With what shame do we realize that "the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib" (Isa. 1:3), yet man in general ignores his Maker and seems bent upon forgetting to acknowledge Him!

There is a reason for all this. The formation of the human brain shows us that reverence and gratitude to God were intended to be a part of the natural disposition of humanity. The organs of veneration, worship and spirituality lie at the apex of the human brain. In nothing, therefore, was man intended to find so much pleasure, peace and satisfaction as in the recognition of his God and the acknowledgment of his obligations to Him. Why then the aversion to God, the endeavor to forget Him, the ignoring of His blessings and mercies and the attempt to account for them all as matters of

chance, operations of nature? Why is it that the family dog exhibits more of the spirit of loyalty, reverence, obedience and confidence in his master than that which man, with a higher intellect and capability, exercises toward the God of all grace, the Father of mercies (2 Cor. 1:3)?

"AN ENEMY HATH DONE THIS"

Jesus in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43) declared that "the good seed are the children of the kingdom"—true, loyal children of God, brought forth by the pure Truth of His Word. But He indicated also that after the Apostles would fall asleep "while men slept" in death, the enemy, Satan, would over-sow the wheat field with tare seed, which He explains are "the children of the wicked one"—imitation Christians however good, noble, moral and respectable they may be otherwise, some of them being mere worldlings, hypocrites, etc., and all of them engendered by Satan's false standards of conduct and practice and his false doctrines, which St. Paul designates "doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1). These demon doctrines have gone forth to the whole world to misrepresent God and His purposes regarding mankind. One of the prominent characteristics of the "tare" class, who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, is that they are unthankful (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Undoubtedly it is these doctrines of demons that have gotten their hold in men's minds from childhood's hours, which have effected such a poisonous influence upon humanity as to drive the masses away from God—some in fear, some in disgust, and some in total unbelief. Is it any wonder that intelligent people should try to convince themselves that there is no such God as the creeds of the Dark Ages have represented? Indeed, it is not strange. It really is to their credit that they refuse to worship a being pictured in the creeds of the Dark Ages as far worse than the most depraved human being that was ever born.

The doctrine of eternal torment, which is taught in these

creeds, has created many atheists and many infidels. It is no wonder that men try to disbelieve in a God who, they are told, plotted the eternal torture of the great majority of the human race long before He created it, and that He has made every preparation for the torture of many humans to all eternity! And is it any wonder that the world repudiates the Bible, and desires to repudiate it, since they are told that the Bible is the authority for this and other atrocious theories respecting the Almighty's purposes? We need not wonder.

In much of the present-day unbelief and discontent we are merely reaping the results of the false doctrines handed down to us, and believed by many to be taught in the Word of God, without the proper exercise of their heads or hearts to prove these and to see that they are doctrines of devils, wholly separate from and contrary to the teachings of God's Word.

GOD IS GOOD AND MERCIFUL

Notice how contrary our text is to what mankind in general has been taught respecting the Heavenly Father and His Plan for the human family. Our text gives us the true basis for things—an appreciation of God's goodness: "O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good"! This is the merciful God which our souls have hungered after and then follows the assurance that Divine mercy endures forever. St. Paul declared that all nations of men feel after God if haply they might find Him. "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:26, 27). It is this true, merciful God that they are seeking. But when they are presented instead with a horrible misrepresentation in which He is set forth as the planner and instigator of eternal torture for nearly the entire race, this blasphemy serves to turn their hearts away from Him and from the Bible, which they are told teaches it.

It is high time that all Christians should awake and realize the terrible mistake that has been made, and that we begin to preach the true Gospel, the message of God's mercy. The statement respecting Divine mercy is made 26 times in Psa. 136 alone. And yet many Christians have denied this statement, and have declared instead that God's mercy is only for the elect; that the thousands of millions of heathendom and other hundreds of millions of the non-elect in Christendom will have no mercy!

Knowing that the majority of minds are darkened through sin, ignorance and superstition; knowing that the Apostle declares that Satan has blinded the minds of all unbelievers; knowing that God, through the Apostles and the Prophets, has declared that the coming Age of Messiah's Kingdom is the time when all the deaf ears will be unstopped and all the blinded eyes opened, and that the glory of the LORD shall

cover the whole earth "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isa. 60:2). "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isa. 35:5). See also 2 Cor. 4:4. In spite of knowing all this, some Christians have cried out to those beyond the grave that God's mercy endures merely for the time we call the present life.

Why do some Christians contradict the Almighty? What motive is there behind this? In seeking to restrict the grace of God to the present unfavorable time of blindness and darkness these Christians have had the encouragement of Satan, and the visions, messages and dreams caused by the fallen angels. St. Paul pictured our day exactly, saying: "Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1).

THE REVEALING

The greater portion of Divine Truth has been expressed under cover, so that its full import is not always discernible. The Bible abounds in symbols, figures and allegories. Jesus often opened His mouth in parables and dark sayings, so that those who heard Him, even His own disciples, often said, "We cannot tell what He saith." But Matt. 10:26, 27 assures us that in due time all would be made manifest "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, preach ye upon the house tops."

Several purposes have been served by first hiding, and then gradually unfolding the Truth: (1) the successful development of Jehovah's Plan; (2) the saving of His consecrated children from discouragement because of the length of time involved; and (3) the trial of the faith of believers. Yes, Deut. 29:29 says "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but the things that are revealed (in the Word of God) belong unto us (the fully consecrated) and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Compare Acts 1:7 which shows that this principle is enunciated also by our Lord Jesus, when He said that it is not for us to know that "which the Father hath put in his own power."

The revealing of God's Truth has gradually progressed from Age to Age, and His faithful ones in every Age have had a sufficient revelation of Truth and its understanding, including such knowledge of future things as would encourage them, to enable them to carry out their part in advancing His plan. It has also been a part of God's plan that Truth once revealed, expounded, or made manifest, should not only serve its immediate purpose, but also that it should be treasured up and recorded for the generations following, not being lost or forgotten. God's servants of every Age have been taught to bear witness to the Truth, both to their own and succeeding generations, each according to their ability

and opportunity. And it is through the faithfulness of past witnesses—the Patriarchs, Prophets, Jesus, the Apostles and other members of His seven stars, His special messengers to the seven stages of His Church throughout the Gospel Age (Rev. 1:16, 20), together with all who have been and are ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20)—that we have our present knowledge of God’s Word. To us comes the same commission that came to them, in the last clause of Matt. 10:28. With the blessed knowledge always comes the responsibility of making it known to others. Let us all seek to be faithful therein!

This privilege of service to Jehovah and those He has called “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Rev. 18:4) continues to this very day. Oh, my dear brethren, with this privilege to write on constructive advancing Truth, let us ever be cautious that we not become Speculators! When we consider the emphatic teachings against speculation let us recognize Jehovah’s reasoning. The prohibition to speculate has not been given to God’s Parousia and Epiphany people to take away their rights and liberty, nor to make the Laodicean Messenger lords over God’s heritage; but it is given for a benevolent reason: to save the individuals of the various involved classes from losing their standing in their respective classes, i.e., to prevent Little Flock brethren by speculating from falling into the Great Company, the Great Company by speculating from falling into the second death class, the Youthful Worthies by speculating from falling into the tentatively justified class, the tentatively justified by speculating from falling into the Camp class, the Consecrated Epiphany Campers by speculating from falling into the class outside the Camp!

The way these matters of bringing the Truth forward have been carried out in practice during the Parousia and Epiphany is this: Jehovah gives Jesus the understanding of the Truths respecting these stages as due. Jesus gave that understanding as due to the Parousia and Epiphany messengers as they studied the pertinent matters, and these have given them to the Priesthood, from whom they went out to the Levites, who in turn with the Priests have given it to the Campers, and who in turn with the Priests and Levites have given it to outside the Camp.

As with all things God’s Truth comes to His Consecrated People with very strict rules of order. These are given in Ex. 19:21-25 “And Jehovah said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto Jehovah to gaze, and many of them perish; And let the Priests also, that come near to Jehovah, sanctify themselves, lest Jehovah break forth upon them; And Moses said unto Jehovah, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou didst charge us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it; And Jehovah said unto him, Go, get thee down; and thou shalt come up, thou,

and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto Jehovah, lest he break forth upon them; So Moses went down unto the people, and told them.” Speculating (to gaze) has been especially prohibited during the Parousia and Epiphany.

The Consecrated Epiphany Campers have many wonderful blessings now and will have many more Millennially. The Consecrated Epiphany Campers will have a resurrection of the just: Luke 14:14 “And thou shalt be blessed; . . . for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” These Consecrated Epiphany Campers are now tentatively justified by faith in Christ and are accepted by God in consecration as of the pre-Millennial seed of Abraham under the earthly features of the Oath-bound Covenant, and they also have the privilege of prayer to God and fellowship with Him. When on trial for life under the New Covenant, they will not lose this Oath-bound Covenant relationship and these privileges; “My son, give me thy heart; And let thine eyes delight in my ways” (Prov. 23:26).

God will highly honor them, for they are proving themselves faithful under greater trial than restitutionists in general will have. They will be privileged to be the special assistants of the Worthies and will be very able helpers to the world of mankind as they with them come up the Highway of Holiness. As a fifth order of the seed of Abraham, Consecrated Epiphany Campers, will under elective features of salvation be one part of the five pre-restitution consecrated classes—the Little Flock, the Ancient Worthies, the Great Company, the Youthful Worthies and the Consecrated Epiphany Campers—symbolized respectively by Zion, Moriah, Akra, Bezetha and Ophel—the special means of assisting the non-elect up the Highway of Holiness. These five classes will feed the restitution class under the Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ. Isaiah 49:10 “They shall not hunger or thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.”

We read in Prov. 4:18: “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” The full or perfect day, the glorious day of the Lord’s Kingdom established on earth, the Millennial Day so abundantly prophesied in the Scriptures, has not yet fully come; the Truth continues to unfold and its light shines brighter and brighter to those who “walk in the light.” How wonderfully God has revealed and continues to reveal His secrets to those who reverence Him (Psa. 25:14), giving them just what they particularly need at given times. The new features of Truth as given were never popular, and they always tested the loyalty and faithfulness of His servants as they bore witness to it.

This Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ that we so much long for is sure to come: Isa. 46:9 “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I

am God, and there is none like me, v. 11 . . . yea, I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.” Noah needed the Truth on the coming Flood that would destroy wicked mankind. He by faith accepted the message and obediently built the ark, but his preaching to others for 120 years (Heb. 11:7; 2 Pet. 2:5; Gen. 6:3) was not popular, for he won no converts aside from his own family. Abraham needed more Truth than that which was given to Noah; he had to walk in the light beyond that in which Noah walked. Moses and the Israelites of his day needed still more Truth, and God gave it to them, though it still proved unpopular and brought persecution upon those who faithfully held to it. Note, e.g., their experiences with the Egyptians, their enemies in the wilderness and subsequently in Canaan. Then came further unfolding of Truth through the Prophets, given as needed, to develop God’s plan and to try the faith of His faithful ones (Heb. 11:32-40).

The history of God’s people during the Gospel Age has been very similar. Jesus “brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10), and this message in its simplicity and as revealed more and more in its details likewise brought persecution, even unto the present day (2 Tim. 2:10-13). The Apostles were persecuted by the Jews; the early Christians by pagan Rome; the later Christians by papal Rome; many were driven into the catacombs and into the mountains and deserts for safety; others were unmercifully and unspeakably tortured and even burned at the stake. As each one received further light from God and faithfully bore witness to it before others, his faith was tested, e.g., Peter Waldo, Marsiglio, John Huss, Savonarola, Luther, Zwingli, Servetus, Hubmaier, Cranmer, Wesley, Campbell, William Miller and faithful Christians in general up to and including the present time.

Our Lord told His followers that they would be persecuted, saying: “They shall put you out of the synagogues [their religious assemblies]: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me” (John 16:2, 3). However, all the persecution has not come through being cast out (Isa. 66:5) and through physical violence, for much of it has been through the misuse of the tongue (Psa. 64:3). Our Lord encouraged His faithful followers regarding this matter, saying: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matt. 5:10-12).

It is a matter of comparatively small concern what men may say of us now. They will say hard things of us even against their own convictions, though often because they

believe them; and this the faithful witness must endure; and while he should take heed to let the light of Truth shine through a transparent character (2 Cor. 3:2) and a clear and positive testimony, he may commit his way unto the Lord, for “he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday” (Psa. 37:5, 6, 7). When all is revealed, nothing will remain covered; then, “the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). Every type, prophecy, figure, parable and dark saying will in due time bear a testimony to all. And while it will be with the Truth, it will also be true of those who bear the Truth, and indeed of all men, good and bad; for there is no character now covered that shall not be revealed. Upright and godly characters are often hidden under misunderstanding and misrepresentation, while many base and detestable characters are hidden under fair, deceiving exteriors. All masks will eventually be taken off, and every man will be estimated both by God and man according to his motives (1 Cor. 4:5).

TELL THE TRUTH—SHAME THE DEVIL

It is high time for all who love the Lord and believe the Bible to get themselves straight on God’s great plan of salvation for all mankind and then to help others also to get straight on it. It is high time that all should know what real cause there is for gratitude to God and for contentment with the wonderful blessings now being showered upon them and with His plan for the blessing of all the families of the earth. It is high time to tell them plainly that the Scriptures teach that the death of Christ is to be the full offset for the sin of Adam, and that the penalty of Adam’s sin—death—is to be fully lifted. It is high time to tell them that during Messiah’s Thousand-year Reign of peace and righteousness on the earth the world of mankind will be raised out of sin and death—the reversal of the present reign of sin and death—and that all those who then show themselves willing and obedient will attain to life everlasting on earth.

Let us that have the Epiphany Truth and its understanding tell the world that during the Gospel Age God indeed has been electing, or selecting, saintly ones, but certainly not to the injury of the non-elect! Let us declare that the work of Jesus with His Bride and Bridesmaids in the heavenly condition and the Worthies with the Consecrated Epiphany Campers as their special helpers in the earthly condition will in God’s due time bring God’s rich blessing to all the families of the earth—the non-elect “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name, And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these

things” (Acts 15:14-17). “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Gal. 3:8). We bring to your attention the rich words of promise in Rev. 22:17 “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.”

Let us tell them the Truth on hell—that the Bible hell is the condition of oblivion, hades; that in the resurrection awakening death and hell will deliver up the dead that are in them “And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works” (Rev. 20:13); “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (judgement) (John 5:28, 29); that from the Bible hell all will be delivered and will have an opportunity for restoration to perfection of life everlasting on earth; and that only the willfully wicked will die the Second Death symbolically illustrated by Gehenna, the lake of fire. “And 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). It is time to tell the basic Truth; that all go to the Bible hell (grave), to await the promised time of restitution spoken of in Acts 3:19-21 “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 heaven 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.”

God has provided this blessed provision for Adam and the remainder of his race; restitution, restoration to human perfection, from which they fell, and to a worldwide Eden—God’s footstool made glorious “Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?” (Isa. 66:1). Yes, the thorns, thistles, trials, difficulties, sorrows and tears of the past six thousand years are part of the penalty, “Dying, thou shalt die.” It is time to tell them that God during the reign of Messiah’s Kingdom, by uplifting the race, will wipe away the tears from off all faces (Rev. 21:1-4). It is time to let them know that He is indeed a God of mercy; and that although His mercy is as yet extended only to the favored people of God, eventually, in the Millennial Age, it shall extend to all the families of the earth, for their blessing “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). Also Luke 2:10 “And the angel said

unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” Oh, Jesus “by the grace of God tasted death for every man” (Heb. 2:9).

ON THIS BASIS THANKFULNESS

On the basis of receiving this knowledge of God, knowledge of why sorrow and death prevail, the world would be ready to acknowledge the grace of God, His boundless mercy, and be better prepared to give thanks to Him.

For this study we must make a sharp distinction between the privilege of prayer and the privilege of thanksgiving. All who appreciate God’s goodness may offer worship in the sense of thanks, acknowledgment and appreciation. Prayer is a wholly different matter. No one has the privilege of prayer with the assurance it will be heard except those who approach God through Jesus, the great Advocate whom He has appointed (1 John 2:1). And no one can approach through the Advocate except on the Divine terms that they become His disciples and take up their cross and follow Him.

All of God’s consecrated children may come to Him and know that He is ever ready to hear their prayer. These have special guidance in all their affairs, because they have come into the family of God. But even those who are aliens and strangers may give thanksgiving in the presence of the great King.

Let each consecrated child of God feel a personal responsibility in telling others the good tidings. Let each one who receives the blessing “show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9). Let each one who appreciates the true basis of thankfulness report the message of the Kingdom to others, that they, too, may be blessed. Let us tell any with a hearing ear that the present unbelief (Luke 18:8) and discontent will increase, and will involve the entire world in still greater distress “Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth” (Jer. 25:32). This is the great Time of Trouble, the climax of which will be Anarchy.

However, the Bible proceeds to tell that even when faith will have largely fled from the world, when discontent will have burst into anarchy, when the present social order will have collapsed, then God will show His mercy “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). God’s mercy will then be manifested in the prompt establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. Man’s breaking point will be God’s opportunity for showing forth His great mercy and love, for He so loved the world when they were yet sinners (Rom. 5:8), that He gave His only begotten Son to die on their behalf.

LET US BE THANKFUL

If our hearts have not been overcome by the tidal waves of

unbelief sweeping over the world, it is a cause for gratitude to God, and for a resolution that by His grace we will seek to know Him better, appreciate Him more and increase our thankfulness. If we have a faith that recognizes Divine providence, especially in the affairs of His consecrated people, let us be grateful, and let us remember that faith needs to be cultivated to recognize thanksgiving.

With the disciples of old let us pray, “Lord, increase our faith,” and let us use the means He has provided for the increase of our faith. Let us note in God’s Word the fulfillments of His promises and let us note also the application of the Scriptures to our own personal experiences. Let us grow in appreciation of the Truths of the Bible and our understanding of even the deep things of God’s Word “But unto us God revealed [them] through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10). Let us through increased energy in the study of the Bible and in the application of its

message to our own hearts grow in His grace and knowledge. Let us grow also in increased thankfulness and effort to show forth His praises and to assist others out of darkness into the marvelous light which we ourselves are more and more enjoying.

While we are not to think of God in the way we do of man, we know that man was made originally in God’s image. We are justified, therefore, in assuming that as we appreciate thankfulness and gratitude, in the hearts of those who are sharers of our bounties, so God is surely pleased with those who are appreciative of His goodness, who think upon His favors and who make acknowledgment of them, who seek to show forth His praises to others and who by faith are trusting Him even where they cannot trace Him. Let the sentiment of our hearts increasingly be, “O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever” (1 Chro. 16:34).

THOUGHTS FOR THE MEMORIAL SEASON

“And he took bread and gave thanks and brake it and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me”—Luke 22:19.

As we approach the Passover season we do well to meditate on its significance. A college professor, lecturing on “Religion,” said that Christians have the communion to “remember the Last Supper.” Not understanding the matter, he misstated it. Our Lord stated the matter correctly—He said, “This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19). The partaking of the communion is something we do, but the object of our remembrance is Christ and what He did. “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. 5:7, 8). See also 11:23-26.

When someone has a birthday party, the birthday cake may be on the table. The guests eat the cake, but the center of attention is not the cake; rather, it is the one having the birthday celebration. While the cake is cut and eaten, it is not the cake that the guests are there to remember, but the one whose birthday it is honoring.

The Memorial emblems also occupy a place on the table, but it is not the bread and the cup that we celebrate. It is not the supper—no, not even the “last” supper—that we commemorate, but the Lord’s death. “The wages of sin is death,” and “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:3). He saves us now from the condemnation of sin, and eventually will save us from the power and effects of sin, unto eternal life.

Therefore everything connected with the Memorial celebration is to remind us that we are saved by the death

of Jesus, by our faith appropriating justification through His broken body and shed blood. The unleavened bread reminds us of His flesh broken for us, and the grape juice reminds us of His perfect life-blood shed for us. Together they mean that His perfect human life was given in sacrifice unto death as a ransom-price—a corresponding price—for Adam and the race that was in his loins when he sinned and forfeited life for himself and his race. The fact that we eat real bread, and drink literal juice, is very impressive, and, among other things, may indicate that Jesus’ death was real, that the judgment of, death for sinners is literal, and that the life which we hope for is just as real.

To all who truly realize that “the wages of sin is death” and that the ransom given for all by our dear Redeemer through His death was His life, His cross must always be the central point of interest from which all our hopes of future life and blessing emanate. All such will esteem it a privilege to commemorate the dying love, the redeeming love, the enduring love, the powerful love, manifested by Jesus from Jordan to Calvary.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8), “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1 Pet. 3:18), that He might have the right and opportunity of effecting human restitution to the state of perfection and harmony with God, forfeited by Adam’s transgression.

By laying down His perfect human life as a ransom sacrifice for Adam and his race, Jesus opened up “a new and living

way”—a way to life everlasting. The Scriptures call the Church of God “the church of the first-born,” “a kind of first-fruits of his creatures,” “the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb” (Heb. 12: 23; Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:4). These expressions imply that ultimately there will be others of God’s family *later* born; *after*-fruits. Christian people in general seem to have overlooked these Scriptures, so far as making proper application of them is concerned, and have generally come to believe that only those who are ever to be saved are designated in the Bible as *first*-fruits—that there will be no *after*-fruits, none who will be saved in the Millennium.

But the Passover type indicates that it was God’s purpose to free not only the firstborn, but *all* Israelites; and that as a nation they represented all of mankind who will ever come into harmony with God and be granted everlasting life in the Land of Promise. Let us note that there were two Passovers—the one in which only the firstborn were passed over; and *another greater one* at the Red Sea, when by Divine Power the whole nation of Israel was miraculously delivered and led across the channel of the Sea especially prepared for them by the accentuation of winds and tides. These passed over dry-shod and were saved; while the hosts of Pharaoh, representing all who eventually will go into the Second Death, were overwhelmed in the Sea. The Passover at the Red Sea pictures the ultimate deliverance from the power of sin and death of every creature of Adam’s race who, Millennially, will come into heart-accord with the Lord and will render Him worship; all who will ever become a part of true antitypical Israel; for not one Israelite was left behind in Egyptian bondage.

But this Passover is not the one which we are about to celebrate. We are to celebrate the antitype of the passing over of the firstborn of Israel by the angel in the land of Egypt. Only the firstborn ones of Israel were endangered on that night in Egypt, though the deliverance of the entire nation depended upon the salvation, the passing over, of those firstborn. The antitype applied first to the Spirit begotten, Firstborn sons of God, but now, it can be seen that it applies also to the consecrated ones of today that are not Spirit begotten. It was only the Firstborn of the sons of God from the human plane, the Church of Christ, have been passed over during the night of the Gospel Age; only these were in danger of the destroying angel. These were all under the sprinkled blood. We see, therefore, in harmony with all the Scriptures, that the “Church,” “the first-fruits unto God of his creatures,” “the church of the firstborn,” *alone* were being spared, passed over, a work now completed.

We see also that the remainder of mankind who may desire to follow the Christ, the great antitypical Moses, when in the Age to follow [Millennial Mediatorial Reign] He shall lead the people forth from the bondage of sin and death, are not now in danger of eternal destruction—only the Firstborn

were in such danger, as the type shows. The Church of the Firstborn were those of mankind who in *advance* of the remainder of the race have had the eyes of their understanding opened to a realization of their condition of bondage and their need of deliverance, and to God’s willingness to fulfill to them all of His good promises. Furthermore, they were such as had responded to the grace of God in justification and have made a full consecration of themselves to Him and His service, and in return have been begotten of His Holy Spirit. With these it was a matter of life or death whether or not they remained in the Household of Faith—behind the blood of sprinkling.

Just as in the type it meant death to leave the house on whose lintel and doorposts the typical lamb’s blood was sprinkled, so for the Spirit-begotten to go forth from under the blood of Jesus would have implied a disregard of Divine mercy. It would have signified that they were doing despite to Divine goodness; and that, having enjoyed their share of the mercy of God as represented in the blood of the Lamb, they were not appreciative of it. For such, the Scriptures declare, “There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins”; “Christ dieth no more” (Heb. 10:26; Rom. 6:9). They are esteemed as adversaries of God, whose fate was symbolized in the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt. The Church of the Firstborn, through the begetting of the holy Spirit and the greater knowledge and privileges which they enjoyed in every way, had a far greater responsibility than has the world; for they [Little Flock] are the only ones that were in danger of the Second Death.

This is the lesson of the Passover type; it applied only to these true Christians. But by and by the night of sin and death will have passed away, the glorious Morn of deliverance will have come, and The Christ, the anti-typical Moses, will lead forth, will deliver, all the people of God—all who, when they shall know the Truth, will be glad to reverence, honor and obey the will of God. That Day of Deliverance will be the entire Millennial Age, at the close of which all evil and evil-doers, symbolized by the hosts of Egypt, will be utterly cut off in the Second Death—destruction.

The Apostle Paul clearly and positively identifies the Passover Lamb with our Lord Jesus, saying, “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast.” He informs us that we all need the blood of sprinkling, not upon our houses, but upon our hearts. We are to partake of the Lamb; we must appropriate to ourselves the merit of Christ, the value of His sacrifice; we must eat also of the unleavened bread of Truth, if we would be strong and prepared for the deliverance in the Morning of the New Dispensation. We put on Christ, not merely by faith, but more and more we put on His character and are transformed into His glorious image in our hearts and lives. We are to feed on Christ as the Jews fed on the literal lamb. Instead of the bitter herbs, which aided and whetted their appetites, we have *bitter experiences and*

trials which the Lord prepares for us, and which help to wean our affections from earthly things and to give us increased appetite to feed upon the Lamb and the unleavened Bread of Truth. They had to remember that they had no continuing city; but as pilgrims and strangers, staff in hand, were to gird themselves for their journey to the antitypical Canaan, to all the glorious things which God has in reservation *for the Church of the Firstborn*, in association with their Redeemer (A work now complete).

Our Lord Jesus also fully identified Himself with the Passover Lamb. On the same night of His betrayal, just preceding His crucifixion, He gathered His Apostles in the upper room, saying, “With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15). It was necessary that as Jews they should celebrate the Passover Supper on that night—the night of the anniversary of the slaying of the Passover lamb in Egypt, of the saving of the typical firstborn from the typical “prince of this world”—Pharaoh—the same date on which the real Passover Lamb was to be slain. But as soon as the requirements of the type had been fulfilled, our Lord Jesus instituted a new Memorial upon the old foundation, saying, “Do this in remembrance of me.”

We recall the circumstances of the first Memorial—the blessing of the bread and of the cup, the fruit of the vine; and our Lord’s declaration that these represented His broken body and shed blood, and that all His followers should participate, not only feeding upon Him, but being broken with Him; not only partaking of the merit of His blood, His sacrifice, but also laying down their lives in His service, in co-operating with Him in every and any manner, that they might later share His honor and glory in the Kingdom. How precious are these thoughts to those who are rightly in tune with our Lord!

In presenting to the disciples the unleavened bread as a memorial, Jesus said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” The evident meaning of His words is, this symbolizes, or represents, My body. The bread was not actually His body; for in no sense had His body yet been broken. In no sense would it then have been possible for them to have partaken of Him actually or antitypically, the sacrifice not being as yet finished. But the picture is complete when we recognize that the unleavened (pure, unfermented) bread represented our Lord’s sinless flesh—leaven being a symbol of sin under the Law, and especially commanded to be put away at the Passover season.

On another occasion Jesus gave a lesson which interprets to us this symbol. He said, “The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” “I am the bread of life.” “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:33, 35, 51).

In order to appreciate how we are to eat, or appropriate, this living bread, it is necessary for us to understand just what the bread signifies. According to our Lord’s explanation of the matter, it was His flesh which He sacrificed for us. It was not His prehuman existence as a spirit being that was sacrificed, although that was laid down and its glory laid aside, in order that He might take our human nature. It was the fact that He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners—without any contamination from Father Adam, and free from sin—that enabled Him to become the Redeemer of Adam and his race, that permitted Him to give His life “a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Tim. 2:4-6).

When we see that it was the pure, spotless human nature of our Lord Jesus that was laid down on behalf of sinners, we see what it is that we are privileged to appropriate. The very thing that He laid down for us we are to “eat,” appropriate to ourselves; that is to say, His perfect human life was given to redeem all the race from condemnation to death, to enable them to return to human perfection and everlasting life, if they would; and we are to realize this and accept Him as our Savior from death.

The Scriptures show us, however, that if God would consider all past sins canceled, and would recognize us as having a right to human perfection, this still would not make us perfect, nor give us the right to eternal life. In order that any of the race of Adam might profit by the sacrifice of Jesus, it was necessary that He should rise from the dead on the Divine plane of life, that He should ascend to the Father and impute the sacrificial merit of His death deposited in the hands of Justice on our behalf and receive from the Father the position of exercising “all power [authority] in heaven and in earth.” As relates to the world, it was necessary also that in the Father’s due time He should come again to earth, a glorious Divine Being, then to be to the whole world a Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King, to assist back to perfection and to harmony with God all who will avail themselves of the wonderful privileges then to be offered to all mankind—dead and living.

It is this same blessing that the Gospel Church of this Age receive by faith in their Redeemer; namely, justification by faith—not justification to a spirit nature, which we never had and never lost, and which Christ did not redeem; but justification to human nature, which Father Adam *possessed* and *lost*, and which Christ redeemed by giving His own sinless *flesh*, His *perfect human life*, as our ransom-sacrifice—corresponding price. The partaking of the unleavened bread at the Memorial season, then, means to us primarily the appropriation to ourselves, by faith, of *justification to human life-rights*—and *the right to human life*—with all the privileges, which our Lord at His own cost procured for us. Likewise the fruit of the vine symbolizes primarily our

Savior's life given for us, His human life, His being, His soul, poured out unto death on our behalf; and the appropriation of this by us also signifies, primarily, our acceptance of restitution rights and privileges secured by our Lord's sacrifice of these—Justification.

Now let us note that God's object in justifying the Church by faith during the Gospel Age, in advance of the justification of the world by works of obedience in the Millennial Age, was for the very purpose of permitting this class to present their bodies a living sacrifice, and to have part with the Lord Jesus in His sacrifice—as members of His Body. To this deeper meaning of the Memorial He did not refer very fully, though He did refer to it in the Luke account of the cup (Luke 22:20). It was doubtless one of the things to which He referred when He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when it, the Spirit of truth, is come, it will guide you into all truth . . . and will show you things to come" (John 16:12, 13). This Spirit of Truth, the power and influence of the Father bestowed through Christ, speaking through the Apostle Paul, clearly explains the very high import of the Memorial; for St. Paul says, writing to the consecrated Church, "The cup of blessing for which we give thanks, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ?"—the sharing with Christ as joint-sacrificers with Him even unto death, that thereby the Body members might be counted in with Him as sharers of the glory which He has received as the reward of His faithfulness?—"For we, being many, are one loaf, one body" (1 Cor. 10:16, 17, Diaglott).

Our Lord distinctly declares that the cup, the fruit of the vine, represents blood; that is, life— not life *retained*, but *life shed*, given, yielded up—sacrificed life. He tells us that this life poured out was for the remission of sins—and that all who would be His must drink of it, must accept His sacrifice—appropriate it by faith. They must receive life from this source. It will not do for any to claim eternal life outside of Christ. It will not do to declare that life is the result of obedience to the Law. It will not do to claim that faith in some great teacher and obedience to his instructions will amount to the same thing and bring eternal life. There is no way to attain eternal life other than through the merit of the blood once shed as the ransom-price for the whole world. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial Supper, our dear Lord, as usual, had something to say about the Kingdom, the theme of His every discourse. Those to whom He had promised a share in the Kingdom, if faithful, He reminded of His declaration that He would go away to receive a Kingdom and come again and receive them to Himself to share in it. He now adds that this Memorial which He was instituting would find its fulfilment in the Kingdom,

that He would no more drink of the fruit of the vine until He would drink it anew with them in the Father's Kingdom.

Just what our Lord meant by this statement might be difficult to determine positively; but it seems consistent that we understand Him to mean that as a result of the trials and sufferings symbolized in His Cup, there will be jubilation in the Kingdom. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isa. 53:11). He will look back over the trials and difficulties endured in faithful obedience to the Father's will, and will rejoice in these as He sees the grand outcome—the blessings which will come to all mankind. This jubilation will be shared by all His disciples who have drunk of this Cup, first as signifying justification, then in consecration and sacrifice with Him. These have His promise that they shall reign with Him; and when the reign shall have begun, when the Kingdom shall have been established, looking back they will praise the way that God had led them day by day, even unto the end of their earthly course, and even though it had been a "narrow way," a way of self-sacrifice, a way of self-denial.

Our dear Master's faith stood the test of all these trying hours which He knew to be so near the time of His apprehension and death. The fact that 'He rendered thanks to the Father for the bread and the cup is indicative of a joyful acquiescence in all the sufferings which the breaking of the bread and the crushing of the grapes implied: always He was satisfied with the Father's arrangement. In line with this spirit was the singing of a hymn as they parted, a hymn of praise no doubt, thanksgiving to the Father that His course on earth was so nearly finished, and that He had found thus far, grace sufficient for His needs.

In considering the events of those solemn hours which followed the Memorial Supper, let us follow the Redeemer to Gethsemane, and behold Him "with strong crying and tears" praying "unto him who was able to save him from death" (Heb. 5:7)—expressive of our Master's fear of eternal death, lest in some particular He might have failed to follow out the Father's Plan, and therefore be thought unworthy of a resurrection. We note that our Lord was in some way comforted with the assurance that He had faithfully kept His consecration vow, and that He would surely have a resurrection as promised.

We behold how calm He was thereafter, when before the high priest and Pilate and Herod, and then Pilate again "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" in self-defense (Isa. 53:7). We see Him faithful, courageous to the very last; and we have His assurance that He could have asked of the Father and could have had more than twelve legions of angels for His protection. But instead of petitioning for aid to escape His sacrifice, He petitioned for help to endure it faithfully. What a lesson is here for all His footstep followers! On the other hand, we recall that



**HAVE YOU MOVED OR
ARE YOU GOING TO BE MOVING?
RENEW TODAY!**

even among His loyal disciples the most courageous forsook the Master and fled; and that one of them, in his timidity, even denied his Lord! What an occasion is this for examining our own hearts as respects the degree of our own faith, our own courage and our willingness to suffer with Him who redeemed us! What an opportunity is afforded us to buttress the mind with the resolution that we will not deny our Master under any circumstances or conditions—that we will confess Him not only with our lips, but also by our conduct.

We are shocked with the thought that it was Jehovah's professed people who crucified the Prince of Life! And not only so, but that it was the leaders of their religious thought, their chief priests, Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, rather than the common people, who were responsible for this dreadful deed. We remember the Master's words, "Marvel not if the world hate you; for you know that it hated me before it hated you." We see that He referred to the religious world; and realizing this, we know that it will be the religious world that will hate us, His followers.

We are not to be surprised, then, that opposition to the Truth and persecution of the light-bearers should come from the most prominent religious leaders. This fact, however, should not cause us to hate either our own opponents or those who persecuted our Lord to the death. Rather we are to remember the words of the Apostle Peter respecting this matter: "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts 3:17). Ah, yes! Ignorance and blindness of heart and mind are at the bottom of most of the persecutions of Christ and His followers. The Father permits it to be so now—for our good.

SUGGESTIONS FOR KEEPING THE FEAST

According to custom, the Philadelphia area congregation will this year meet at 7:30 p.m., April 9 at the Epiphany Bible House Chapel, to celebrate the great event which is so full of precious significance to all the ones who have come into an appreciation of present Truth. We recommend that the dear friends in various parts of the world neglect not this blessed Memorial. We do not advise the leaving of the smaller groups to meet with larger companies, but rather that each little company, or band meet together as is its usual custom; for this seems to have been the course of the early Church. Let us "keep the feast," with joy of heart, but with due appreciation of its solemnity, not only as relates to our Lord's sacrifice for us, but also as relates to our own covenant to be dead with Him—dead to self-will and alive to God's will.

TO:

We recommend that the leaders of each company make arrangements to obtain unleavened bread, and either unfermented grape juice, or raisin juice. Our recommendation is against the use of fermented wine, as being a possible temptation to some weak in the flesh, though provision might be made for any, if there be such, who conscientiously believe that fermented wine was meant to be used; or a few drops of such wine may be put into the otherwise unfermented juice to favor those with such scruples.

We recommend that these little gatherings be without ostentation. Decently, orderly, quietly, let us come together, full of precious thoughts respecting the great transaction we celebrate. Helpful to this would be a re-reading of Vol. 6, Chapter XI, treating of the Passover of the New Creation. Let us not have our attention too much taken up with forms and ceremonies. Let us in this, as in all things, seek to do that which would be pleasing to our Lord; and then we shall be sure that the service will be profitable to all who participate.

We have previously suggested that none are to be forbidden to partake of the emblems who profess faith in the precious blood and full consecration to the Lord, provided they are not disfellowshipped. As a rule there will be no danger that any will accept the privilege of this fellowship who are not earnest of heart. Rather, some may need to be encouraged, since wrong views, we believe, are sometimes taken of the Apostle's words concerning those who "eat and drink damnation [condemnation] to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body" (1 Cor. 11:29). For the sake of these timid ones, who, we trust, will not forego the privilege of commemorating this great transaction, we explain that to our understanding the class mentioned by the Apostle is composed of those who fail to realize the real import of the sacrifice, and who recognize this service as a mere ceremonial form. The failure to investigate and learn what this signifies, brings condemnation, reproof.

We trust that the Memorial will this year be a most precious and profitable one to all the brethren. As we are approaching the end of our course, the great importance of our calling, its responsibilities and privileges, should be impressed more and more upon our hearts and minds. We are living in wonderful times. We know not what a day may bring forth. Therefore let us walk with great carefulness, with great soberness, yet with joy and rejoicing, knowing that our deliverance draws nigh, and that, if faithful, we shall soon share great joys and blessings with our Lord Jesus in God's Kingdom.