
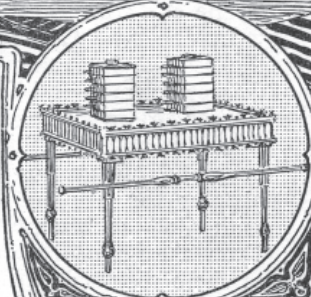


The
PRESENT TRUTH
 and
Herald of Christ's Epiphany

SPRING 2023
 A.D. 2023 — A.M. 6152
 WHOLE NO. 781

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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.

IMPOSSIBLE IN SOME CASES

“For it is impossible as to those who have been, once for all, illuminated, who have tasted also of the heavenly free-gift, and have been made, partners, in a Holy Spirit, And have tasted God’s utterance to be, sweet, Mighty works also of a coming age, And who have fallen away, again, to be remoulding them into repentance” . . . Heb. 6:4-6 (Rotherham)

We believe it is imminent for the consecrated child of God to recognize the immense importance of properly understanding the privilege of being a Consecrated Epiphany Camper hopeful. As a “called to” consecration individual, the same consecrated attitude of heart, mind and will is a requirement as were it for the very Elect.

By analogy we can say: The Consecrated Epiphany Campers are in a somewhat similar position before the Lord to that of the Apostles prior to Pentecost, for like the Youthful Worthies they are consecrated and in a tentatively justified condition.

While some of the promises to the Youthful Worthies,

such as the better resurrection, the resurrection to life, immediate faculty perfection when raised from the dead, etc., do not apply to the Consecrated Epiphany Campers, they also are accepted by God in consecration (Prov. 23:26) as of the pre-Millennial seed of Abraham under the earthly features of the Oath-bound Covenant.

The CEC’s 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.

All the loyal believing Jews and loyal faith justified throughout the Jewish and Gospel Ages will have to consecrate in order to obtain eternal life and will eventually be included among the consecrated *quasi*-elect. We must distinguish between those of the *quasi*-elect who consecrate now and those of the *quasi*-elect who consecrate in restitution times. Those who consecrate now, Consecrated [heart condition] Epiphany [time period] Campers [place of residence], receive the rewards purposed by God for Consecrated Epiphany Campers! Those *quasi*-elect who consecrate during the restitution times will receive the rewards purposed for that time. We must distinguish between these two classes. Bro. Jolly gives the thought that there are more-advanced *Quasi*-elect consecrating before the Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ and less-advanced who will consecrate in restitution times (PT ‘55 p. 44).

Consecrated Epiphany Campers must exercise the physical, the mental, the artistic, the moral, and the religious spheres which will allow for a proper appraisal of ourselves in relation to our dangers. This will require the exercise of courage to drive cowardice out of our minds, hearts, wills; and God is pleased to subject our courage, once cultivated, to trials amid a great variety of testings, experiences and situations. And blessed is he who stands these tests to the Divine pleasing. He will, other things being equal, share in the grand triumph that



PRESENT *The* **TRUTH**
and
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 York, PA, 17402 and additional mailing offices.

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.

awaits those courageous ones who are good after they have combined with their courage, goodness.

The Little Flock, the Ancient Worthies, the Great Company, and the Youthful Worthies, the four elect classes, will be acclaimed by everyone in heaven and earth! Angelic choirs will render the sweetest music that God can compose; and on earth, men will join in the refrain. As these four corps pass the reviewing stand, their Captain will point out each one to their King and tell of his heroism, and their King will acknowledge them with praise and appreciation. Likewise, the Consecrated Epiphany Campers will be acclaimed on earth and their heroism in the present time when evil is in the ascendancy will be acknowledged in heaven and earth. Great indeed will be the triumph of the brave and the good (PT '70, p. 55)!

God will highly honor the Consecrated Epiphany Campers, 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. What a wonderful Heavenly Father we have! How gracious He is to us all! Let us keep ourselves in the love of God (Jude 21)!

PERTINENT THOUGHTS REGARDING CONSECRATED EPIPHANY CAMPERS

Bro. Jolly in PT '57, p. 25, states: "The Ancient Worthies will be princes—not kings—throughout the earth, and therein will have as their associates the Youthful Worthies. . . These Ancient and Youthful Worthies will be the subordinate rulers under Christ; while the world [typed by the twelve tribes of Israel] will then not only not rule at all, but will be subject to these Worthies. . . The Ancient and Youthful Worthies will stand before the world as the latter's visible rulers, and as such will be recognized and obeyed by the world" (E-17, p. 107). Each tribe being headed by an individual prince (Num. 1:5-16) does not necessarily mean that only one individual of the Worthies would be the head of each respective tribe, for in the Gospel-Age application the princes in each case represented "the leaders (not one, but a number)" in each one of the antitypical tribes (E-8, p. 12). In the type, the leaders or princes had "subordinates" (E-8, p. 665, bottom), who were assistant princes or captains. Thus, there were captains of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. Apparently, there were also princes over various houses within a tribe, as, *e.g.*, is indicated in the case of Zimri, who was "a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites" (Num. 25:14). So the Worthies as princes will have able

assistants in the *quasi*-elect (especially in the Consecrated Epiphany Campers), according to their varying abilities, for apparently the *quasi*-elect are represented among the subordinate princes or captains.

It is surely fitting that the Consecrated Epiphany Campers should be considered the highest class among the *quasi*-elect, under the Worthies. As antitypical Medan (Keturah's third-born son), they are next to antitypical Jokshan—the Worthies in general (Keturah's second-born son) and are above the rest of the *quasi*-elect and the restitution class in general, typed by Keturah's later-born children. Because of the position they will have next to the Worthies, as the highest class among the *quasi*-elect, they will indeed have a Millennial reward *similar* in many respects to that of the Worthies, particularly that of the Youthful Worthies—*though not the same*.

Bro. Gohlke in PT '81, p. 78: The Christ, Head and Body, is the Royal Priesthood, now in the antitypical Most Holy, the Divine nature. The Great Company and the Youthful Worthies are the two classes in the antitypical Court in this, the Epiphany period of Jesus' Second Advent. Those consecrating since the end of the antitypical 80 years (1874-1954) for the purification of the mother of a daughter (Lev. 12) have their standing as consecrated ones, not in the Epiphany Court, but in the Epiphany Camp. We therefore refer to this class as the Consecrated Epiphany Campers. They are pictured also in the Nethinim, who were the assistants to the Levites in their service. This class will be blessed richly Millennially as they assist the Worthies in blessing all the non-elect with their restitution opportunity.

They will be the highest class of the restitutionists Millennially under the Worthies and also the highest earthly class post-Millennially. Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, who led the women in singing the great anthem of deliverance, after the overthrow of Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea, seems to picture those who will be leaders among mankind, in the great Hallelujah chorus (Rev. 5:13), after the destruction of Satan and his hosts in the Second Death in the Little Season (E-11, p. 293). The Consecrated Epiphany Campers will be the chief ones in antitypical Miriam. The Millennial work and labor of love of this class will never be forgotten by those they helped to go up the Highway of Holiness to everlasting life on earth. They also will be highly rewarded.

The faithful Epiphany-enlightened brethren have conformed themselves to these transitional changes and adjustments as the Lord has brought them about and

revealed them through His Word and providential leadings which continue to this very day. And now there are more and more brethren who have consecrated since the Fall of 1954, who have their standing in the Camp, as Consecrated Epiphany Campers. The Consecrated Epiphany Campers in the Truth are the highest class of the antitypical Nethinim, who serve in sympathetic unity with their Youthful Worthy brethren, who are antitypical Levities in the Court. Furthermore, they are very closely related to these Youthful Worthy brethren, both being of the same antitypical tribe of Manasseh.

My dear consecrated brethren: The Consecrated Epiphany Campers have consecrated unto death while sin is in the ascendancy, so the Consecrated Epiphany Campers enter a strait gate and walk on a narrow way as they faithfully remain dead to self and the world and alive to God amid many besetments and opposition! Yes, so close do they in many ways come to being of the elect. With these greater privileges come greater trials that prove them to stay true to their call. However, if they fail willfully, they will come under a much stronger sentence for their wrongdoings! Consecrated Epiphany Campers are the “virgins without number” in Cant. 6:8 who had a close relationship with Solomon though not a connubial relationship. Oh, the Consecrated Epiphany Campers have been given the commission by God through David to serve the Levites, “Also of the Nethinim whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites” (Ezra 8:20). Yes, with the time of transition comes increased friction for the Consecrated Epiphany Camper hopefuls. So, let us set aside Murmursome-Contradictionism, ingratitude; and like Paul run so as to win!

CEC’s CHARACTER HARMED BEYOND REPAIR IN THIS AGE?

It is our understanding that some during the Millennial time of gathering out a people for His name, not under second death, can spoil their characters beyond repair. Among such will doubtless be many of the Scribes and Pharisees of the Jewish and Gospel Age Harvests (Matt. 23:33; E-16, p. 175) who have through their sins, especially against God’s Truth, so greatly undermined their characters as to make it in some cases impossible for the Millennial arrangements to reform them. The old men who do not fill their Millennial days with good works are those who at the end of the Millennium—in the little season—will be found unworthy of life and be put into the Second Death. Thus, post-millennially these classes will no longer exist. From these facts, we

conclude that all will be given at least a hundred years of opportunity to reform. Those who refuse to reform even externally will be put to death at the end of the hundred years trial, and end their trial for life in complete failure, a longer trial in their case being useless, because of their irreformability (E-16, p. 175).

SCRIBE: Noun, Latin *scriba*, from *scribo*, to write; A writer and a doctor of the law; a man of learning; one skilled in the law; one who read and explained the law to the people. (Ezra 8:1).

The class addressed in Matt. 23:15, 33 was not the heathen who had no knowledge of the Truth, nor the lowest and most ignorant of the Jewish nation, but the Scribes and Pharisees, outwardly the most religious, and the leaders and teachers of the people. To these, our Lord said, “How can ye escape the judgment of *Gehenna*?” These men were hypocritical; they were not true to their convictions. Abundant testimony of the Truth had been borne to them, but they refused to accept it and endeavored to counteract its influence and to discourage the people from accepting it. And in resisting the Holy Spirit of light and Truth, they were hardening their hearts against the very agency which God designed for their blessing. Hence, they were wickedly resisting His grace, and such a course, if pursued, must eventually end in condemnation to the Second Death, *Gehenna*. Every step in the direction of willful blindness and opposition to the Truth makes return more difficult and makes the wrongdoer more and more of the character which God abhors, and which the Second Death is intended to utterly destroy. The Scribes and Pharisees were progressing rapidly in that course: hence the warning inquiry of our Lord, “How can ye escape?” etc. The sense is this: Although you boast of your piety, you will surely be destroyed in *Gehenna* unless you change your course (Life-Death-Hereafter p. 67).

The Consecrated Epiphany Campers, as special helpers to the Worthies and since the death, April 5, 2016, of the last Youthful Worthy leader of the Lord’s people, have the responsibility of leading the Lord’s Movement. Jehovah has placed a Consecrated Epiphany Camper trustee at Bible Standard Ministries [LHMM] Headquarters in Chester Springs, PA., and CEC’s as His representatives throughout the world. With this privilege comes extensive responsibility! The Epiphany enlightened CEC’s are under great scrutiny in what is written and said in conversation with interested ones. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely,

whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye both learned, and received and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you” (Phil. 4:8, 9). We live in a time when approving wrong is an acceptable principle when it brings name recognition, wealth, and power to that individual. The act of approving; a liking; that state or disposition of the mind, in which we assent to the propriety of a thing, with some degree of pleasure or satisfaction; as the laws of God require our *approbation*: This is approbateness!

We should respect God’s desire to provide Truth as due until the Mediatorial Reign of Christ opens and all those chosen vessels of God have been prepared to serve the heathen of the earth for everlasting life under perfect conditions. God has required of His Son to “Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for thy possession*” (Psa. 2:8).

We should keep in mind that we have received Truths from non-star-member servants, too. Bro. Johnson pointed to this service, for example, in referring to dreams and visions by some elders and general servants in E-9, p. 108-110, 112, 113. Also, E-10, p. xxiv, points out that, “generally speaking, typical Truth in its *first reception* is limited to the star-members. Yet others than these, *i.e.*, other scribes instructed in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13:52), have from time to time been privileged to *bring forth something new* from the storehouse, the Bible [italics ours].” And E-5, p. 38, states that the “Lord Himself promised that every able and faithful servant of the Truth would by Him be favored with bringing something new out of the storehouse” (Matt. 13:52; PT 2003, p. 42).

Although Moses himself was commanded to make the two trumpets, he evidently had the work done by the craftsmen, Bezaleel and Aholiab, assisted by their companions (see Ex. 31:1-6). Bezaleel types our Lord in His capacity of developing the Church and all its pertinent teachings. Aholiab represents the members of the seven stars, used by the Lord as special assistants in developing the Church and its teachings. Their assistants represent the antitypical scribes instructed in the matters of the Kingdom, bringing forth things new and old. These scribes consisted of general and special helpers of the members of the seven stars (Matt. 13:52; PT 2003, p. 3).

PHARISEES: *noun* [Heb. to separate.] One of a sect among the Jews, whose religion consisted in a strict observance of rites and ceremonies and of the traditions

of the elders, and whose pretended holiness led them to separate themselves as a sect, considering themselves as more righteous than other Jews.

Let us consider some sifting work that has always come when transition is taking place: We wish to begin with our Lord’s first coming. Our Lord’s ministry had progressed considerably and the people hung on His Words and said, “Never man spake like this man,” and “great multitudes followed Him.” But toward the close of His ministry, as the jealousy and animosity of the “Doctors of Divinity” and the Pharisees began to manifest itself, He became less popular; and we find that many of His hearers were leaving Him. And He said, “Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given him of My Father.” From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, “Will ye also go away?” Then Simon Peter answered and said unto Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Such siftings and testings of the Lord’s disciples during transition have been in progress throughout the Gospel Age and continue to this very day!

Something of interest is that only Matthew tells of his previous occupation as a publican which is an indication of his humility. That a publican was chosen illustrates the Lord’s impartiality and implies Matthew’s honesty, notwithstanding the general reputation of these despised servants of the Roman overlords. Originally named Levi, he was after his call to Apostleship known as Matthew (“gift of God”; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27; PT 2000, p. 56).

Our Lord’s reputation as one who consorted with publicans and sinners may have begun on this occasion, as Matthew at once prepared a supper in his own home for Jesus and for his own friends and acquaintances (Matt. 9:10). The Pharisees, cynical, critical, and fault-finding, objected that if Jesus were righteous, He would not be found in such company. The Lord replied that not the healthy, but the sick, needed a physician and the occasion furnished Him the opportunity to preach to them a very short sermon from the text of Hosea 6:6 to the effect that He had come not to call to repentance the righteous, but sinners.

These bad leaders were and are greedy sectarians, whose desire for power, honors, and filthy lucre is insatiable (Acts 20:30; Phil. 3:2; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3). They are unprofitable shepherds, without proper understanding, looking to their own ways and for gain especially from their own sects and denominations (Isa. 56:11; Ezek. 34:2-10;

John 10:12, 13). These circumstances have brought into the pulpit a very large proportion of what the Scriptures designate “hireling shepherds.” The responsibility, of the hireling shepherds, who have undertaken the gospel ministry in the name of Christ is very great. They stand very prominently before the people as the representatives of Christ, as special exponents of His spirit, and expounders of His Truth. And, as a class, they have had advantages above other men for coming to a knowledge of the Truth, and freely declaring it. They have been relieved from the burdens of toil and care in earning a livelihood which fetter other men, and, with their temporal wants supplied, have been granted time, quiet leisure, special education, and numerous helps of association, etc., for this very purpose (P-4, p. 62).

Let those ambitious for this world’s luxuries and wealth seek them in the fields of trade or in the lucrative professions; but let none become ministers of the Gospel of Christ from any other motive than love for God and His Truth and for His brethren; a love that will rejoice in sacrificing ease and wealth and honor of men—not grudgingly, but heartily. Nominal Christianity has grown great and worldly, and her servants are honored with the titles Reverend, Very Reverend, Most Reverend, and Doctor of Divinity; and with these honors and titles go salaries, not according to the minister’s needs, but on the commercial basis of his ability to attract large congregations and wealthy people. The natural result has followed—“The priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD and say, Is not the LORD among us? None evil can come upon us” (Mic. 3:11). “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:3, 4; P-6, p. 286, 287).

Accordingly, some in the Truth groups and some in Christendom were and are spiritually blind, bad religious leaders, or watchmen. Like the blind Pharisees in their day, they cannot discern the signs of the times (Matt. 15:14; 16:1-3; Luke 12:54-56). “They willingly are ignorant” of “the present truth” (2 Pet. 3:3-5; 1:12); they are like watchdogs that cannot bark a warning; they have many fanciful ideas (sleeping [*dreaming*; see margin, ASV]), and love ease and figurative slumber (Isa. 56:10).

Milton [one of the greatest of English poets] called them “blind mouths.” John Ruskin [a writer of polemical prose, philosopher, and social thinker] commenting on this, says: “These two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character in the two great offices of the church—those of bishop and pastor. A bishop means a person who sees; a pastor means one who feeds; the most unbishoply character a man can have is, therefore, to be blind; the most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed. Nearly all the evils of the church have arisen from bishops desiring *power* more than *light*. They want authority, not outlook. It is the king’s (Christ is our King) office to rule: the bishop’s office is to *oversee* the flock, to number the flock sheep by sheep; to be ready always to give a full account of it.”

Oh, my dear Brethren, God acted a husbandly part toward the Law Covenant throughout the Jewish Age, until at its end the servants of that covenant—the priest, Levites, Scribes, Pharisees, etc., proved their utter unworthiness, whereupon the Lord cast them off, the Law’s promises and its teachings, arrangements, institutions, etc., with all under them, from His favor.

When one that has served God in the study, practice, and spread of the Word of God’s Truth with favor and then sets this privilege aside, that Servant in so doing, proves their utter unworthiness, whereupon the Lord cast them off. Jehovah, who can read the heart, cast them off along with all under them, from His favor.

KING DAVID’S REPENTANCE

“Create in me a clean heart, O God.” (Psalm 51:1-17)

We open this study about King David’s Repentance with some thoughts on how bondage to sin originated! Sin as a great taskmaster, ruling the world, is a very grim but very truthful picture of the facts. Many inquire, How is it that God, Himself good, pure, and perfect, has brought forth human children under such a bondage to sin through imperfection? They inquire, Do not the Scriptures declare of God, “His work *is* perfect” (Deut. 32:4)? Why then this imperfection, why this subjection to the power of sin?

A true answer can come from one place only—the Bible, the Word of God; and that answer is the only satisfactory answer, the only one which meets all the requirements of the conditions as they are known to men.

That answer is that, although God’s work was perfect in the creation of man, yet the creature, being endowed with free moral agency, rebelled against the law of his Creator and by self-will and self-gratification brought himself under the sentence previously prescribed—“Dying thou

shalt die” (Gen. 2:17, margin). This deliberate, willful act on the part of our first parent not only brought himself under this penalty, but since his posterity proceeded from himself, all of his posterity, still in his loins, shared in his subjection to death, and in the slavery to sin consequent to his alienation from God and his failing powers as he gradually passed under the power of death. So then the fact that Father Adam *sold* to Sin himself and his posterity, yet in his loins, for a momentary gratification of self-will, meant not only his own enslavement, but also that all of his posterity would be born in such slavery to sin. And such are the facts of the case. All of his posterity can say with one of old, “I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psa. 51:5).

KING DAVID’S REPENTANCE

Prosperity did not work to King David’s personal advantage. After years of phenomenal success under the Lord’s blessing, when his kingdom was mighty and his name honorable, and the necessity for his personal participation in wars was passed, and his heart had begun to gravitate toward earthly pleasures and was less zealous for the Lord and the Law than at first, the king fell into very grievous sins, which appear all the more black in contrast with the high moral character shown by him in his earlier life, when he was the man after God’s own heart. The story of his sins, how he became enamored of Bathsheba and committed adultery with her, and subsequently, to shield himself, caused her husband Uriah to be placed in the forefront of the battle that he might be killed by the enemy, involving the loss of several other lives as well, is told in the Scriptures in a most straightforward manner, without the slightest effort to condone the king’s wrongdoing. No excuses are offered in connection with the account; the full weight of these awful crimes is laid directly on the king’s head. Whatever excuses may be offered on his behalf must come from the reader of the account.

We may suggest some thoughts along this line: in that day the kings of the world exercised a despotic authority, and it was a theory among the people that the king could do no wrong—that whatever he pleased to do was proper to him because of his high position as the head and ruler of the nation. We could in no sense of the word agree with such thought. Nevertheless, we can reasonably suppose that a sentiment so general would have more or less influence upon the mind of the king. He who respected Saul’s life, because he was the Lord’s anointed, may have to some extent fallen into the misconception that his own anointing by the Lord relieved him in some degree from the responsibilities resting upon others of his nation.

For about two years after these crimes were committed,

the king sought to stifle his conscience, and to consider that he was only using kingly liberties in what he had done. Nevertheless, his conscience smote him, and he felt an alienation from God and a condemnation under His law such as he would not have felt had he been of a different stamp of character. God was not hasty in reproving him either. He allowed him to have a full taste of heart bitterness—allowed him to feel the darkness of soul, absence of joy, resulting from the cloud which had come between him and the Lord. It was at the appropriate time, after David had passed through secret mournings and travailings of the soul, that the Lord sent him a reproof through Nathan the prophet to bring the whole matter clearly before his mind. Nathan, under the figure of a parable, excited the king’s sympathies and declaration of a very severe judgment—a death sentence—against the person offending, and then the Prophet brought home to him the lesson saying, “Thou art the man” (2 Sam. 12:7)!

DAVID CONFESSED HIS SINS

David committed some very serious sins, but he uncovered and confessed them before God, and earnestly sought God’s forgiveness. God forgave him and covered his sins in His sight, because of Jesus’ coming death on his behalf; for God “*quickeneth*, who were dead” [those dead in trespasses and sins—Eph. 2:1], “and calleth those things which be not as though they were” (Rom. 4:17). When David committed his great sin of adultery and murder against Uriah, God severely rebuked him through the prophet Nathan. David repented, saying, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan assured him, “The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die” (2 Sam. 12:13). In connection with David’s sin of numbering the people, his “heart smote him” and he “said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly” (2 Sam. 24:10). Again, he was forgiven, though in both cases he was punished for his sin.

We note David’s beautiful confessional prayer in Psa. 51, how he prayed for God to have mercy upon him, to blot out his transgressions, to cleanse him from his sin, to cast him not away nor take the holy Spirit from him, but to deliver him from blood guiltiness and restore to him the joy of God’s salvation. God graciously answered his prayer, as he testified in Psa. 32: “Blessed is he *whose* transgression is forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered [in God’s sight, because of the coming Messiah’s Ransom merit]. Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile” (vs. 1, 2;

comp. Rom. 4:6-8). God testified of David that he was a man after His own heart (Acts 13:22).

GOSPEL AGE KNOWLEDGE REQUIRES A HIGHER STANDARD

We are to remember that King David did not belong to the spiritual house of sons and had a far less clear view of such matters than that which would properly belong to every member of God's Gospel-Age house who are "taught of God." We are not, therefore, to expect to draw a lesson to ourselves along similar lines. Rather we of the Gospel-Age house, under the clearer conceptions of the Divine will, are to remember the higher interpretation of adultery and murder set forth in the New Testament: that whoever desires adultery, and is merely restrained from it by outward circumstances or fears, is really an adulterer in his heart (Matt. 5:28); that he that is angry with his brother, he who hates his brother, is a murderer—because the spirit of anger is that which, unrestrained, would lead to murder (Matt. 5:22); and that the person who covets the things of another and is merely restrained from taking them for lack of opportunity or fear of consequences, is at heart a thief.

When these principles are applied by God's Gospel-Age people in the examination of their hearts, it is entirely probable that some of these today may find themselves very near the plane of King David as respects sin, and so viewing matters they will exercise proportionately greater compassion in their judgment of the royal transgressor. Such, too, will find great consolation in the Lord's compassion, provided they are exercised in respect to their offenses as David was concerning his. If God were wanting in compassion, as are many of our fellow creatures, there would be nothing to hope for under such circumstances. It is when we realize that there is forgiveness with the Lord for all who are penitent at heart, and who, therefore, give evidence that their sins are not willful, but rather of the weakness of heredity and under the pressure of blinding temptations, that we are moved to repentance by a hope for better things.

The 51st Psalm is generally recognized as being the one in which the Psalmist expresses to God his contrition for his sins, and the fact that it is dedicated to the Chief Musician implies that it was the king's intention that it, in common with other of the Psalms, should be chanted in the Tabernacle services, for which he had set apart a large number of singers. We perceive that if the sin was flagrant and gross, the atonement which the king endeavored to make was a most public one. Probably many of the nation had felt more or less of the king's condemnation, and its influence must have been very injurious; and now

in his public view of it as sin, and his prayer for Divine forgiveness, the king would undo so far as possible not only the injury which he had inflicted upon his own conscience, and which as a cloud hung between the Lord and him, but he would undo also the evil influences as respects the conscience of the nation—on the subjects of adultery and murder.

Here again we see why David was described as a man after God's own heart. His sins were not pleasant to God—quite the reverse; but the later appreciation of the enormity of his sins, and his hearty repentance therefor to the Lord and desire to be cleansed from every evil way, were pleasing to the Lord. Here we have an illustration of how all things may work together for good to those who love God. By reason of his heart-loyalty to the Lord, and the principles of righteousness, even these terrible sins resulted in bringing a great blessing to David's own heart—humbling him—giving him an appreciation of his weakness and littleness, and of his need to abide close to the Lord, if he would have the Lord's fellowship and compassion and be safe from the temptations of his own fallen flesh. So, too, with God's people at the present time. How many of them have realized profitable lessons and blessings out of some of their stumblings—not that the stumblings were good nor of the Lord, but that the Lord was able to overrule such circumstances for good to those who are of the proper mind—rightly exercised by them to repentance and reformation.

DAVID'S REALIZATION OF HIS SIN

The first three verses of the Psalm express David's realization of his sin, and his trust in the Lord, without any attempt to apologize for his shortcomings. He trusted the Lord to make whatever allowances could be made and merely appealed to His great "lovingkindness." In calling to mind the multitude of God's tender mercies in the past, he expressed faith and trust that in some way the Lord could blot out these grievous transgressions and forgive them. The Lord had not yet clearly defined the way in which He could be just and yet be the justifier of sinners. Only vaguely through the shadows of the day of atonement sacrifices had He intimated that He had some way of His own by which in due time the guilty but repentant ones might be cleansed. David grasped the thought of mercy as understood in the types and shadows of the law, and much more may we grasp the thought of our Father's forgiveness when we see that it is exercised towards us by the Lord Jesus Christ, who already has given Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, and whose sacrifice has been accepted of the Father—as manifested by our Lord's resurrection

from the dead, and by the descent of the holy Spirit at Pentecost. If, therefore, David could trust the Lord for lovingkindness and tender mercies and forgiveness of sins, we too should be able to exercise full faith in the Divine character and plan of salvation from sin.

The fourth verse would seem to ignore the fact that wrongdoing had been done to fellow creatures, but we may preferably understand it to mean that while this wrong to fellow creatures was recognized by the king, he recognized a still higher responsibility to God, whose laws he had broken and whose kingly office, typifying that of the Christ, he had dishonored. So, in contrast between what man might think of his crime as against man and his own still higher consciousness of his sin as against the Lord, the latter seemed so much greater as to practically obscure the former. The greater sin as against the Almighty quite overshadows the wrongs to humanity. David declares his recognition of the fact that God is the great Judge, and that whatever His judgment would be, he knew in advance that it would be right.

In the fifth verse he introduces an extenuating thought, as though reminding the Lord that he was born in sin and therefore that perfection was not possible for him. But he does not use this fact as a screen behind which to hide his own responsibilities. Free to will, though a sinner by nature, he was necessarily responsible for yielding as he did to temptation, but he was confident that the Lord would give him the benefit of every mitigating circumstance.

DAVID PUNISHED FOR HIS SINS

It will be noted that David expected punishment from the Lord for his sins and was here expressing his confidence that the Lord would send no punishment which would not be reasonable and within the limits of justice. What he was praying for in this Psalm was not a remission of proper punishment, but rather for the cleansing of his heart in the sight of the Lord and for his restoration to the Divine favor. As a matter of fact, we find that the Lord did send a severe punishment upon the king, and that he restored the sinner to His favor, granting him to experience again the joys of His salvation. According to the sentiments of other kings of his time, evidently acquiesced in by the people of Israel, the king had taken an extremely moderate course in sin, in that he had not directly taken the life of Uriah but merely connived at his death in battle; but the king appreciated the fact that God was looking deeper than this and desired truth—righteousness in the inward parts—in the heart.

Outward crime and a crime allowed in the mind are alike heinous in God's sight: his experience had taught

the king wisdom. Now, in verse seven, David wished to be thoroughly cleansed, and poetically says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Hyssop was used in the sprinkling of the unclean under the Law. David, grasping to some extent the significance of the symbol, desired the antitypical cleansing of his *heart*.

David's appreciation of the Lord's thoroughness in dealing with sin and of His compassion in forgiveness are good lessons for some of the still more favored members of God's Gospel-Age house. Many of the latter, although having seen with "the eye of faith" the great atonement for sins made by our Lord Jesus, are still unable to appreciate the fact that the application of the merit of His sacrifice is quite sufficient to cleanse us from all sin and perfect us, that we may be recognized as absolutely pure in the Father's sight, and dealt with accordingly—not as sinners, but as prospective sons.

From the statement in the eighth verse we may reasonably infer that during the year that preceded this repentance, King David was in so miserable a state of mind that even the music of the singers, and of those who played skillfully upon the harp, and all the joyous songs of nature were sore to his heart—had no gladness in them to comfort his heart when it was barred from the Lord's presence and fellowship.

King David was longing for the joy and gladness which he had experienced in times past, and figuratively he likens himself to one whose bones had been broken. He knew that his joy and comfort would return if he could but have back again the Lord's favor. He knew, too, that the Lord could not look upon sin with any allowance, therefore his prayer: "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities [unrighteousness]. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

No true Christian can read these words without feeling a deep sympathy with the different expressions; and even though we have had no experience with such terrible sins as those which weighed upon the heart of David, nevertheless our higher responsibilities and higher conceptions of sin under the "new commandment" and under the instructions of the holy Spirit, cause us to feel with proportionate weight transgressions which in the sight of the world would appear nothing—such, for instance, as we have just mentioned: covetousness, hatred, slander, which are thefts and murders from the higher standpoint of the Divine view.

In verse thirteen (Psa. 51) the prophet proposes to the Lord that his discomfiture in Divine disfavor was used for the instruction of others—to show transgressors the Lord's ways and to turn sinners from the evil of their course. How appropriate this thought to us! Not until we know experimentally through faith in the blood of Christ that our sins have been put out of the Father's sight, not until we have experienced the joys of His salvation and forgiveness, are we in any condition to be servants to the Truth or illustrations to others. So, we see that it is only those who have been enlightened of the holy Spirit who are especially authorized to preach the Gospel. To others the Lord says, "What hast thou to do to . . . take my covenant [word] in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee"—refusing to submit to the Divine requirements (Psa. 50:16, 17).

The fourteenth verse repeats the same thought in a different form. If the Lord will deliver him from his *guilt* in connection with his sin, his tongue shall thereafter sing loudly the Lord's righteousness—not David's righteousness. This is the song that all the blood-washed may sing, "True and righteous are all thy ways, Lord God Almighty. Thou hast redeemed us from among men." None of us have any right to sing our own righteousness, for as the Apostle declares, "There is none righteous, no, not one." The mission of the cleansed ones is to accept and use the Lord's mercy towards them, to extol His righteousness, to acknowledge their unworthiness and to call upon others to recognize this fountain of righteousness and forgiveness.

Verse fifteen: "O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise." This expression implies that none need expect to have a proper opening of their mouths to show forth the Lord's praises, and give the call from darkness into His marvelous light, unless the Lord shall first have opened their lips with His mercy and Truth; for otherwise how could any expect to tell the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people? This equally implies that all who have had forgiveness of sins should be in a condition of spirit to make a full consecration of their all to the Lord, and then all such should expect an unsealing of their lips, that the message of God's Truth and grace may flow out from them for the instruction and blessing of others—as it is written, "Grace is poured upon thy lips." "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." While these are appropriate especially to our dear Redeemer, they are appropriate also to His Gospel-Age people; and all such who have never had

their lips unsealed to confess the Lord to the extent of their opportunity, have reason to question everything pertaining to their relationship to the Lord.

In verses sixteen and seventeen the king shows that he had acquired a deep insight into the meaning of some of the typical sacrifices—though probably, by inspiration, he wrote more wisely than he understood. The Day of Atonement sacrifices were sin offerings; the burnt offerings and peace offerings of the remainder of the year represented the consecration to the Lord and His service. Grasping this thought prophetically, to whatever extent he also grasped it intellectually, King David expressed his realization that the Lord is pleased rather with a broken and contrite condition of heart than with burnt offerings, which were but types. So, too, we learn that nothing that we can give the Lord, even after our acceptance in Christ, has any value in His sight until first of all we have given Him ourselves—our hearts, our wills.

DOES GOD SPURN THE BROKEN AND CONTRITE? NO!

Let us ever keep in memory that a broken and contrite heart the Lord never despises, will never spurn. Therefore, into whatever difficulty any of the Lord's people may stumble, if they find themselves hungering for the Lord's fellowship and forgiveness, if they find their hearts contrite and broken, let them not despair, but remember that God has made a provision through the merit of Christ which enables Him to accept and justify freely from all sin all that come unto Him through Jesus—through faith in His blood. However, there is a sin unto death—a sin unto the second death—from which there will be no recovery, no resurrection; but those who have broken and contrite hearts on account of their sins may know that they have not committed "the sin unto death," for their condition of heart proves this, as the Apostle declares: "It is impossible to renew again unto *repentance*" any who have committed the sin unto death—willful sinners against full light and knowledge. Let all, therefore, rejoice in the grace of our God, who is able through Christ, His accepted way, to save unto the uttermost all who come to Him, laying aside sin and its desires.

"If any man sin [through weakness and temptation—not intentionally], we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). Such, therefore, may come with faith unto God that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every (future) time of need (Heb. 4:16). But, like David, their prayers and hopes should be for a restoration of Divine favor and not for escape from chastisements needful to their

correction. God forgave David, but also chastened him (2 Sam. 12:11-14).

Surely King David must have learned a great lesson in *mercy* from his sad experience. How many times must he have called to mind his response to Nathan's parable, "the man that hath done this thing [*is worthy of death*]: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity!" Alas, poor David! These words showed that he had a mind, a heart, that was no stranger to justice and pity in other men's affairs, and that he was the more guilty in his much more serious violations of justice and compassion. "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth"—who is not condemned by his own declarations in respect to the affairs of others. Oh, how merciful to the failings of others it should make us when we remember our dear Redeemer's words, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses"; and when again we remember that we may not even pray for forgiveness of our sins unless we from the heart forgive those who have injured us and again desire our fellowship.

HOW DO WE BECOME A REAL CHRISTIAN?

A real Christian is a disciple, or follower, of Christ. Christ's disciples, or followers, were called Christians first in Antioch (Acts 11:26). There are certain distinct steps that an individual must take in order to become a disciple, a follower, of Christ, a real Christian:

(1) *Repentance*. According to the Bible, God created Adam in His own image, "very good" (Gen. 1:26-31), but Adam sinned by disobeying God, and so was condemned to death; and all mankind, in his loins when he sinned, share in that condemnation to death (Rom. 5:12, 19), and through heredity are imperfect—mentally, morally, physically, and religiously (Psa. 51:5). One who intelligently believes that he is by nature a sinner and manifests a godly sorrow thereat (2 Cor. 7:9-11), has taken the first step toward becoming a real Christian.

(2) *Justification*. "God heareth not sinners" (John 9:31); Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"; "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (John 14:6; Matt. 11:28). Note that He does not say; Go to this denomination or that one, but "Come unto *me*." God "loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins" (1 John 2:2; 4:10; Rom. 5:6-10). Jesus "gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6), so that Adam and all who shared the death sentence which came upon him might have an opportunity to return to God. One who is truly repentant and intelligently believes that

by Divine grace Jesus Christ the Righteous died for his sins and has faith in the merit of Jesus' ransom-sacrifice as the satisfaction before God for his sins, has taken the second step toward becoming a real Christian.

Many, including some popular evangelists, mistakenly think and teach that only these two steps are necessary in order for one to become a real Christian. They do not seem to realize that while those who are justified by faith have peace with God through Christ (Rom. 5:1), there is still a further step, as indicated in v. 2, "By whom also we have access by faith into this [further] grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." Only those who take this third step are real disciples, or followers, of Christ—real Christians.

(3) *Consecration*. This implies a complete dedication to God, a sanctifying or setting-apart of one's self to God and His service, a surrendering of one's human all to God, taking His will instead of one's own, even as Jesus did (Heb. 10:7; Matt. 26:39, 42). St. Paul writes in Rom. 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren [they must already be justified believers in order to be addressed as brethren], by the mercies of God [His past favors], that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Jesus said, "Whosoever will come after me [be My disciple], let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34), and "he that loveth father or mother . . . son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26). He showed that self-denial and world-denial are necessary to real discipleship. It means a refusal on the part of the consecrated to gratify even their proper human sentiments selfward and world-ward whenever such indulgence interferes with devotion to the interests of God's cause.

TAKING UP OUR CROSS

In addition to self-denial and world-denial, Jesus tells anyone who would be a real disciple to "take up his cross." To take up the cross would mean to accept and resolutely grapple with the trials (1 Pet. 1:7; 4:12), persecutions (2 Tim. 3:12) and sufferings (1 Pet. 2:21) in following the Master in the way of sacrifice or suffering for righteousness' sake, even to the extent of death. Elsewhere in Luke 14:27 Jesus says, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." He warns that taking up and carrying the cross is a serious matter. Instead of seeking to excite people into doing something they would not afterward fully understand or appreciate, as many modern-day evangelists do, Jesus urges prospective disciples to sit down first and count the cost (v. 28). It would be better

not to take up the cross unless we have the determination to go on unto the end. He illustrates this by saying, “No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back,

is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). If you take up the cross, it is to be not merely *lifted*, but *carried* faithfully unto death.

THE GREAT VALUE OF DISCIPLINE

“My son do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by him; for those whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons” (Heb. 12:5-8 NASV).

This subject begs the question. Who desires discipline? We live in a time when discipline to most people in various nations is not popular. The majority in various nations seem to be governed by the selfish desire for pleasure and they seem to make this (*i.e.*, hedonism) the chief aim in life. Many people seem to be governed chiefly by such desires as love for the opposite sex, love for food and drink, love for gaining and retaining money and other possessions, love for travel, *etc.* As prophesied for “the last days” of this Gospel Age, or Church Age, “men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

Duties and obligations, including solemn vows to follow the teachings of God’s Word (the Bible), and also marriage vows, are often lightly regarded or soon set aside when they conflict with the individual’s desire for pleasure. Spouses and children are often largely or entirely forsaken as pleasure-gratification dominates the person.

Some seem to be governed by the idea that selfish desires should not be suppressed but indulged, whenever and however possible. Accordingly, some feel that sexual desires, like the desires for food and drink, should be indulged whenever, wherever and with whomever will consent to their obtaining the gratification of their lust.

In business dealings, the principles of justice are frequently set aside. Many are governed rather by “situation ethics”—the following of any course they can get away with, regardless of the principles of justice and the law. In this same world in which many are governed by little or no discipline, Christians are, as our text teaches, to be governed by the discipline of God and Christ. Jesus says to His disciples, “Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13; compare Col. 4:6). In other words, they (consecrated children of God) desire discipline and are to exercise a preserving, purifying, seasoning effect on others about them. He says also, “Ye are the light of the world” (v. 14), and we are to let our light shine before others, that God may be glorified (v. 16). God says through the Apostle Paul (Phil. 2:15, 16; compare

ASV), “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke [having in us no just reason for being rebuked], in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.”

CHASTENING INCLUDED IN DISCIPLINE

The Greek word translated *discipline* in our text is *paideia*, which literally means *child-training*. The KJV Bible translates it chastening, but the better translation is discipline, as given in the NASB, the ASV, The Interlinear Bible, *etc.* Chastening is defined as correction by punishment. This is included in our discipline, for all Jesus’ followers do sin by omission and commission and need correction. We remember that although our Lord Jesus was a Son in whom there was no sin (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26), yet He received, as a part of the “cup” the Father poured for Him, various trials, and tastings— included in His discipline. All these experiences were very profitable to Him, showing that the Father loved Him, that the Father had something which He was desirous that our Lord would do that He would not have been qualified to perform without some of these educational, disciplinary instructions and experiences. He learned obedience by these disciplinary experiences, including the many and great sufferings which He endured (Heb. 5:8).

VARIOUS REASONS FOR DISCIPLINING

As Jesus’ disciples, some disciplines, some chastisements, come to us as a result of our own mistakes and the natural consequences flowing from those mistakes and the apologies and heartaches which may necessarily follow them. God could save us from these experiences and so seclude and shelter our lives that we would not have anything to tempt us. But such is not His purpose. He wishes us to have these experiences that we may be guided in the right way and learn of our own weaknesses, “Examine yourselves . . . how that Jesus Christ is in you . . .” (2 Cor. 13:5).

If we did not come into contact with various testing experiences, we would not know wherein we are weak.

We learn where we can strengthen our characters and how we can be thoroughly developed as Jesus' disciples. The Scriptures speak of our Lord Jesus as "enduring such contradiction of sinners against himself" (Heb. 12:3). Our trials, or disciplines, in meeting every opposition that can come to us, should bring more or less of correction in righteousness. Even if this would not mean outward stripes, we, in any event, would have our mental regrets as His disciples and would get a form of correction or discipline. Additionally, the Lord causes His children to come into peculiar trials as an example either to the brethren or to the world. In many of these, whatever the cause, we may understand them to be also corrections or (1) instructions in righteousness, (2) testing of our learning ability, (3) correction in righteousness, (4) after proper teaching and correction sentencing as to our place in the kingdom.

The trials and difficulties of the consecrated child of God are not to be esteemed as the results of Divine carelessness or indifference in regard to the consecrated one's interests, but rather as the outworking of Divine providence on one's behalf. Those who can see the matter from this viewpoint are enabled to learn some of life's most helpful lessons and are thereby prepared for the glorious future which God has arranged for those who faithfully carry out their covenant of consecration.

We should seek to judge of the purpose of our experiences by self-examination, that we may ascertain whether in our conduct there has been something out of harmony with the Father's will. In every case, our experience is a test of our loyalty of heart—as to our willingness to learn the lessons which Jehovah is seeking to teach us and as to our recognition of the source from which they come.

Sometimes we cannot be sure whether a trialsome experience we have is a punishment for wrongdoing—a chastisement for some fault or faults in us—or, on the other hand, just a disciplinary experience from the Lord to test us, to see if we will maintain our integrity, as He arranged in the case of Job (2:3, 9; 27:5). If we cannot reasonably or fully determine the reason for our trialsome experience, we are to accept it nevertheless and seek to get all the good out of it that we can. God's true people are learning how to grow in Christlikeness, how to be pleasing in the Father's sight, to be well-qualified for a particular service, as the seed of Abraham. And His discipline is often the means employed for that instruction.

Christ's disciples need to follow the instruction in practical lessons in character development of a very high

order, and consequently they are receiving objective knowledge such as no other creatures in the universe receive. Because they are trying to live righteously, trying to please the Heavenly Father, they are being disciplined for instruction, that they may be fully conformed to the Divine Will, that they may lay aside their own preferences, that they may not do their own will, but that of the Lord. Jesus advised the consecrated to "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:29).

Such experiences are not for mankind in general. Such experiences were not given to Adam. He was required to live merely in harmony with his environment and to be obedient to the Heavenly Father. Such experiences are not for the angels. They are required merely to live righteously, to avoid sin and to use their bodies in harmony with the Divine purposes of their creation. They occupy such positions as are natural to them.

But for those who are to be of the pre-Millennial seed of Abraham and exalted in the Millennial Mediatorial Reign, it is necessary that they make special manifestations of loyalty, self-abasement, and self-sacrifice. Being of the pre-Millennial seed of Abraham, the Consecrated Epiphany Campers surely believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and are therefore justified by faith; therefore, from this standpoint, they are to be numbered among the just, even as the Ancient and Youthful Worthies are similarly numbered among the just. And the Consecrated Epiphany Campers did not receive this grace of God in vain, for they consecrated and thus made it their own. Will this faith justification be taken from them in the resurrection awakening? Surely not! If they die believing in the Lord, they will come forth in the resurrection still believing in Him. Dying as of the just, they will be raised as of the just (Luke 14:14). What was true of Jesus should be true also of His disciples, whom He bought with His precious blood (Matt. 10:25; Acts 20:28). Any disciple of Christ that wants to do a good job gets his tools ready first.

Every child of God will need chastening. If we wander from the paths of righteousness, we are chastened to bring us back; but even if we did not wander, we will still need discipline, that we might learn obedience, even as our Lord Himself did. Of St. Paul the Lord said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). The Apostle was put through disciplinary experiences because he was a favored child of God. And it is this way with all the Lord's chosen ones, like the Captain of our salvation, Jesus, each and

all must learn and prove their obedience and loyalty to the divine plan by suffering in this present time. Yes, God wants a consecrated people fitted and prepared for heavenly and earthly blessings in accordance with God's will. Disciplining is prominent in qualifying for making our calling and election sure.

So, it was with our Lord and with the apostles: and it is written for our encouragement that the sufferings of this present time work out "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So, it is with Christ's disciples. There are people who say of us, "Those who endeavor to do God's will suffer more than those who do not try; we do not care to undertake any such experience." These people may succeed in having fewer trials in the present life, but they will have blessings of a lower order in the world to come when the faithful will be exalted under the Lord in the Kingdom. Let us request of the Lord that He shows us how much more it is our privilege to suffer for His sake!

THE PATH TO THE KINGDOM

These experiences with trouble are the very tests of character necessary for our development. The reason why some of the consecrated will not make their calling and election sure as pre-Millennial seed of Abraham is that *they have not developed enough determination—enough strength of character—a willingness to follow directions.* They will either develop that strength by faithfulness under difficult trials or they will lose out. Oh, God wants us to be servants that He can count on to be a part of "the salt of the earth" and as shining lights in "this present [more than ever] evil world" (Gal. 1:4). Let us not compromise with the world but seek to live so as to please our Heavenly Father.

This great work of developing and training character is necessarily a slow and tedious one, and not infrequently it is a painful process. But the Apostle plainly tells us that such things are necessary for the development of steadfast and enduring character. Consider how your own experience has verified this, you who have been for some time under the Lord's special care and leading. How much richer you are for all the lessons of experience, and for the patience and other spirit-fruits that experiences have developed in you! Like the Apostle, you can say, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11).

And, if you continue to endure cheerfully the disciplinary experiences the Heavenly Father arranges for

you, you will develop in Christlikeness to the point where you can say with the Apostle, "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." "I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation" (Rom. 5:3-5; 2 Cor. 7:4).

Job 36:10 speaks clearly to the consecrated child of God, "He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity." "The path of the just [those justified by faith] *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). The perfect day has not yet come—when God's will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Let us, therefore, "walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8), following carefully and closely the fiery, cloudy pillar of God's Word of Truth, as it leads us out of the wilderness to our promised rest (Num. 9:15-23; Deut. 1:33). And let us, as true followers of our Lord and Master, go on in our development "till we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the *knowledge* of the son of God" (Eph. 4:13 Diaglott).

Resting in God's loving care requires a good measure of discipline. We live in a time when to most of the people discipline is not popular. The majority seem to be governed by the selfish desire for pleasure and they seem to make this their chief aim in life. Many people seem to be governed chiefly by such desires as love for the opposite sex, love for food and drink, love for gaining and retaining money and other possessions, love for travel as prophesied for "the last days" of this Expanded Gospel Age Harvest. Not so for the consecrated child of God, it is for discipline we endure. We recognize God's call "my son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord" (Heb. 12:5 NASV). We have duties and obligations, including our solemn vow to follow the teachings of God's Word (the Bible). "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:33). We also have our marriage vows and our vow to care for the children we produce. We use discipline in our sexual desires, our business dealings, the desires for food and drink. In business dealings, the principles of justice are frequently set aside by the worldly.

Many, however, are governed rather by "situation ethics"—the following of any course they can get away with, regardless of the principles of justice and the law. One principle is Personalism: people are the first concern, not laws. Love is something that is experienced by people.

So Personalism is the view that if we are to maximize love, we need to consider the person in a situation—the “who” of a situation. Summing up this Fletcher says: Love is of people, by people, and for people. So, a person who practices “situation ethics” approaches ethical problems with some general moral principles rather than a rigorous set of ethical laws; and is prepared to give up even those principles if doing so will lead to a greater good. The boss principle of “situation ethics” is to create the most loving consequences.

In this same world in which many are governed by little or no discipline, Christians are to be governed by the discipline of God and Christ. To us, His disciples, Jesus says, “Ye are the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13; compare Col. 4:6). In other words, we are to exercise a preserving, purifying, seasoning effect on others around us. He says also, “Ye are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14), and we are to let our light shine before others, that God may be glorified (v. 16). God says through the Apostle Paul (Phil. 2:15, 16; compare ASV), “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke (having in us no just reason for being rebuked), in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.”

The consecrated child of God has the desire to follow instructions through a knowledge of the absolute justice of the God with whom we have to do. This knowledge was prepared for by the Mosaic Law, which was a “schoolmaster,” or pedagogue, to lead men to Christ (Gal. 3:23-25). And Jesus, by His obedience to that Law, *magnified* it and showed its honorableness, its worthiness, and honored God, the author of that Law showing His character. Love would, of necessity, mean the fulfillment of justice, because the law or requirements of the Lord are based upon justice, “the foundation of His throne.” We are to view the commandments of the Lord from this standpoint and to see first that our love for God is just—must recognize that we owe Him love, devotion, appreciation, because of what He has done and promises yet to do for us. Justice calls for our loving, reverential obedience to the Lord. It is the same with respect to our love for our fellow men. Justice, as well as respect for our Heavenly Father’s regulations, calls on us to do right to our neighbor.

Most of the Nominal Church and mankind, in general have preferred to apply their own earthy and pragmatic means and principles to the problems associated with man’s fallen estate, rather than adopt those high

moral and religious principles of absolute justice and perfect love that are set before us in the Word of God (Isa. 55:8, 9). Let us rejoice in God’s absolute justice and work with all diligence to be a tabernacle fit for God’s habitation!

By being truly consecrated children of God, we are resting in God’s promises—in His strength and ability to make good His promises; for we know that He who has called us is able to fulfil all His good Word. This peace, or rest, is the special blessing of the holy Spirit. Only in proportion as we receive the holy Spirit, the holy mind of God, the holy disposition, can we have this peace fulfilled in us. It is a matter of simple ratio. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, in the knowledge of the Truth and its Spirit, we shall have this to comfort and strengthen us, and we shall have more of the peace of God every day and be able to prosper and abide in His love. Let us be filled with the desire to receive our instruction from Jehovah through His appointed vessels for whosoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken away (Luke 8:18).

It has been written for our instruction and comfort that “this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (Resting in God’s Loving Care) (1 John 5:4). This faith is built upon the testimony of God’s Word—a sure foundation. It is only through maintaining strong and unwavering faith that the peace of God will abide with His children. “No good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly”; “all things work together for good to them that love God” (Psa. 84:11; Rom. 8:28). “The eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers” (1 Pet. 3:12). If we keep our minds stayed on God and meditate on His many precious promises to His consecrated people, if our fixed purpose is to do His will only, He will maintain us in the fullness of peace, prosperity, and give us the victory under all conditions.

Don’t make light of the Lord’s DISCIPLINE and don’t give up when He corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he LOVES (Hebrews 12:5-6).

The Lord allows trials, for whatever the reason; understand that they may also be corrections or:

- (1) instructions in righteousness,**
- (2) testing of our learning ability,**
- (3) correction in righteousness,**
- (4) after proper teaching and correction, will come sentencing as to our place in the kingdom.**



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

BIBLE QUESTION

Question—Will those of the Second Death Class realize that they are going into the Second Death?

Answer—Some of them will not, and some of them will. During the Harvest there were persons who had given many evidences of spirit begetting, but who later denied the Ransom. They persevered to the end in such ransom denial, yet believing that they were in God's special favor and dying in that condition. We might instance Mr. Barbour as a case to the point. Apparently he gave no evidence of sorrow, remorse or anything other than satisfaction in his denial of the Ransom, and died in the belief that he was a child of God. He is therefore an example of those of the Second Death Class who die ignorant of the fact of their dying the Second Death. But as pictured forth by Cain and Judas, certain of the Second Death Class will realize that they have sinned the sin unto death. Those who, as the antitypical Judas, betray the Christ Class here in the end of the Age, will realize their guilt and its penalty, and will suffer deep but unavailing remorse as typed by Cain and Judas. Often Satan plagues faithful or measurably faithful brethren with the thought that they are going into the Second Death, and most inexpressibly grieves them thereby, even as for a while in the garden he made our Lord fear that He was going into the Second Death. If Satan should ever assail us in such a way, let us go at once to the Father in prayer, as our Lord did, and the Father will send us comfort, as He did to our Lord Jesus (Heb. 5:7). At such times let us earnestly and honestly examine ourselves for the witness of the Spirit, and, finding it, we may assure ourselves that we are sons of God. This witness when complete consists of the seven following parts:

(1) a heart appreciation of the deep things of God especially the operation of the spirit of begetting in the heart (1 Cor. 2:6-16),

TO:

- (2) heavenly aspirations (Col. 3:1-4),
- (3) opportunities of service (Matt. 21:28),
- (4) growth in Christlikeness (Rom. 8:29),
- (5) chastisement for faults (Heb. 12:5-11),
- (6) trials and tests of character (Jas. 1:12) and
- (7) persecution for righteousness (Matt. 5:10-12).

Whoever has all of these evidences of his standing with God or at least the first and second of them is not given over to the Second Death; for he is a son of God.

OBITUARIES

Bro. Darling Johnson, age 87, of Wilmington, NC died Oct. 29, 2022. He is survived by his wife Vera, three children and four grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces and nephews. A funeral service was held Saturday, November 5, 2022, at 11:00 AM officiated by Bro. Jon Hanning.

Sr. Sandra Melle, age 66 of Independence, KS, died Nov. 17, 2022. She was the daughter of Francis and Betty Melle. All were associated with Bible Standard Ministries for many years. Bro. Richard Piquere officiated at the internment.

OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL 2023

Monday April 3rd
After 6:00 PM

www.biblestandard.com

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