1Red - Redemption Or The First Advent Of Christ With His Life And Ministry (1877)

PAMPHLETS / 1Red - Redemption Or The First Advent Of Christ With His Life And Ministry (1877) / PREFACE

PREFACE

IN PRESENTING TO THE PUBLIC A SERIES OF PAMPHLETS UPON THE LIFE OF CHRIST THE PUBLISHERS WISH TO SAY THAT THE WRITER IS A CHRISTIAN LADY OF GREAT EXPERIENCE, HAVING BEEN A WRITER AND PUBLIC SPEAKER FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS. HER LABORS HAVE EXTENDED INTO TWENTY STATES, AND ALSO INTO THE CANADAS. BY THE POWER OF DIVINE GRACE SHE HAS OBTAINED THE REPUTATION IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD, AS WELL AS AMONG HER PEOPLE, OF BEING A FORCIBLE SPEAKER, AND EMINENTLY QUALIFIED TO TEACH THE PEOPLE.

IT IS VERY EVIDENT TO ALL WHO HEAR MRS. WHITE THAT HER MIND HAS BEEN VISITED BY HEAVENLY ILLUMINATIONS, WHICH HAVE QUALIFIED HER TO PRESENT THE FACTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST IN CONNECTION WITH THE GREAT PLAN OF HUMAN REDEMPTION IN A CLEAR LIGHT. ONE THING IN PARTICULAR WILL IMPRESS THE READER, THAT THE WRITER OF THESE LITTLE BOOKS PRESENTS MANY BEAUTIFUL THOUGHTS WHICH ARE NOT EXPRESSED IN OTHER WRITINGS OF THE KIND. AND THESE THOUGHTS ARE SO VERY NATURAL IN THEIR CONNECTIONS WITH THE GREAT SUBJECT, SO SIMPLE, PLAIN, AND BEAUTIFUL, THAT THE READER WILL OFTEN INQUIRE WHY HE HAS NOT BEFORE THOUGHT OF THEM.

THESE PAMPHLETS WILL NOT FAIL TO DO GOOD, AND ONLY GOOD WHEREVER THEY MAY BE CIRCULATED AND READ. WE BESPEAK FOR THEM A WIDE CIRCULATION, AS WELL AS A CANDID AND PRAYERFUL READING. PUBLISHERS.

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The Great Controversy

Chapter I. - The First Advent of Christ

The blood of beasts could not satisfy the demands of God in atoning for the transgression of his perfect law. The life of a beast was of less value than the life of the offending sinner, therefore it could not be a ransom for sin. It could only be acceptable with God as a figure, representing the perfect Offering which the blood of beasts prefigured. {1Red 9.1}

Man could not atone for man. He was created lower than the angels, and his sinful, fallen condition would constitute him an imperfect offering, an atoning sacrifice of less value than Adam before his fall. God made man perfect and upright, and after his transgression there could be no sacrifice acceptable to God for him, unless the offering made should in value be superior to man as he was while in his state of perfection and innocency. {1Red 9.2}

The divine Son of God was the only one of sufficient value to satisfy the claims of God's perfect law. The angels were sinless, but of less value than the law of God. They were amenable to law. They were messengers to do the will of Christ, and before him to bow. They were created

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beings, and probationers. Upon Christ no requirements were laid, as upon created beings. He had power to lay down his life, and to take it again. No obligation was laid upon him to undertake the work of atonement. It was a voluntary sacrifice that he made. His life was of sufficient value to rescue man from his fallen condition. The Son of God was in the form of God, and he thought it not robbery to be equal with God. He was the only one, who as a man walked the earth, who could say to all men, Who of you convinceth me of sin? He had united with the Father in the creation of man, and he had power through his own divine perfection of character to atone for man's sin, and to elevate him, and bring him back to his first estate. {1Red 9.3}

The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver. He knew that his life alone could be sufficient to ransom fallen man. He was of as much more value than man, as his noble, spotless character, and exalted office, as commander of all the heavenly host, were above the work of man. He was in the express image of his Father, not in features alone, but in perfection of character. As he was without blemish, he alone could become an acceptable offering for man. {1Red 10.1}

The sacrificial offerings, and the priesthood of the Jewish system, were instituted of God to represent the death and mediatorial work of Christ. All those ceremonies had no meaning, and no virtue, only as they related to Christ, who was himself the foundation and existence of the entire system. The Lord had made known to Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and the ancient worthies, especially Moses, that the ceremonial system of sacrifices and priesthood, of

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themselves, were not sufficient to secure the salvation of one soul. The system of sacrificial offerings pointed to Christ. Through these the ancient worthies saw Christ, and believed in him. These were ordained of God to keep before the people the fearful separation which sin had made between God and man, requiring a mediating ministry. Through Christ, the communication which was cut off because of Adam's transgression,

was opened between God and the ruined sinner. The infinite sacrifice that Christ voluntarily made for man remains a mystery that angels cannot fully fathom. {1Red 10.2}

The Jewish system was symbolical, and was to continue until the perfect Offering should take the place of the figurative. The Mediator, in his office and work, would greatly exceed in dignity and glory the earthly, typical priesthood. The people of God, from Adam's day down to the time when the Jewish nation became a separate and distinct people from the world, had been instructed in regard to the Redeemer to come, which their sacrificial offerings represented. This Saviour was to be a Mediator, to stand between the Most High and his people. Through this provision a way was opened whereby the guilty sinner might find access to God through the mediation of another. The sinner could not come in his own person, with his guilt upon him, and with no greater merit than he possessed in himself. Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demand of the divine law. He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish. The extent of the terrible consequences of sin could never have been known, had not the remedy provided been of infinite value. The salvation of fallen man was procured at such an

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immense cost, that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the Majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race. {1Red 11.1}

As the time drew near for the Son of God to make his first advent, Satan became more vigilant in preparing the hearts of the Jewish people to be steeled against the evidences he should bring of his Messiahship. The Jews had become proud and boastful. The purity of the priesthood had not been preserved, but was fearfully corrupted. They retained the forms and ceremonies attached to the priesthood, while their hearts were not in the work. They did not sustain personal piety and virtuous characters. And the more they were wanting in the qualifications necessary to the sacred work, as priest of the most high God, the more tenacious were they of outward show of piety, zeal, and devotion. They were hypocritical. They loved the honors of the world, and were ambitious to become exalted through riches. In order to obtain their desire, they improved every opportunity to take advantage of the poor, especially of the widow and fatherless. They exacted heavy sums of money of those who were conscientious, on various pretenses, for the Lord's treasury, and used the means thus dishonestly obtained for their own advantage. They were rigorous themselves to outwardly keep the law. They appeared to show great respect for traditions and customs, in order to obtain money from the people to gratify their corrupt ambition. {1Red 12.1}

Traditions, customs, and needless ceremonies, were repeated to the people, which God had not given them through Moses or any other one. They originated from no higher source than man. The

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chief priests, scribes, and elders, forced these upon the people as the commandments of God. Their hearts were hard and unfeeling. They showed no mercy to the poor and unfortunate. Yet, at the same time, while praying in the market-places, and giving alms

to be seen of men, and thus putting on the outward semblance of goodness, they were devouring widows' houses by their heavy taxes which they laid upon them. They were apparently exact in outward forms when observed of men; for they wished to give impressions of their importance. They wished the people to have exalted ideas of their zeal and devotion to religious duties, while they were daily robbing God by appropriating the offerings of the people to themselves. {1Red 12.2}

The priesthood had become so corrupt that the priests had no scruples in engaging in the most dishonest and criminal acts to accomplish their designs. Those who assumed to fill the office of high priest prior to, and at, the time of Christ's advent, were not men divinely appointed to the sacred office. They had eagerly aspired to the office through love of ambition and show. They desired a position where they could have power and authority, and practice fraud under a garb of piety, and thereby escape detection. The high priest held a position of power and importance. He was not only counselor and mediator, but judge; and there was no appeal from his decision. The priests were held in restraint by the authority of the Romans, and were not allowed the power of legally putting any one to death. This power rested with those who bore rule over the Jews. Men of corrupt hearts sought the distinguished office of high priest, and frequently

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obtained it by bribery and assassination. The high priest, clad in his consecrated and expensive robes, with the breastplate upon his breast, the light playing upon the precious stones inlaid in the breastplate, presented a most imposing appearance, and struck the conscientious, true-hearted people with reverence and awe. The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This order of priesthood was not to pass to another, or be superseded by another. {1Red 13.1}

The Jewish nation had corrupted their religion by useless ceremonies and customs. This laid a heavy tax upon the people, especially the poorer classes. They were also under bondage to other nations, and required to pay tribute to them. The Jews were unreconciled to their bondage, and looked forward to the triumph of their nation through the Messiah, the powerful deliverer foretold in prophecy. Their views were narrow. They thought the Coming One would, at his appearing, assume kingly honors, and, by force of arms, subdue the heathen nations, and take the throne of David. Had they, with humble minds and spiritual discernment, studied the prophecies, they would not have been found in so great error as to overlook the prophecies which pointed to his first advent in humility, and misapply those which spoke of his second coming with power and great glory. The Jewish people had been striving for power. They were ambitious for worldly honors. They were proud and corrupt, and could not discern sacred things. They could not distinguish between the first and second appearings of Christ. The glory described by the prophets as

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attending his second advent, they looked for a fulfillment of in his first advent. Their own glory was to them their greatest anxiety. All their worldly and ambitious desire was the establishment of a temporal kingdom, which they supposed would reduce the world to

subjection, and exalt them with authority and power to reign as kings over them. They had made the proud boast to the heathen nations, to whom they were in subjection, that they were not to oppress them long; for their reign would soon commence, which would be more exalted and glorious than that even of Solomon. {1Red 14.1}

Christ was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger, surrounded by the beasts of the stall. And is this indeed the Son of God, in all outward appearance a frail, helpless creature, so much resembling other infants? His divine glory and majesty were veiled by humanity, yet angels heralded his birth. Angels that ministered unto him were not permitted to reveal their glory to the eyes of men. The tidings of his birth were borne with joy to the heavenly courts, while the great men of the earth knew it not. The proud Pharisees and scribes, with their hypocritical ceremonies, and apparent devotion to the law, knew nothing of the Babe of Bethlehem. They were ignorant of the manner of his first appearing, notwithstanding all their boasted learning and wisdom in expounding the law and prophecies in the schools of the prophets. They were devising means to advantage themselves. Their study was as to the most successful manner to obtain riches and worldly honor. They were wholly unprepared for the revelation of the Messiah. They looked for a mighty prince, who should reign

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upon David's throne, and whose kingdom should endure forever. Their proud and lofty ideas of the coming of the Messiah were not in accordance with the prophecies which they professed to be able to expound to the people. They were spiritually blind, and were leaders of the blind. {1Red 15.1}

The King of glory stooped low to take humanity; and angels, who had witnessed his majesty and splendor in the heavenly courts, as he was worshiped by all the heavenly messengers, were not prepared to find their divine Commander in a position of so great humiliation. His bed was in a manger, and he was surrounded by the beasts of the stall. Yet even in his humiliation, they could bow before him without forfeiting their allegiance to Jehovah. {1Red 16.1}

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." The wise men from the east had been waiting for the predicted Messiah. They had studied prophecy, and knew the time was at hand when Christ would come, and they were anxiously watching for some sign of this great event, that they might be among the first to welcome the infant heavenly King, and worship him. These wise men had seen the heavens illuminated with light, which enshrouded the heavenly messengers who heralded the advent of Christ to the shepherds of Israel, and after the angelic messenger returned to Heaven, a luminous star appeared, and lingered in the heavens. The unusual appearance of the large, bright star which they had never seen before, hanging as a sign in

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the heavens, attracted their attention, and the Spirit of God moved them out to seek this heavenly Visitor to a fallen world. The wise men directed their course where the star seemed to lead them. As they drew nigh to the city of Jerusalem, the star was

enshrouded in darkness, and no longer guided them. They reasoned that the Jews at Jerusalem could not be ignorant of the great event of the advent of the Messiah, and they made inquiries in the vicinity of Jerusalem. They plainly stated their errand. They were in search of Jesus, the king of the Jews, for they had seen his star in the east, and had come to worship him. {1Red 16.2}

The city of Jerusalem was thrown into great excitement by the sayings of the wise men. The news was immediately carried to Herod. He was exceedingly troubled, yet disguised his discomfiture, and received the men with apparent courtesy. {1Red 17.1}

"When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."

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{1Red 17.2}

Although Herod received the wise men with apparent respect, yet the intimation by them of the birth of a king to reign in Jerusalem, excited his envy and hatred against the infant whom he thought might prove his rival, and drive him, or his descendants, from the throne. A storm of opposition and satanic fury took possession of Herod to destroy this infant king. Yet he put on a calm exterior, and requested a private interview with the wise men. He then inquired particularly the exact time the star appeared. He apparently hailed the supposition of the birth of Christ with joy, expressing a desire to be immediately informed by the wise men, that he might be among the first to show him true honor by worshiping him also. The wise men were not able to read the heart of the tyrant Herod; but God, who is acquainted with every emotion of the soul, with the intents and purposes of the heart, was not deceived by his hypocritical pretenses. His power will protect and preserve the precious infant Saviour from Satan's devices, until his mission on earth is accomplished. "When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." After the wise men had left Jerusalem they again saw, to their great joy, the guiding star in the heavens, which directed them to the birthplace of our Saviour. "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

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{1Red 18.1}

Herod understood that Christ was to reign over a temporal kingdom, and he was utterly averse to the idea of a Jewish king. The chief priests and scribes had professed to understand the prophecies in reference to the appearing of Christ. They had

repeated the prophecies which relate to the second appearing of Christ in power and great glory, to put down all authority, and to rule over the kingdoms of the whole earth. They had, in a boastful, resentful manner, asserted that Christ was to be a temporal prince, and that every kingdom and nation was to bow in submission to his authority. These priests had not searched the prophecies with an eye single to the glory of God, or with a desire to conform their lives to the high standard marked out by the prophets. They searched the Scriptures to find ancient prophecies which they could in some way interpret to sustain their lofty pride, and to show with what contempt God regarded all the nations of the world except the Jewish nation. They declared that the power and authority they were then compelled to respect and obey, would soon come to an end; for Messiah would take the throne of David, and, by force of arms, restore the Jews to their liberty, and to their exalted privileges. The understanding of the Jews was darkened. They had no light in themselves. They were seeing the prophecies through their own perverse, corrupt understanding. Satan was leading them on to their own ruin. Herod was determined to defeat the purposes of the Jews, and to humble these proud boasters, by destroying Christ as soon as he should be found. {1Red 19.1}

After the mission of the wise men had been accomplished, they were purposing to return, and

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bear the joyful news to Herod of the success of their journey. But God sent his angels in the night season to turn the course of the wise men. In the vision of the night they were plainly told not to return to Herod. They obeyed the heavenly messengers, and returned to their homes another way. "And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And when they were departed, behold the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt." {1Red 19.2}

The Lord moved upon the wise men to go in search of Jesus, and he directed their course by a star. This star, leaving them when near Jerusalem, led them to make inquiries in Judah; for they thought it was not possible for the chief priests and scribes to be ignorant of this great event. The coming of the wise men made the whole nation acquainted with the object of their journey, and directed their attention to the important events which were transpiring. God well knew that the advent of his Son to earth would stir the powers of darkness. Satan did not want that light should come into the world. The eye of God was upon his Son every moment. The Lord had fed his prophet Elijah by a miracle when upon a long journey. He could obtain food from no other source. He rained manna from Heaven for the children of Israel. The Lord provided a way for Joseph to preserve his own life, and the

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lives of Jesus and the mother, by their fleeing into Egypt. He provided for the necessities of their journey, and for their sojourn in Egypt, by moving upon the wise men of the east to go in search of the infant Saviour, and to bear him valuation offerings as a token of honor. The Lord is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He

directed the course of Joseph into Egypt, that he might there find an asylum from the wrath of a tyrannical king, and the life of the infant Saviour be preserved. The earthly parents of Jesus were poor. The gifts brought to them by the wise men sustained them while in a land of strangers. {1Red 20.1}

Herod waited anxiously for the return of the wise men; for he was impatient to carry out his determined purpose to destroy the infant King of of Israel. After he had waited long for the knowledge he desired, he feared his purpose might be thwarted. He reasoned thus: Could those men have read the dark deed he premeditated? Could they have understood his design, and purposely avoided him? This he thought was insult and mockery. His impatience, envy, and hatred, increased. He was stirred by his father the devil to seek the accomplishment of his purpose by a most cruel act. If he should fail in carrying out his murderous intent by pretense and subtlety, he would, by power and authority, strike terror to the hearts of all the Jews. They should have an example of what their king would meet, should they seek to place one upon the throne in Jerusalem. {1Red 21.1}

And here was a favorable opportunity to humble the pride of the Jews, and bring upon them a calamity which should discourage them in their ambition to have a separate government, and become

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the glory of the whole earth, as they had proudly boasted. Herod issued a proclamation to a large company of soldiers, who possessed hearts hardened by crime, war, and bloodshed, to go throughout Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, and massacre all the children from two years old and under. Herod designed in this cruel, inhuman act, to accomplish a double purpose: first, to exercise, by this bold act, his power and authority over the Jews; and, second, to silence their proud boastings in regard to the king, and also make his own kingdom secure, by murdering the infant prince whom he envied and feared. This cruel work was accomplished. The sword of unfeeling soldiers carried destruction everywhere. The horror and distress of parents were beyond description. The wailing cries of bereaved mothers, as they clasped their expiring infants to their breasts, rose above the coarse jests and imprecations of the soldiers, while they cried to heaven for vengeance on the tyrant king. {1Red 21.2}

All this terrible calamity was suffered of God, to humble the pride of the Jewish nation. Their crimes and wickedness had been so great that the Lord permitted the wicked Herod to punish them. Had they been less boastful and ambitious, their lives pure, their habits simple and sincere, God would have preserved them from being thus humiliated and afflicted by their enemies. God would, in a signal manner, have made the wrath of the king harmless to his people, had they been faithful and perfect before him. But God could not especially work for them, for their works were abhorred by him. {1Red 22.1}

The Jews had excited the envy and hatred of Herod against Christ, through their false interpretations

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of the prophets. They taught that Christ was to reign over an earthly empire, in unsurpassed glory. Their proud boasting presented the Saviour of the world and his

mission to the earth altogether in a false light. Their lofty ideas and their proud boasting did not result as Satan had at first purposed they should, in the destruction of the infant Saviour, but rebounded back upon themselves, filling their homes with mourning. Jeremiah, in prophetic vision, says: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." Herod did not long survive his cruel work. He died a fearful death, and was compelled to yield to a power he could not turn aside or overcome. {1Red 22.2}

After Herod was cut off from the earth, the heavenly messenger again warned Joseph to return to the land of Israel. He was desirous to make his home in Judah or Bethany; but when he heard that the son of the tyrannical Herod reigned upon his father's throne, he was afraid that the purposes of the father might be carried out by the son in murdering Christ. While in his perplexity, not knowing where to locate, the Lord, through his angel, again selected for him a place of safety. He was to tarry in Nazareth. "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene." {1Red 23.1}

This was the reception the Saviour met as he came to a fallen world. He left his heavenly home, his majesty, and riches, and high command, and took upon himself humanity, that he might save the fallen race. Instead of glorifying God

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for the honor he had conferred upon humanity in thus sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, by giving him a place in their affections, there seemed to be no rest nor safety for the infant Saviour. Jehovah could not trust to the inhabitants of the world his Son, who came into the world that through his divine power he might redeem fallen man. He who came to bring life to man would meet, from the very ones he came to benefit, insult, hatred, and abuse. God could not trust the heavenly Messenger with men while carrying on his noble work for their salvation, and final exaltation to his own throne. He sent angels to attend him, and preserve his life, till his mission on earth should be accomplished, and he should die by the hands of the very men he came to save. {1Red 23.2}

From his childhood, Jesus conformed his life strictly to the Jewish laws. He manifested great wisdom in his youth. The grace and power of God were upon him. The word of the Lord, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, describes the office and work of Christ, and shows the sheltering care of God over his Son in his mission to earth, that the relentless hatred of men, inspired by Satan, should not be permitted to thwart the design of the great plan of salvation. {1Red 24.1}

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth."

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{1Red 24.2}

The voice of Christ was not heard in the street, in noisy contention with those who

were opposed to his doctrine. Neither was his voice heard in the streets in prayer to his Father, to be heard of men. His voice was not heard in joyful mirth. His voice was not raised to exalt himself, and to gain the applause and flattery of men. When engaged in teaching, he withdrew his disciples away from the noise and confusion of the busy city to some retired place more in harmony with the lessons of humility, piety, and virtue, which he would impress upon their minds. He shunned human praise, and preferred solitude and peaceful retirement to the noise and confusion of mortal life. His voice was often heard in earnest, prevailing intercessions to his Father; yet for these exercises he chose the lonely mountain, and frequently spent whole nights in prayer for strength to sustain him under the temptations he should meet, and to accomplish the important work he came to do for the salvation of man. His petitions were earnest and powerful, mingled with strong cries and tears. And notwithstanding the labor of soul during the night, he ceased not his labor through the day. In the morning he would quietly resume his work of mercy and disinterested benevolence. The life of Christ was in marked contrast to that of the Jews, and for this very reason they wished to destroy him. {1Red 25.1}

The chief priests, and scribes, and elders, loved to pray in the most public places; not only in the crowded synagogues, but in the corners of the streets, that they might be seen of men, and praised for their devotion and piety. Their acts of charity were done in the most public manner, and

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for the purpose of calling the attention of the people to themselves. Their voices were indeed heard in the streets, not only in exalting themselves, but in contention with those who differed with them in doctrine. They were resentful and unforgiving, proud, haughty, and bigoted. The Lord, through his faithful prophet, shows the life of Christ in marked contrast to the hypocritical chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees. {1Red 25.2}

The parents of Jesus yearly visited Jerusalem, in accordance with the Jewish law. Their son Jesus, then twelve years old, accompanied them on their journey. In returning to their home, after they had gone a day's journey, their anxiety was aroused, as they missed Jesus. He had not been seen of them since they left Jerusalem. They supposed he was with the company. Inquiry and search were made among their acquaintances and relatives for their much-loved Son; but no trace could be found of him. They hastened back to Jerusalem, their hearts heavy with sorrow. {1Red 26.1}

"And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And

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Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." {1Red 26.2}

The doctors, and expounders of the law, always taught the people publicly upon special occasions. It was upon one of these occasions that Jesus gave manifest proofs of superior wisdom, penetration, and mature judgment. The people were more surprised because the parents of Christ were poor, and he had not received the advantages of education. The question passed from lip to lip, Whence has this youth such wisdom, having never learned? While the parents of Christ were in search of him, they saw large numbers flocking to the temple; and as they entered it, the well-known voice of their son arrested their attention. They could not get sight of him for the crowd; but they knew that they were not mistaken; for no voice was like his, marked with solemn melody. The parents gazed in astonishment at the scene. Their son, in the midst of the grave and learned doctors and scribes, was giving evidence of superior knowledge by his discreet questions and answers. His parents were gratified to see him thus honored. But the mother could not forget the grief and anxiety she had suffered because of his tarry at Jerusalem, and she, in a reproving manner, inquired why he had thus dealt with them, relating her fears and sorrow on his account. {1Red 27.1}

Said Jesus, "How is it that ye sought me?" This pointed question was to lead them to see that if they had been mindful of their duty, they would not have left Jerusalem without him. He then adds, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" While they had been unmindful of the responsible charge entrusted to

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them, Jesus was engaged in the work of his Father. Mary knew that Christ did not refer to his earthly father, Joseph, but to Jehovah. She laid these things to heart, and profited by them. {1Red 27.2}

In returning from Jerusalem with the crowd, talking and visiting engrossed their minds, and Jesus was forgotten for an entire day. His absence was not marked until the close of the day. Joseph and Mary had been honored of God in an especial manner, in being intrusted with the responsible charge of the Saviour, who was to bring salvation to the fallen race. Angels had heralded his birth to the shepherds, and God has directed the course of Joseph, to preserve the life of the infant Saviour. But the confusion of much talk had led to the neglect of their sacred trust, and Jesus was not brought to mind for an entire day, by those who should not have forgotten him for a moment. They returned their weary way, sad and fearful, to Jerusalem. They recalled the terrible massacre of innocent children by the cruel Herod in hope of destroying the king of Israel. When their anxiety was relieved by finding Jesus, they did not acknowledge their own neglect of duty, but their words reflected on Christ--"Why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." Jesus, in most respectful language, inquires, "How is it that ye sought me?" But these words modestly reflect back the censure upon themselves, in reminding them that, if they had not permitted themselves to be engrossed with matters of no special importance, they would not have had the trouble of searching for him. He then justifies his course: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" While he was engaged in the work

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he came to the earth to perform, they had neglected the work his Father had especially intrusted to them. They could not fully comprehend the words of Christ; yet Mary, in a

great measure, understood their import, and laid them away in her heart to ponder over in the future. {1Red 28.1}

It was so natural for the parents of Christ to look upon him as their own child, as parents commonly regard their children, that they were in danger of losing the precious blessing which daily attended them in the presence of Jesus, the world's redeemer. As Christ was daily with them, his life in many respects as other children, it was difficult to keep before them his sacred mission, and the daily blessing of having committed to their charge and parental care, for a while, the Son of God, whose divinity was veiled with humanity. His tarry in Jerusalem was designed of him as a gentle reminder to them of their duty, lest they should become indifferent in a greater degree, and lose the sense of the high favor God had conferred upon them. {1Red 29.1}

Not one act in the life of Christ was unimportant. Every event of his life was for the benefit of his followers in future time. This circumstance of the tarry of Christ in Jerusalem teaches an important lesson to those who should believe on him. Many had come a great distance to keep the passover, especially instituted of God that by its yearly observance they might keep in memory the wonderful works of God in their deliverance from Egypt. This ordinance was designed to call their minds from their world-loving interests, and from their cares and anxieties in relation to temporal concerns, and to review the works of God. They were to call to mind his miracles, his mercies

and loving-kindness, to them, that their love and reverence for him might increase, and lead them to ever look to him, and trust in him in all their trials, and not turn to other gods. {1Red 29.2}

The observance of the passover possessed a mournful interest to the Son of God. He saw in the slain lamb a symbol of his own death. The people who celebrated this ordinance were instructed to associate the slaying of the lamb with the future death of the Son of God. The blood, marking the door-posts of the Israelites, was the symbol of the blood of Christ which was to be efficacious for the believing sinner, in cleansing him from sin, and sheltering him from the wrath of God which was to come upon the impenitent and unbelieving world, as the wrath of God feel upon the Egyptians. But none could be benefited by this special provision made by God for the salvation of man unless they performed the work the Lord left them to do. They had a part to act themselves, and by their acts to manifest their faith in the provision made for their salvation. {1Red 30.1}

Jesus was acquainted with hearts. He knew that, as the crowd returned in company from Jerusalem, there would be much talking and visiting which would not be seasoned with humility and grace, and the Messiah and his mission would be nearly forgotten. It would have been his choice to return from Jerusalem with his parents alone; for in being retired, his father and mother would have more time for reflection, and for meditation upon the prophecies which refer to his future sufferings and death. He did not wish the painful events which they were to experience in his offering up his life for the sins of the world, to be new and unexpected to them. He was separated from

them in their return from Jerusalem. After the celebration of the passover they sought him sorrowing three days. When he should be slain for the sins of the world, he would be separated from them, lost to them, for three days. But after that he would reveal himself to them, and be found of them, and their faith rely upon him as the redeemer of the fallen race, the advocate with the Father in their behalf. {1Red 30.2}

Here is a lesson of instruction to all the followers of Christ. He designed that none of these lessons should be lost, but be written for the benefit of future generations. There is necessity of carefulness of words and actions when a number are associated together, lest Jesus be forgotten of them, and they pass along careless of the fact that Jesus is not among them. When they are aroused to their condition, they discover that they have journeyed without the presence of Him who could give peace and joy to their hearts, and days are occupied in returning, and searching for him whom they should have retained with them every moment. Jesus will not be found in the company of those who are careless of his presence, and who engage in conversation having no reference to their Redeemer, in whom they profess their hopes of eternal life are centered. Jesus shuns the company of such. So also do the angels who do his commands. These heavenly messengers are not attracted to the crowd where minds are diverted from heavenly things. Their pure and holy spirits cannot remain in the company where Jesus' presence is not desired and encouraged, and his absence not marked. For this reason great mourning, grief, and discouragement exist. Through lack of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they

have lost all that is valuable. The divine rays of light emanating from Jesus are not with them, cheering them with their loving, elevating influence. They are enshrouded in gloom, because their careless, irreverent spirit has separated Jesus from their company, and driven the heavenly ministering angels from them. {1Red 31.1}

Many who attend meetings of devotion, and have been instructed by the servants of God, and been greatly refreshed and blessed in seeking Jesus, have returned to their homes no better than they left them, because they did not feel the importance of praying and watching thereunto, as they returned to their homes. They frequently feel inclined to complain of others, because they realize their loss. Some murmur against God, and do not reproach themselves as being the cause of their own darkness, and sufferings of mind. These should not reflect upon others. The lack is in themselves. They talked and jested, and visited away the heavenly guest, and themselves they have only to blame. It is the privilege of all to retain Jesus with them. If they do this, their words must be select, seasoned with grace. The thoughts of their hearts must be controlled to meditate upon heavenly and divine things. {1Red 32.1}

The love of God, manifested toward fallen man in the gift of his beloved Son, amazed the holy angels. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Son was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. He possessed divine excellence and greatness. He was equal with God. It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. He "thought it

not robbery to be equal with God." Yet he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." In order to more fully realize the value of salvation, it is necessary to understand what it cost. In consequence of limited views of the sufferings of the divine Son of God, many place a low estimate upon the great work of the atonement. {1Red 32.2}

Christ consented to die in man's stead, that he, by a life of obedience, might escape the penalty of the law of God. His death did not slay the law, lessen its holy claims, nor detract from its sacred dignity. The death of Christ proclaimed the justice of his Father's law in punishing the transgressor, in that he consented to suffer the penalty of the law himself, in order to save fallen man from its curse. The death of God's beloved Son on the cross shows the immutability of the law. His death magnified the law and made it honorable, and gave evidence to man of its changeless character. From his own divine lips is heard, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law." {1Red 33.1}

In Christ were united the human and the divine. His mission was to reconcile God to man, and man to God. His work was to unite the finite with the Infinite. This was the only way in which fallen men could be exalted through the merits of the blood of Christ, to be partakers of the divine nature. Taking human nature fitted Christ to understand the nature of man's trials, and all the temptations wherewith he is beset. Angels who were unacquainted with sin, could not sympathize with man in his peculiar trials.

{1Red 33.2}

Before Christ left Heaven and came into the world to die, he was taller than any of the angels. He was majestic and lovely. But when his ministry commenced, he was but little taller than the common size of men then living upon the earth. Had he come among men with his noble, heavenly form, his outward appearance would have attracted the minds of the people to himself, and he would have been received without the exercise of faith. {1Red 34.1}

It was in the order of God that Christ should take upon himself the form and nature of fallen man, that he might be made perfect through suffering, and himself endure the strength of Satan's temptations, that he might the better know how to succor those who should be tempted. The faith of men in Christ as the Messiah was not to rest on the evidences of sight, and they believe on him because of his personal attractions, but because of the excellence of character found in him, which never had been found, neither could be, in another. All who loved virtue, purity, and holiness, would be drawn to Christ, and would see sufficient evidence of his being the Messiah foretold by prophecy, that should come. Those who thus trusted in the word of God, would receive the benefits of the teachings of Christ, and finally of his atonement. {1Red 34.2}

Christ came to call the attention of all men to his Father, teaching them repentance toward God. His work was to reconcile man to God. Although Christ did not come as he was expected, yet he came just as prophecy had marked out that he would come. Those who wished to believe had sufficient grounds for their faith by referring to prophecy, which predicted the coming of the Just One, and described the manner of his

coming.

{1Red 34.3}

The ancient Jewish church were the highly favored people of God, brought out of Egypt and acknowledged as his own peculiar treasure. The many and exceeding-great and precious promises to them as a people, were the hope and confidence of the Jewish church. Herein they trusted, and believed their salvation sure. No other people professed to be governed by the commandments of God. Our Saviour came first to his own people, but they received him not. {1Red 35.1}

The self-righteous, proud, unbelieving Jews expected their Saviour and King would come into the world clothed with majesty and power, compelling all Gentiles to yield obedience to him. They did not expect any humiliation and suffering would be manifested in him. They would not receive the meek and lowly Jesus, and acknowledge him to be the Saviour of the world. Had he appeared in splendor, and assumed the authority of the world's great men, instead of taking the form of a servant, they would have received and worshiped him. {1Red 35.2}

His birth was without worldly grandeur. He was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger; yet his birth was honored far above that of any of the sons of men. Angels from Heaven informed the shepherds of the advent of Jesus, while the light and glory from God accompanied their testimony. The heavenly host touched their harps, and glorified God. They triumphantly heralded the advent of the Son of God to a fallen world, to accomplish the work of redemption, and by his death bring peace, happiness, and everlasting life, to man. God honored the advent of his Son. Angels worshiped him. {1Red 35.3}

PAMPHLETS / 1Red - Redemption Or The First Advent Of Christ With His Life And Ministry (1877) / Chapter II. - The Mission of John.

Chapter II. - The Mission of John.

Previous to Christ's entering upon his ministry, the mission of John commenced. He was to prepare the way for the reception of Christ. In the spirit, and with the power, of Elijah, he denounced the corruptions of the Jews, and raised his voice in reproving their prevailing sins. His discourses were plain, pointed, and convincing. Many were brought to repentance of their sins, and, as evidence of their repentance, were baptized of him in Jordan. This was the preparatory work for the ministry of Christ. Many were convicted because of the plain truths uttered by this faithful prophet; but, by rejecting the light, they became enshrouded in deeper darkness, so that they were fully prepared to turn from the evidences attending Jesus, that he was the true Messiah. {1Red 36.1}

John, as he looked forward to the ministry and miracles of Christ, appealed to the people, "saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He was successful in his ministry. Persons of all ranks, high and low, rich and poor, submitted to the requirements of the prophet, as necessary for them in order to participate in the

kingdom he came to declare. Many of the scribes and Pharisees came to him, confessing their sins, and were baptized of him in Jordan. The confessions made by the Pharisees astonished the prophet; for they had exalted themselves as better than other men, and had maintained a high opinion of their own piety and worthiness. As they sought to obtain remission of their sins, and revealed the

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secrets of their lives, which had been covered from the eyes of men, the prophet was amazed. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." {1Red 36.2}

The whole Jewish nation seemed to be affected by the mission of John. The threatenings of God on account of their sins, repeated by the prophet, for a time alarmed them. John knew that they cherished the idea that, because they were of the seed of Abraham, they were securely established in the favor of God, while their course of action was abhorred of him. Their conduct was, in many respects, even worse than that of the heathen nations to whom they felt so much superior. The prophet faithfully presented to them the ability of God to raise up those who would take their place, and would become more worthy children of Abraham. He told them plainly that God was not dependent upon them to fulfill his purpose; for he could provide ways and means independent of them, to carry forward his great work which was to be accomplished in purity and righteousness. John further adds: "And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." He impresses upon them that the value of the tree is ascertained by the fruit it produces. Though a tree may bear an exalted name, yet if it produces no fruit, or if its fruit is unworthy of the name, the name will avail

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nothing in preventing the tree from being devoted to destruction. "Of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes." {1Red 37.1}

The Jews had deceived themselves by misinterpreting the words of the Lord through his prophets, of his eternal favor to his people Israel. They misapplied the words of Jeremiah, and depended for salvation upon their being called the children of Abraham. If they had indeed been worthy of the name of Abraham's children, they would have followed the righteous example of their father Abraham, and would have done the works of Abraham. {1Red 38.1}

"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 31:35-37. {1Red 38.2}

These words the Jews applied to themselves; and because God had shown them so

great favor and mercy, they flattered themselves that, notwithstanding their sins and iniquity, he would still retain them as his favored people, and shower especial blessings upon them. This has been the danger of the people of God in all ages; and especially is this the danger of those living near the close of time. We are cited by the apostle to the children of Israel as a warning. Paul plainly states that "all these things happened unto them

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for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." If in these last days of peril, for the encouragement of persons in responsible positions, God in mercy gives them a word of favor, they frequently become lifted up, and lose sight of their frailties and weaknesses, and rely upon their own judgment, flattering themselves that God cannot accomplish his work without their especial aid. They trust in their own wisdom; and the Lord permits them, for a time, to apparently prosper, to reveal the weakness and corruptions of the natural heart. But the Lord will, in his own time, and in his own way, bring down the pride and folly of these deceived ones, and reveal to them their true condition. If they will accept the humiliation, and by confession and sincere repentance, turn unto the Lord, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, he will renew his love to them. But if they shut their eyes, as did the Jews, to their own corruption, and choose their own ways, the Lord will give them up to blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, that they cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God. {1Red 38.3}

God cannot do much for man, because he misinterprets his blessings, and concludes that he is favored on account of some goodness and virtue in himself. It is not safe to speak in the praise of mortals; for they cannot bear it. Satan has that special work to perform himself, and he needs not the help of the Lord's servants in this matter. How few realize the weakness of humanity and the subtlety of Satan. Many in these last days are preparing themselves for affliction and sorrow, or for separation from the favor of God, because

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of their pride and self-righteousness. They will fall through self-exaltation. {1Red 39.1}

The prophet John impressed upon the people the necessity of their profession's being accompanied with good works. Their words and actions would be their fruit, and would determine the character of the tree. If their works were evil, the truth of God testified against them. God would in no wise excuse sin in a people who had been enlightened, even if he had, in the days of their faithfulness and purity, loved them, and given them especial promises. These promises and blessings were always upon conditions of obedience upon their part. {1Red 40.1}

The Lord pronounced, by the mouth of Moses, blessings upon the obedient, and curses upon the disobedient. "Ye shall make you no idols," was the command of God. "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary. I am the Lord. If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit." Many and great blessings are enumerated, which God would bestow; and then, above all the other blessings, he promised, "I will set my tabernacle among you; and my

soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." "But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant, I also will do this unto you: I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague,

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that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart; and ye shall sow your seed in vain; for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies. They that hate you shall reign over you, and ye shall flee when none pursueth you." {1Red 40.2}

The Jews were experiencing the fulfillment of the curse of God for their departure from him, and for their iniquity. Yet they did not lay these things to heart, and afflict their souls before God. A people that hated them ruled over them. Yet they were claiming the blessings of God promised to confer upon a people who were obedient and faithful, at the very time they were suffering under the curse of God because of disobedience. John declared to them that unless they bore fruit, they would be hewn down and cast into the fire. The people were convicted, and "asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." The people were in expectation of Christ's soon appearing, and they questioned whether this prophet were not the Messiah. "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you

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with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." {1Red 41.1}

John, as a prophet, stood forth as God's representative, to show the connection between the law and the prophets, and the Christian dispensation. His work and ministry pointed the world back to the law and the prophets, while he, at the same time, pointed the people forward to Christ, as the Saviour of the world. He raised his voice and cried to the people, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." {1Red 42.1}

Multitudes followed this singular prophet from place to place, and many sacrificed all to obey his instruction. Kings, and the noble of the earth, were attracted to this prophet of God, and heard him gladly. As John saw that the attention of the people was directed to him, thinking that he might be the Coming One, he cut off their hopes in this direction, by seeking every opportunity to direct the attention of the people to One mightier than himself, and declaring plainly that the work and mission of Christ was of

such an exalted character that he was unworthy to even stoop to unloose his shoes. {1Red 42.2}

"The Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the

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way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou, then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth One among you, whom ye know not; he it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. {1Red 42.3}

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!" {1Red 43.1}

Angels of God hovered over the scene of Christ's baptism, and the Holy Spirit descended in the shape of a dove, and lighted upon him; and as the people stood greatly amazed, with their eyes fastened upon him, the Father's voice was heard from Heaven, saying, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased."

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{1Red 43.2}

John was not certain that it was the Saviour who came to be baptized of him in Jordan. But God had promised him a sign by which he should know of a surety the Lamb of God. That sign was given as the heavenly Dove rested upon Jesus, and the glory of God shone round about him. John reached forth his hand, pointing to Jesus, and with a loud voice cried out, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." {1Red 44.1}

John informed his disciples that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world. As his work was closing, he taught his disciples to look to Jesus, and follow him as the great teacher. John's life was without pleasure. It was sorrowful and self-denying. He heralded the first advent of Christ, and then was not permitted to witness his miracles, and enjoy the power manifested by him. He knew that when Jesus should

establish himself as a teacher, he must die. His voice was seldom heard, except in the wilderness. His life was lonely. He did not cling to his father's family, to enjoy their society, but left them in order to fulfill his mission. Multitudes left the busy cities and villages, and flocked to the wilderness to hear the words of the wonderful prophet. John laid the axe at the root of the tree. He reproved sin, fearless and consequences, and prepared the way for the Lamb of God. {1Red 44.2}

Herod was affected as he listened to the powerful, pointed testimonies of John. With deep interest he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. John was acquainted with the fact that he was about to marry his brother's wife, while her husband was yet living, and faithfully told Herod that it was not lawful. Herod was not willing to make any sacrifice. He married his

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brother's wife, and, through her influence, seized John and put him in prison. But Herod intended to release him again. While there confined, John heard through his disciples of the mighty works of Jesus. He could not listen to his gracious words; but the disciples informed him, and comforted him with what they had heard. Soon John was beheaded through the influence of Herod's wife. The least disciple that followed Jesus, witnessed his miracles, and heard the comforting words which fell from his lips, was greater than John the Baptist; that is, he was more exalted and honored, and had more pleasure in his life. John came in the spirit and power of Elijah, to proclaim the first advent of Jesus. He was to represent those who should go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah, to herald the day of wrath, and the second advent of Jesus.

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{1Red 44.3}

PAMPHLETS / 1Red - Redemption Or The First Advent Of Christ With His Life And Ministry (1877) / Chapter III. - The Temptation of Christ.

Chapter III. - The Temptation of Christ.

After the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. The Holy Spirit had fitted him for that special scene of fierce temptations. Forty days he was tempted of the devil, and in those days he ate nothing. Everything around Jesus was unpleasant, from which human nature would be led to shrink. He was with the wild beasts, and the devil, in a desolate, lonely place. The Son of God was pale and emaciated through fasting

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and suffering. But his course was marked out, and he must fulfill the work he came to do. {1Red 45.1}

Satan took advantage of the sufferings of the Son of God, and prepared to beset him with manifold temptations, hoping he should obtain the victory over him, because he had humbled himself as a man. Satan came with this temptation: If thou be the Son

of God, command that these stones be made bread. He tempted Jesus to condescend to him, and give him proof of his being the Messiah, by exercising his divine power. Jesus mildly answered him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. Satan was seeking a dispute with Jesus concerning his being the Son of God. He referred to his weak, suffering condition, and boastingly affirmed that he was stronger than Jesus. But the word spoken from Heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased," was sufficient to sustain Jesus through all his sufferings. In all his mission he had nothing to do in convincing Satan of his power, and of his being the Saviour of the world. Satan had sufficient evidence of his exalted station and authority. His unwillingness to yield to Jesus' authority, shut him out of Heaven. {1Red 46.1}

It was not any part of the mission of Christ to exercise his divine power for his own benefit, to relieve himself of suffering. This he had volunteered to take upon himself. He had condescended to take man's nature, and he was to suffer the inconveniences, and ills, and afflictions, of the human family. He was not to perform miracles upon his own account. He came to save others. The object of his mission was to bring blessings, and hope, and life, to the afflicted and oppressed. He was to bear the burdens and griefs of suffering

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humanity. When Satan stirred up men to fury against him, so that they sought to kill him, angels were sent to rescue him, and preserve his life. His power was not called into exercise to save himself in a single instance. {1Red 46.2}

Satan had been at war with the government of God, since he first rebelled. His success in tempting Adam and Eve in Eden, and introducing sin into the world, had emboldened this arch foe, and he had proudly boasted to the heavenly angels, that when Christ should appear, taking man's nature, he would be weaker than himself, and he would overcome him by his power. He boasted that Adam and Eve in Eden could not resist his insinuations when he appealed to their appetite. The inhabitants of the old world he overcame in the same manner, through the indulgence of lustful appetite and corrupt passions. Through the gratification of appetite he had overthrown the Israelites. He boasted that the Son of God himself was not able to resist his power, and lead the favored people of his choice to Canaan; for nearly all who left Egypt died in the wilderness. {1Red 47.1}

Also the meek man, Moses, he had tempted to take to himself glory which God claimed. David and Solomon, who had been especially favored of God, he had induced, through gratification of lustful passions, to incur God's displeasure. And he boasted that he could yet succeed in thwarting the purpose of God in the salvation of man through Jesus Christ. According to Satan's arrangement, he beset Christ with manifold temptations. Christ was without food forty days, as many days as the children of Israel wandered years. Moses had, on especial occasions, been thus long without food. But he felt not the pangs of hunger. He was not

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harassed and tormented by a vile yet powerful foe. Moses was elevated above the human, and was enshrouded in the glory of God, and was especially sustained of God. The excellent glory inclosed him. {1Red 47.2}

Christ was humbled by taking humanity, and, for a time, during the period of this fearful trial with Satan, he was left alone to cope with the terrible foe. Christ's human nature endured the pangs of hunger. While emaciated and suffering, Satan came to him with a covering of light, as one of the bright angels from glory, hoping to deceive and insnare the Son of God, whom he regarded as his rival. Satan reasoned with Christ thus: If the words spoken after his baptism were indeed the words of God, that he was the Son of God, he need not bear the sensations of hunger; he could give him proofs of his divinity by showing his power in changing the stones of that barren wilderness into bread: "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Satan declared that if he would do this, he would no longer resist his authority; but leave him to the undisputed right to govern the world. Christ meets Scripture with Scripture, by citing the words of Moses, "Man shall not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He told Satan that in order to prolong life, obedience to God's requirements was more essential than temporal food. To pursue a course of deviation from the purposes of God, in the smallest degree, would be more grievous than hunger or death. Being defeated here, Satan tries another device. To manifest his strength, he carried Jesus to Jerusalem, and set him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and again

tempted him, that if he was the Son of God, to give him evidence of it by casting himself down from the dizzy height upon which he had placed him. Satan came with the words of inspiration: "For it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." {1Red 48.1}

Satan, by an insulting taunt, urged Christ to prove his mission by casting himself down from the high eminence whereon he had placed him, declaring that God had promised that angels should bear him up. And if he were indeed what he claimed to be, he had nothing to fear. Again Jesus met the assault of Satan with Scripture: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Satan wished to cause Jesus to presume upon the mercy of his Father, and risk his life before the fulfillment of his mission. He had hoped that the plan of salvation would fail; but the plan was laid too deep to be thus overthrown by Satan. {1Red 49.1}

Christ is the example for all Christians when tempted, or their rights disputed. They should bear it patiently. They should not feel that they have a right to call upon God to display his power, that they may obtain a victory over their enemies, unless there is a special object in view, that God can be directly honored and glorified by it. If Jesus had cast himself from the pinnacle, it would not have glorified his Father; for none would witness the act but Satan and the angels of God. And it would be tempting the Lord to display his power to his bitterest foe. It would

have been condescending to the one whom Jesus came to conquer. {1Red 49.2}

"And the devil taking him up into a high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give

thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." {1Red 50.1}

This presumptuous blasphemy, and insult to Jehovah, excited the indignation of Christ, and led him to exercise his divine authority, and command Satan in an authoritative, dignified manner to desist. Here Satan, in his pride and arrogance, declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all its glory, as though he had created the world and all the riches and glory contained in it. He endeavored to make a special contract with Christ, to make over to him at once the whole of his claim, if he would worship him. {1Red 50.2}

Here Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world. They were presented in the most attractive light. He offered them to Jesus if he would there worship him. He told Jesus that he would relinquish his claims of the possessions of earth. Satan knew that his power must be limited, and finally taken away, if the plan of salvation should be carried out. He knew that if Jesus should die to redeem man, his power would end after a season, and he would be destroyed. Therefore it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the

completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man's redemption should fail, he would retain the kingdom which he then claimed. And if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of Heaven. {1Red 50.3}

Satan exulted when Jesus left Heaven, and left his power and glory there. He thought that the Son of God was placed in his power. The temptation took so easily with the holy pair in Eden, that he hoped he could with his satanic cunning and power overthrow even the Son of God, and thereby save his life and kingdom. If he could tempt Jesus to depart from the will of his Father, then his object would be gained. Jesus bade Satan get behind him. He was to bow only to his Father. The time was to come when Jesus should redeem the possessions of Satan by his own life, and, after a season, all in Heaven and earth should submit to him. Satan claimed the kingdoms of earth as his, and he insinuated to Jesus that all his sufferings might be saved. He need not die to obtain the kingdoms of this world. But he might have the entire possessions of the earth, and the glory of reigning over them, if he would worship him. Jesus was steadfast. He chose his life of suffering, his dreadful death, and, in the way appointed by his Father, to become a lawful heir to the kingdoms of the earth, and have them given into his hands as an everlasting possession. Satan also will be given into his hands to be destroyed by death, never more to annoy Jesus, nor the saints in glory. {1Red 51.1}

Chapter IV. - The Ministry of Christ.

After Satan had ended his temptations, he departed from Jesus for a season, and angels prepared him food in the wilderness, and strengthened him, and the blessing of his Father rested upon him. Satan had failed in his fiercest temptations; yet he looked forward to the period of Jesus' ministry, when he should at different times try his cunning against him. He still hoped to prevail against him by stirring up those who would not receive Jesus, to hate and seek to destroy him. Satan held a special counsel with his angels. They were disappointed and enraged that they had prevailed nothing against the Son of God. They decided that they must be more cunning, and use their power to the utmost to inspire unbelief in the minds of his own nation as to his being the Saviour of the world, and in this way discourage Jesus in his mission. No matter how exact the Jews might be in their ceremonies and sacrifices, if they could keep their eyes blinded as to the prophecies, and make them believe that it was a mighty, worldly king who was to fulfill these prophecies, they would keep their minds on the stretch for a Messiah to come. {1Red 52.1}

For many years the Son of God lived unhonored, and almost unknown, in the wicked and despised city of Nazareth. This humble city was proverbial because of the wickedness of the people who resided therein. It was a humiliation to be an inhabitant of so corrupt a city. Christ commenced his mission among the hardest classes.

He placed his own feet in the most uneven path which the poor, neglected, and sinful, must tread. And it will be the portion of all who live in the world to breathe an atmosphere tainted with sin. All who seek to do the will of God have to be surrounded with moral disease, and breathe a pestilential atmosphere, which will surely corrupt their faith and stain their virtue, unless counteracted by the great remedy the Redeemer has provided. He took upon himself the woes which the afflicted must suffer. He has given all an example who are desirous to imitate him, that, if they walk circumspectly, their light can shine in the darkest places, and in the most corrupt society, if God would have them thus circumstanced. The meek, unpretending life of Christ rebuked selfishness, pride of worldly wisdom, glory, riches, and honor. By making his home in humble Nazareth, Christ would be an example to his followers, that any place, and any work, dictated by duty, would be honorable, because of their own faithfulness in doing the work. {1Red 52.2}

The treatment Christ received from the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, as he commenced his public ministry, and as the attention of the people was called to him, was the exhibition of the worst passions of the human heart. Who manifested this bitter hatred? Was it the heathen? No. The very men who were foremost in the wicked jealousy, envy, and hatred, of Christ, were the scribes and elders, but more especially the chief priests, who assumed the sacred office as representatives of Christ in the priesthood. {1Red 53.1}

Christ introduced his public ministry first to his own people. He went into the synagogue at Nazareth upon the Sabbath, as had been his custom.

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The elders read from the prophets, and exhorted the people to continue to hope and believe for the Coming One, who would bring in a glorious reign, and subdue all oppression. He sought to animate the faith and courage of the Jews, by rehearsing the evidences of Messiah's soon coming, dwelling especially upon the kingly power and glorious majesty that would attend his coming. He kept before the people the erroneous idea that the reign of Christ would be upon an earthly throne in Jerusalem, and his kingdom would be a temporal kingdom. He taught them that Messiah would appear at the head of armies, to conquer the heathen, and deliver Israel from every oppressive yoke, destroying in wrath his enemies. At the close of the service of the minister, Jesus stood up with dignity, and requested them to bring him the book of the prophet Esaias. {1Red 53.2}

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and

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wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill (whereon their city was built), that they might cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way." {1Red 54.1}

The attention of the people was attracted to Christ. The eyes of the congregation were fastened upon him, as he stated that this prophecy was fulfilled in him. The authority, dignity, and power, attending his words, held them spell-bound. The wisdom manifested, the energy, and the impressive manner of his address, captivated the congregation, and their hearts were affected by a power they had never experienced before. They witnessed to his words by their shouts of joy, and fervent responses. Jesus stood himself the living and divine interpreter of the prophet's words in regard to

himself. He made there the declaration

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claiming the Messiahship, which prophets had waited and longed to hear, and to see, but were brought under the dominion of death without their expectations being realized. The astonishment of the people was great. They felt a convincing power as his words fell upon their ears. Their hearts were stirred, their interest awakened. But Satan was not asleep. He was present to suggest doubts and unbelief. Many had seen Jesus in his humble, unpretending life. His home was among the poor and lowly of the earth. He was the son of a carpenter, working at the trade with his father Joseph. He had made no claims to distinction, or greatness. The Jews expected a being with power, with honor, and glory. The language of their hearts was, This cannot be the man who is to be the Redeemer of Israel. They whispered one to another, "Is not this Joseph's son? And are not his mother and brethren among us?" Has he not worked for years at the carpenter's trade? {1Red 55.1}

Jesus read their thoughts, and met their questionings with the relation of the history of the prophets, the men whom God had chosen to do a special and important work. They did not labor for the salvation of an unbelieving, hard-hearted people. But those who had hearts that could feel, and faith that would grasp the evidences God was pleased to give, were the especial subjects of the power of God displayed through the faithful prophets. The words of Christ were to them a terribly severe rebuke, opening before them their corrupt lives, striking the truth home in regard to their wicked unbelief. They now scorned the faith and feeling of reverence his words at first inspired in them. They would not

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believe that this man, who had come in meekness and lowliness, in poverty and sorrow, was any other than a common man. They would have no one as their king unless attended by riches and splendor, and a grand and imposing army. {1Red 56.1}

Their unbelief and malice increased. Satan controlled their minds, and they cried out against him with wrath and hatred. Their assembly broke up, and they laid hands upon Jesus, and thrust him out of the synagogue, out of their city, and would have rid the world of his presence, had they had power so to do. All seemed eager to act a part in destroying him. They hurried him to the brow of a steep precipice, intending to cast him headlong. Their hands, they thought, were upon him. Some were crying one thing, some another. Some were casting stones and dirt at him; but suddenly he disappeared out of their midst, they knew not how, or when. Angels of God attended Jesus in the midst of that infuriated mob, and preserved his life. The heavenly messengers were by his side in the synagogue, while he was speaking; and they accompanied him when pressed and urged on by the unbelieving, infuriated Jews. These angels blinded the eyes of that maddened throng, and they conducted Jesus to a place of safety. {1Red 57.1}

Christ had come first to his own favored people, to proclaim the gracious words of salvation in their ears; but they refused to listen to his words. That which stirred their malice was the meekness and plainness with which he had explained the words of the prophets concerning himself. Here was an opportunity for them to receive the great

blessing which follows the reception of Christ.

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But they were blinded by Satan, and, in their fanatical zeal, could discover nothing in Christ, but simply the son of a carpenter. At a later period he came to Nazareth for the last time. He would give the people he loved, and whom his heart yearned to bless and save, an opportunity to redeem their past cruel conduct, and violence, toward him. The fame of his miracles, and wisdom, and power, had spread everywhere, and many of the people of Nazareth had been witnesses of his wonderful miracles. He had silenced and cast out demons, healed the sick, given sight to the blind, restored hearing to the deaf, and raised the dead to life. These evidences had been witnessed by thousands. He stood before his people in his own city, after they had had opportunity to reflect and repent of their abuse of him when he first made the public announcement that he was the Messiah. But they were no more ready to receive him, even then, than at first. They had committed themselves at the first to reject and insult him, and they retained their prejudices, and would not receive evidence, and be convinced that he was the Coming One, the Redeemer of Israel; for if they should then acknowledge him, they would condemn themselves. He came to his own nation and people, but they received him not; and ever after, their pride, which they had not controlled, was too great to accept of evidence, and admit the power of God in the mighty works performed by Christ. They rejected Christ as their Saviour, and after they had set their hearts in rebellion against him, it was not so easy for them to change their course. Notwithstanding all the mighty works they saw him do, they were too proud and self-exalted to yield

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their rebellious feelings. Every manifestation of his divine character increased the hatred and jealousy of the Jews. They were not content to turn from him themselves, but they sought to hinder all they could from listening to his teachings, or witnessing his miracles. The majority rejected him. They despised his humble appearance. They denied his testimony. They loved the praise of men, and the grandeur of the world. In their estimation of these things, they thought their judgment perfect, even as the judgment of God. {1Red 57.2}

The whole life and teachings of Christ were lessons of humility, benevolence, virtue, and self-denial. This was a continual reproof to the self-righteous, exacting spirit manifested by the Jews. Satan led them on until they seemed to possess a frenzy at the mere mention of the wonderful works of Christ, which were drawing the attention of the people from them. They at length made themselves believe that he was an impostor, and any means they could devise to get rid of him would be a virtue in them. They could not point to one act in his life which they could condemn, yet his very goodness made him a subject of their jealousy and hate, and in their blind rage they cried out, Crucify him! crucify him! The rejection of light leaves men captives of Satan, subject to his temptations. When he controls the mind, light will become darkness to that mind, good evil, and evil good. {1Red 59.1}

At the first advent of Christ, Satan knew that he had come to limit his power, and set free captives which he had bound, and his skill was especially exercised to lead the Jewish nation to believe Christ an impostor. The prophecies furnished

sufficient evidence to unprejudiced minds that Christ was indeed the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. But the unbelieving Jews chose their own standard of virtue, and purity of life. They would not be taught by the Just One, and continued to perform their useless sacrifices and offerings, looking forward for a Messiah which had already come. {1Red 59.2}

Our Heavenly Father designed to prove and test the professed faith and obedience of his people. The sacrifices which they performed under the law were typical of the lamb of God, and illustrated his great atonement. Yet the Jews were so blinded and deceived by Satan that when Christ came, whom their sacrifices and offerings had been prefiguring, they would not receive him. They led him as a lamb to the slaughter. {1Red 60.1}

The same rebellion and hatred against Christ will be in the hearts of men at his second advent. If Christ's second coming should be in the same humble manner as was his first advent, reproving sin, and commending virtue and holiness, where there was then one voice raised, crying, Crucify him! crucify him! there would be thousands in this apostate age. Infidelity in regard to Christ's being the true Messiah, the Saviour of the world, will increase and spread to an alarming degree previous to his second coming. Satan has lost none of his skill and power which he has been exercising in past time. He can better deceive man now than at Christ's first advent. {1Red 60.2}

The Son of God in this age will be as virtually despised and insulted by corrupt men who pretend to be good men, as at his first advent. Satan is now transforming himself into an angel of light, to hide the deformity of his character, and

thereby he and his evil angels receive that worship from a blinded, deluded people, which belongs alone to God. Christ is trampled under foot. Virtue and holiness are despised. Evil angels whisper their low, corrupt teachings in the ears of men, and they are pleased. Their carnal minds are gratified. That which comes from Satan and hell, they make themselves believe comes from the spirits of the dead. Their consciences are seared as with a hot iron. {1Red 60.3}

Satan and his angels were very busy during Christ's ministry, inspiring men with unbelief, hate, and scorn. Often when Jesus uttered some cutting truth reproving their sins, they would become enraged. Satan and his angels urged them on to take the life of the Son of God. Once they took up stones to cast at him, but angels guarded him, and bore him away from the angry multitude to a place of safety. {1Red 61.1}

Satan still hoped that the great plan of salvation would fail. He exerted all his power to make the hearts of all people hard, and their feelings bitter against Jesus. He hoped that the number who would receive him as the Son of God would be so few that Jesus would consider his sufferings and sacrifices too great to make for so small a company. But if there had been but two who would have accepted Jesus as the Son of God, to believe in him to the saving of their souls, he would have carried out the plan. {1Red 61.2}

Jesus commenced his work by breaking the power which Satan held over the suffering. He healed those who had suffered by his evil power. He restored the sick to

health, healed the lame, and caused them to leap in the gladness of their hearts, and glorify God. He gave sight to the

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blind, and restored to health by his power those who had been infirm and bound by Satan's cruel power many years. The weak, the trembling, and the desponding, he comforted with gracious words. He raised the dead to life, and they glorified God for the mighty display of his power. He wrought mightily for all who believed on him. And the feeble, suffering ones whom Satan held in triumph, Jesus wrenched from his grasp, and brought to them by his divine power, soundness of body, and great joy and happiness. {1Red 61.3}

The mission of Christ was marked with humility, sympathy, and love. He was ever attentive to listen to, and relieve, the woes of those who came to him. Multitudes carried the evidences of his divine power in their own persons. Yet many of them soon after the work had been accomplished, were ashamed of the humble, yet mighty, Teacher. Because the rulers did not believe on him, they were not willing to suffer with Jesus. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. There were but few who could endure to be governed by his sober, self-denying life. They wished to enjoy the honor which the world bestows. But many followed the Son of God, and listened to his instructions, feasting on the words which fell so graciously from his lips. His words were full of meaning, yet so plain that the weakest could understand. {1Red 62.1}

After the rejection of Christ in Nazareth, "he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim; that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by Esaias, the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

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the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." {1Red 62.2}

Evidences of Christ's divine power attended his ministry. He was ever touched with human woe. He was ever watching and waiting to do the works of mercy and righteousness which he came to perform. "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Christ had a work for them to do in the salvation of souls. He also saw two other young men, James and John, brethren, the sons of Zebedee, and called them to follow him. They made no excuse, but immediately left the ship, and their father, and followed him. These men Christ selected to be with him as he entered upon his public labors, to be learners while he should speak the word of eternal life to the multitudes. They were to be followers of him, that they might learn his manner of labor, and be prepared, as they witnessed his life and listened to his words, to fulfill their high commission with wisdom, patience, meekness, earnestness, and energy, copying the example of their master. These humble, unlearned men he selected to be witnesses of his miracles, and to bear a pointed testimony in the future in regard to the things which they had seen and heard, which testimony would possess a power that would move the

people, and convince the understanding of those who would not steel their hearts against evidence. The testimony of

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these faithful disciples, especially their epistles, would be indeed needed for those of future generations who would believe on the name of Christ. {1Red 63.1}

Jesus did not go to the schools of the prophets to select his disciples, nor to the wealthy and honorable of the earth; neither did he select the leaders of the Jewish people. None of these would have followed Christ with unquestioning obedience. They would have too many considerations of their own at stake, to follow the humble man of Nazareth. Their pride and lofty aspirations would incline them to make the work of salvation an entirely different thing from what Christ would make it. They would never consent to unite in so humble a mission, and, to outward observation, so unpromising an enterprise. They would seek to make the religion which they should adopt outwardly attractive, while the motives and actions of the people would remain untouched. Christ presented no inducements of worldly honor, riches, or glory. Those who followed him must do so without worldly inducements. {1Red 64.1}

This was a time of general and dense moral darkness among God's professed people. The words of the prophet correctly describe their state: "This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me; but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men." "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes; the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered." {1Red 64.2}

Jesus did not select these unlearned fishermen because he was opposed to education and correct

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knowledge. He knew that knowledge, pure, correct, and unmixed with the precepts of men, could not be found to exist in the hearts of men instructed in the schools of the prophets, or among the teachers of that time; for darkness had covered the men of wisdom, as they had united with the spirit of the world, and were in pursuit of its honors. He chose men of humble life and simple habits, who were acquainted with privation and hardship, for such alone could accomplish the work he had for them to do as his disciples. These hearts, uncorrupted with the love of worldly riches, and not aspiring for the honors of the great and exalted of the earth, could be impressed with the beauty of truth, and inspired with the love of mercy, righteousness, justice, and true holiness. {1Red 64.3}

Jesus, the majesty of Heaven, who united with the Father in the creation of the world, could himself become the instructor of men called to a holy work. He could qualify them to become fishers of men, and to be co-workers with him in the salvation of the fallen race. This knowledge would be free from corrupting error. It would come from above, not from beneath. The faith and destiny of future generations were dependent upon correct knowledge being obtained through these followers of Jesus, who were to attend him in his work and mission. These fishermen were to fulfill their commission with wisdom, perseverance, fortitude, and energy, in accordance with its magnitude. Having been instructed by the great Teacher, and guided continually by wisdom from

Heaven, they would have power over the most intelligent and cultivated minds of the world. How important that their instructions be free from all superstitious customs, and precepts of men!

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Their knowledge should come direct from the great Source of truth. The faith and practice of the Christians of future generations were to be molded, in a great degree, by the testimony of these humble men, made mighty through the power of God. The lives and testimony of these men would be studied by the world. When Jesus called these humble men, saying, "Follow me," they were filled with awe and amazement that he should notice them, and honor them with the privilege of being near him, and beholding his mighty works. {1Red 65.1}

The words of Jesus, in his lessons of instruction as he speaks by the seaside, in the synagogues, in the fields, or upon the mountain, are clothed with a living reality. He selects figures and objects with which all are familiar, and frequently that which is seen and transacted in their sight at the very time he is speaking, to make his discourses more impressive, and that the minds of the weakest may comprehend his meaning. His illustrations are frequently drawn from nature, and are so beautiful in their simplicity that the mind becomes attracted, and with intense interest hangs upon the words of the divine Teacher. He does not aspire to words of lofty eloquence. He could command these as readily as he could the plain, simple, touching language, in which he preferred to clothe his ideas, that the common people might understand his lessons of instruction. {1Red 66.1}

Jesus was acquainted with hearts. He knew that those who had advantages and ability, and who were seeking for worldly wisdom, would have no place in their hearts for the heavenly knowledge he came to impart. The knowledge obtained at the schools seldom makes men wise unto salvation,

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and obedient to the divine will. These attainments do not generally have an influence to increase humility, and to make men feel that they belong to God, to render back to him the talents he has lent them, with principal and interest. Scholars too often become self-sufficient and independent, and cherish exalted views of their own abilities, as though under no obligation to the Giver, to return them back with usury. God will require all that he has given them. He has made them for awhile stewards of privileges and gifts, to prove them, and to try them, whether they will love and reverence the Giver, or will make these blessings bestowed upon them prove a curse to them, by idolizing and making them the cause of withdrawing their affections from God. {1Red 66.2}

Jesus will accept the intellectual who have power of influence and of talents, if they will accept the light he brings them, and follow in a course of humble obedience; but many will not do this. They do not choose the simplicity of Christ. Worldly attractions eclipse the beauty and power of the truth. Many of the worldly-wise men see nothing in Christ, that they should desire him. They behold him at his first advent as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, practicing self-denial, self-sacrifice, and humiliation. They do not discern that they have had any part in thus making the life of Christ undesirable. They do not discern that their sins have laid upon him the weight and

burden which bring to him the grief he carries. They are blinded by the god of this world, and know not the things which make for their peace. Thus saith the Lord by the holy apostle: {1Red 67.1}

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that

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perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? for after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." {1Red 67.2}

The humble fishermen, whom God called to follow him, were the very men he could use best for the accomplishment of his work. Their habits were not conformed to the customs and fashions

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of the world, and they had not cherished the bigotry of the scribes and Pharisees. These men, humble though they were in the eyes of the world, were the men especially chosen by the Saviour of the world. They possessed candor of sentiment, and their conduct was marked with equity and benevolence. They had hearts that were not hardened by blind prejudice. They could, like their divine Master, feel for the woes and sorrows of others. This class he could instruct, and present ideas which would not be forgotten by them, but be preserved for the benefit of future generations. {1Red 68.1}

Jesus taught the people at Capernaum in their synagogues upon several successive Sabbaths. They were astonished at his doctrine; for his lessons of instruction were given with power. Here he cast out devils with his divine power. These demons, in a most public manner, entreated him not to disturb them. Said they, What can we do to resist thy power? Has the time come now to destroy us? "I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God." Demons were unable to resist the power of Christ. They surrendered to him, and in the presence of the astonished multitude, acknowledged him to be the all-powerful Son of God. The devils spoke through the mediums whom they had power to control. The ones possessed, in a most marked manner, spoke the words of the evil spirits which controlled them. These persons so peculiarly afflicted had no knowledge of

Jesus. They could not of themselves understand Christ's mission to release the captives, bound by the power of Satan, and finally accomplish his work, and destroy him who exercised this power over human beings, and who had the power of death. The demons

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understood this far better than the scribes and elders, with all their learning and knowledge obtained in the schools of the prophets. They did not receive Christ, nor see anything desirable in him or his kingdom. The multitude listened with amazement to the words of command from Christ, silencing the demons, that they should not make him known, as he delivered the suffering subjects bound by their power. The people said among themselves, "What a word is this? for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about." {1Red 69.1}

Christ performed a miracle upon Simon Peter's wife's mother, rebuking the raging fever, and it immediately left her, and she rose from her bed of suffering, magnifying the Lord for his mercies. She then prepared food for Christ and his disciples; for they were weary and hungry. Thus she ministered unto those who had ministered unto her. Those who had afflicted and diseased ones, brought them to Christ, and he had pity on them all. He healed them of their divers diseases, by laying his hands upon them. Those who had been possessed of demons were delivered by his divine power. As the devils were cast out, they made great outcries, declaring, "Thou art Christ, the Son of God." While his own people refused to know him, and rejected him, demons knew him, and yielded to his authority. Many who were brought to him by others, because they could not come themselves, were restored, and walked away to their own homes, to publish to the care-worn watchers, relatives, and friends, the great work which had been wrought for them by

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the power of Jesus. Physicians could find but little work to do in the cities. Those who had suffered many things of many physicians, and had not been made any better, but rather worse, applied to Christ, the great Physician, and were perfectly restored in a moment of time. {1Red 70.1}

After the toil and burdens of the day had reached far into the night, Jesus sought a season of repose. But his rest was short. Long before day, he arose and went into a solitary place to pray to his Father. His fervent petition was borne upon the air to the ears of Simon and others who had been searching for him. Guided by the voice of the earnest petitioner, they found his place of devotional retreat, and related to Jesus that there was the greatest anxiety among the people to be with him, and listen to his words, and continue to experience his power in curing their sick and delivering those who were oppressed by Satan. Simon expressed the earnestness of the people: "All men seek for thee." Not only the poor and afflicted, but those who had wealth, and who were the honored of the earth, sought Christ. They entreated Jesus to remain with them, and in no case to leave them. But he informed them that he had the same work of mercy and love to perform in other towns and cities. For this purpose he had come into the world. He could not abide with them; for in thus doing, others would be deprived of his

ministry. {1Red 71.1}

Christ preached in their synagogues throughout Galilee, healing the sick, casting out devils, comforting the afflicted, and relieving the despairing. While many, bearing their burdens of those diseased, were pressing through the multitude, to Christ, for him to heal them, there was an

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unusual commotion among the people. The pressing multitude gave way, falling back. A leper, who was a most loathsome spectacle, was making his way to Christ. Some thought to turn him back from approaching Jesus, as they feared that the people might become infected. But he was as one who neither saw them, nor heard them. The expressions of loathing that came from many lips, did not move him nor turn him from his course. He had but one object in view. His eye saw only the divine Son of God. His ear heard nothing but the voice that was speaking health and happiness to the unfortunate and suffering. As he came into the presence of Jesus, his pent-up feelings, which had been of hopeless despair and agony, now found vent, as a ray of hope lighted up his terrible darkness. He wailed out to Christ his beseeching cry for pity and mercy. He had been loathed and shunned by his fellow-mortals. He had been separated from his family, and was mourned for by them as one far worse than dead. His case had been pronounced incurable. In the greatest humility, he prostrated his consuming, dying, and yet living, breathing, body at the feet of the only One who could save him. His earnest cry to Christ was, If thou wilt, thou canst save me--even me, corrupted and loathsome as I am. Thou canst make me clean. "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." The eager multitude now lose their terror, and again venture to draw nigh to Jesus, to behold this new and wonderful manifestation of his power. But Jesus had no sooner spoken the word of life-giving power, than the half-dead body of putrefaction was changed to healthy flesh, sensitive nerves,

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and firm muscle. The people witnessed this transformation with speechless amazement and awe. {1Red 71.2}

Jesus charged the cleansed leper not to make known the work he had wrought for him, saying, "See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Accordingly the now happy man went to the same priests who had previously examined him, and whose decision had banished him from his family and friends. {1Red 73.1}

Joyfully he presented his offering to the priests, and magnified the name of him who had restored him to health. This irrefutable testimony convinced the priests of the divine power of Jesus, although they still refused to acknowledge him as the Messiah. The Pharisees had asserted that his teachings were directly opposed to the law of Moses, and for the purpose of exalting himself; yet his special directions to the cleansed leper to make an offering to the priest, according to the law of Moses, evidenced to the people that these accusations were false.

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{1Red 73.2}

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Chapter V. - Cleansing the Temple.

The Pharisees were bitter in their hatred of Jesus. His teachings reproved their hypocritical lives, and their religion, which consisted of forms

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and ceremonies. With all their rigorous exactions they had no reverence for the true requirements of God, and daily trampled them beneath their feet. Early in his ministry, Christ condemned their sacrilegious practices by his act of cleansing the temple. {1Red 73.3}

At the time of the passover, when Jerusalem was crowded with people who had come from a distance to celebrate this great annual festival, Jesus with his disciples mingled with the gathering throng. It was early in the morning, yet large crowds were already repairing to the temple. As Jesus entered, he was indignant to find the court of the temple arranged as a cattle market and a place of general traffic. There were not only stalls for the beasts, but there were tables where the priests themselves acted as money-brokers and exchangers. It was customary for each person who attended the passover to bring a piece of money, which was paid to the priests upon entering the temple. {1Red 74.1}

From the changing of foreign coins and different denominations of money to accommodate strangers, this matter of receiving these offerings had grown into a disgraceful traffic, and a source of great profit to the priests. Many came from a great distance and could not bring their sacrificial offerings. Under the plea of accommodating such persons, in the outer court were cattle, sheep, doves, and sparrows for sale at exorbitant prices. The consequent confusion indicated a noisy cattle market, rather than the sacred temple of God. There could be heard sharp bargaining, buying and selling, the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, and cooing of doves, mingled with the chinking of coin, and angry disputation.

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A great number of beasts were annually sacrificed at the passover, which made the sales at the temple immense. The dealers realized a large profit, which was shared with the avaricious priesthood and men of authority among the Jews. These hypocritical speculators, under cover of their holy profession, practiced all manner of extortion, and made their sacred office a source of personal revenue. {1Red 74.2}

The babel of voices, the noises of animals, and the shouts of their drivers created such a confusion just without the sacred precincts that the worshipers within were disturbed, and the words addressed to the Most High were drowned in the uproar that invaded the temple erected to his glory. Yet the Jews were exceedingly proud of their

piety, and tenacious of outward observances and forms. They rejoiced over their temple, and regarded a word spoken in its disfavor as blasphemy. They were rigorous in the performance of ceremonies connected with it, yet allowed the love of money and power to overrule their scruples, till they were scarcely aware of the distance they had wandered from the original purity of the sacrificial ceremony, instituted by God himself. {1Red 75.1}

When the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, the place was consecrated by his presence. A divine command was given Moses to put bounds around the mount and sanctify it, and the word of God was heard in warning: "Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it. Whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death. There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or

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man, it shall not live." All the people were cleansed and sanctified for the presence of the Lord. In direct contrast to this example, the sacred temple, dedicated to the Almighty, was made a market-place and a house of merchandise. {1Red 75.2}

As the youthful Galilean entered the enclosure, he stooped and picked up a whip of small cords that had been used in driving some of the animals. Jesus ascended the steps of the temple and surveyed the scene with a calm and dignified look. He saw and heard the traffic and bartering. His expression became stern and terrible. The eyes of many turned instinctively to look at this stranger; their gaze became riveted upon him. Others followed their example till the whole multitude were regarding him with a look of mingled fear and amazement. {1Red 76.1}

They felt instinctively that this man read their inmost thoughts and their hidden motives of action. Some attempted to conceal their faces as if their evil deeds were written upon their countenances to be scanned by those searching eyes. {1Red 76.2}

The confusion was hushed. The sound of traffic and bargaining ceased. The silence became painful. A sense of awe overpowered the entire assembly. It was as if they were arraigned before the tribunal of God to answer for their deeds. The Majesty of Heaven stood as the Judge will stand at the last day, and every one of that vast crowd for the time acknowledged him their Master. His eye swept over the multitude, taking in every individual. His form seemed to tower above them in commanding dignity, and a divine light illuminated his countenance. He spoke, and his clear, ringing voice, echoing through the arches of the temple, was like the

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voice that shook Mount Sinai, of old: "My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." {1Red 76.3}

He slowly descended the steps, and raising the whip, which in his hand seemed changed to a kingly scepter, bade the bargaining company to quit the sacred limits of the temple, and take hence their merchandise. With a lofty zeal, and a severity he had never before manifested, he overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the coin fell, ringing sharply upon the marble floor. The most hardened and defiant did not presume to question his authority, but, with prompt obedience, the dignitaries of the temple, the speculating priests, the cattle traders and brokers, rushed from his

presence. The most avaricious did not stop to gather up their idolized money, but fled without a thought of their ill-gotten gains. {1Red 77.1}

The beasts and birds were all hurried beyond the sacred portals. A panic of fear swept over the multitude who felt the over-shadowing of Christ's divinity. Cries of terror escaped from hundreds of blanched lips as the crowd rushed headlong from the place. Jesus smote them not with the whip of cords, but, to their guilty eyes, that simple instrument seemed like gleaming, angry swords, circling in every direction, and threatening to cut them down. Even the disciples quaked with fear, and were awe-struck by the words and manner of Jesus, so unlike the usual demeanor of the meek and lowly man of Galilee. But they remembered that it was written of him, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Soon the multitude, with their cattle, their sheep, doves, and sparrows, were far removed from the temple

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of the Lord. The courts were free from unholy commerce, and a deep silence and solemnity settled upon the late scene of confusion. If the presence of the Lord sanctified the mount, his presence made equally sacred the temple reared to his honor. {1Red 77.2}

How easily could that vast throng have resisted the authority of one man; but the power of His divinity overwhelmed them with confusion and a sense of their guilt. They had no strength to resist the divine authority of the Saviour of the world. The desecrators of God's holy place were driven from its portals by the Majesty of Heaven. {1Red 78.1}

After the temple was cleansed, the demeanor of Jesus changed; the terrible majesty of his countenance gave place to an expression of tenderest sympathy. He looked after the flying crowd with eyes full of sorrow and compassion. There were some who remained, held by the irresistible attraction of his presence. They were unterrified by his awful dignity, their hearts were drawn toward him with love and hope. These people were not the great and powerful, who expected to impress him with a sense of their grandeur; they were the poor, the sick, and the afflicted. {1Red 78.2}

After the buyers and sellers, and the promiscuous crowd with their merchandise, were driven out, Jesus healed the stricken ones who flocked unto him. The sick were relieved, the blind received their sight, the dumb praised God with loosened tongues, the lame leaped for joy, and demons were cast out from those they had long tormented. Mothers, pale with anxiety and watching, brought their dying infants to receive

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his blessing. He folded them tenderly to his bosom, and returned them to their mothers' arms well and strong. {1Red 78.3}

This was a scene worthy of the temple of the Lord. He who, a short time before, had stood upon the steps like an avenging angel, had now become a messenger of mercy, soothing the sorrows of the oppressed, encouraging the despairing, relieving the suffering. Hundreds returned to their homes from the passover sound in body and enlightened in mind, who had come there feeble and desponding. {1Red 79.1}

During this time the people were slowly drifting back. They had partially recovered from the panic that had seized them, but their faces expressed an irresolution and

timidity that could not be concealed. They looked with amazement upon the works of Jesus, beholding more wonderful cures than had ever been accomplished before. The Jews knew that the act of Jesus in purging the temple of its sacrilegious speculators, was not the exhibition of human power. The divine authority that inspired Jesus, and lifted him above humanity, was felt and realized by them, and should have been sufficient to bring them as worshipers at his feet. But they were determined to disbelieve him. They feared that this humble Galilean would take from them their power over the people, by his greater works and super-human authority. Their haughty spirits had looked for a king who would come with great pomp and heraldry, subduing the nations of the earth, and raising them to a much loftier station than they now occupied. This Man, who came teaching humility and love, aroused their hatred and scorn.

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{1Red 79.2}

When he arose in the majesty of his sacred mission, they were stricken with sudden fear and condemnation. But, after the spell was broken, in the hardness of their hearts, they wondered why they had been so terror-stricken and fled so precipitately from the presence of a single man. What right had this youthful Galilean to interfere with the dignitaries of the temple? After a time they returned, but did not dare at once to resume their former occupation. {1Red 80.1}

The crowd were comparatively innocent, for it was by the arrangement of the chief authorities of the temple that the outer court was turned into a market-place. The great sin of desecration lay upon the priesthood, who had perverted and disgraced their sacred office. The chief priests and elders counseled among themselves as to what course should be pursued toward Jesus, and what his conduct could mean, assuming an authority greater than their own, and rebuking them openly. {1Red 80.2}

They went to Jesus with a deference born of the fear that still hung over them; for they concluded that he must be a prophet sent of God to restore the sanctity of the temple. They asked him, "What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" Jesus had already given them the strongest proof of his divine commission. He knew that no evidence he could present to them would convince them that he was the Messiah if his act of cleansing the temple had failed to do so. Therefore he answered their challenge with these words, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They supposed he referred to the temple at Jerusalem, and were astounded at his apparent

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presumption. Their unbelieving minds were unable to discern that he referred to his own body, the earthly temple of the Son of God. With indignation they answered, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" {1Red 80.3}

Jesus did not design that the skeptical Jews should discover the hidden meaning of his words, nor even his disciples at that time. After his resurrection they called to mind these words he had uttered, and they then understood them correctly. They remembered that he had also said that he had power to lay down his life and to take it again. Jesus was acquainted with the path his feet had entered upon, even unto the end. His words possessed a double meaning, referring to the temple at Jerusalem as

well as his own material body. {1Red 81.1}

Christ was the foundation and life of that temple. His crucifixion would virtually destroy it, because its services were typical of the future sacrifice of the Son of God. They pointed to the great antitype, which was Christ himself. When the Jews should accomplish their wicked purpose, and do unto him what they listed, from that day forth sacrificial offerings, and the services connected with them, would be valueless in the sight of God, for type would have met antitype in the perfect offering of the Son of God. {1Red 81.2}

The whole priesthood was established to represent the mediatorial character and work of Christ; and the entire plan of sacrificial worship was a foreshadowing of the death of the Saviour to redeem the world from sin. There would be no more need of burnt-offerings and the blood of beasts when the great event toward which

they had pointed for ages was consummated. The temple was Christ's; its services and ceremonies referred directly to him. What then must have been his feelings when he found it polluted by the spirit of avarice and extortion, a place of merchandise and traffic! {1Red 81.3}

When Christ was crucified, the inner vail of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, which event signified that the ceremonial system of the sacrificial offerings was at an end forever, that the one great and final sacrifice was made in the Lamb of God, slain for the sins of the world. {1Red 82.1}

In the defilement and cleansing of the temple we have a lesson for this time. The same spirit that existed among the Jews, leading them to substitute gain for godliness, and outward pomp for inward purity, curses the Christian world today. It spreads like a defiling leprosy among the professed worshipers of God. Sacred things are brought down to a level with the vain matters of the world. Vice is mistaken for virtue, and righteousness for crime. Temporal business is mingled with the worship of God. Extortion and wicked speculation are practiced by those who profess to be servants of the Most High. Said the inspired apostle, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." It is necessary that Jesus should occupy his temple in the human heart every day, and cleanse it from the defilement of sin. {1Red 82.2}

Chapter VI. - Feast of Tabernacles.

Three times a year, all the Jews were required to assemble for religious purposes at Jerusalem. Jesus had not attended several of these gatherings because of the enmity of the Jews. When he declared in the synagogue that he was the bread of life, many of those who had followed him apostatized and united with the Pharisees to watch him

and spy upon his movements in the hope of finding cause to condemn him to death. {1Red 83.1}

The sons of Joseph, who passed as brothers of Jesus, were very much affected by this desertion of so many of his disciples, and, as the time approached for the Feast of Tabernacles, they urged Jesus to go up to Jerusalem, and, if he was indeed the Messiah, to present his claims before the rulers, and enforce his rights. {1Red 83.2}

Jesus replied to them with solemn dignity: "My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast; I go not up yet unto this feast, for my time is not yet full come." The world loved those who were like itself; but the contrast between Christ and the world was most marked; there could be no harmony between them. His teachings, and his reproofs of sin, stirred up its hatred against him. The Saviour knew what awaited him at Jerusalem, he knew that the malice of the Jews would soon bring about his death, and it was not his place to hasten that event by prematurely

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exposing himself to their unscrupulous hatred. He was to patiently await his appointed time. {1Red 83.3}

At the commencement of the Feast of Tabernacles, the absence of Jesus was commented upon. The Pharisees and rulers anxiously looked for him to come, hoping that they might have an opportunity to condemn him on account of something he might say or do. They anxiously inquired, "Where is he?" but no one knew. Presently a dispute rose among the people in regard to Jesus, many nobly defending him as one sent of God, while others bitterly accused him as a deceiver of the people. {1Red 84.1}

Meanwhile, Jesus had quietly arrived at Jerusalem. He had chosen an unfrequented route by which to go, in order to avoid the travelers who were making their way to the city from all quarters. In the midst of the feast, when the dispute concerning himself was at its height, Jesus walked calmly into the court of the temple, and stood before the crowd as one possessed of unquestionable authority. The sudden and unexpected appearance of one whom they believed would not dare to show himself among them in the presence of all the chief priests and rulers, astonished the people so that a sudden hush succeeded the excited discussion in which they had been engaged. They were astonished at his dignified and courageous bearing in the midst of many powerful men who were thirsting for his life. {1Red 84.2}

Standing thus, with the eyes of all the people riveted upon him, he addressed them as no man had ever done. His knowledge was greater than that of the learned priests and elders, and he assumed an authority which they had never ventured to take. Those very men who had so lately

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been wrought up to a frenzy of hate, and were ready to do violence to Christ at the first opportunity, now listened spell-bound to his words, and felt themselves powerless to do him harm. He was the attraction of the hour; all other interests were forgotten for the time. The hearts of the people thrilled with awe as they listened to his divine words. {1Red 84.3}

His discourse showed that he was well acquainted with the law in all its bearings, and was a clear interpreter of the Scriptures. The question passes from one to another, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Some, less acquainted with his former life, inquire among themselves in what school he has been instructed. Finally, the rulers recover their presence of mind sufficiently to demand by what authority he stands so boldly teaching the people. They seek to turn the attention of the multitude from Jesus to the question of his right to teach, and to their own importance and authority. But the voice of Jesus answers their queries with thrilling power:-- {1Red 85.1}

"My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory;but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." Jesus here declares that his Heavenly Father is the source of all strength, and the foundation of all wisdom. No natural talent nor acquired learning can supply the place of a knowledge of the will of God. A willingness to obey the requirements of the Lord opens the mind and heart to candid inquiry, and diligent

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searching for the doctrine of truth. He declares that, with a mind thus open, men can discern between him who speaks in the cause of God and him who speaks for his own glory for selfish purposes. Of this latter class were the haughty priests and Pharisees. {1Red 85.2}

Jesus spoke upon the subject of the law. He was in the presence of the very men who were great sticklers for its exactions, yet failed to carry out its principles in their lives. These persons persecuted Jesus, who taught so pointedly the sanctity of God's statutes, and freed them from the senseless restrictions which had been attached to them. Since Jesus had healed the paralytic on the Sabbath day, the Pharisees had a determined purpose to compass his death, and were eagerly watching for an opportunity to accomplish their design. Jesus, penetrating their purposes, inquired of them:-- {1Red 86.1}

"Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?" This pointed accusation struck home to the guilty consciences of the Pharisees and rulers, but only increased their rage. That this humble man should stand up before the people and expose the hidden iniquity of their lives, seemed a presumption too great to be believed. But the rulers wished to conceal their evil purposes from the people, and evaded the words of Jesus, crying out, "Thou hast a devil; who goeth about to kill thee?" In these words they would insinuate that all the wonderful works of Jesus were instigated by an evil spirit. They also wished to direct the minds of the people from the words of Jesus revealing their purpose of taking his life.

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{1Red 86.2}

But "Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers; and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man." Jesus referred to his act of healing the man on the Sabbath, and showed that it was in accordance with the

Sabbath law. He alluded also to the custom among the Jews of circumcising on the Sabbath. If it was lawful to circumcise a man on the Sabbath, it must certainly be right to relieve the afflicted, "to make a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day." He bade them "judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." The boldness with which Jesus defended himself, and interpreted the spirit of the law, silenced the rulers and led many of those who heard him to say, "Is not this he whom they seek to kill? But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?" Many of those who lived at Jerusalem, and were not ignorant of the designs of the Sanhedrim council against Jesus, were charmed with the doctrine that he taught and with his pure and dignified bearing, and were inclined to accept him as the Son of God. {1Red 87.1}

They were not filled with the bitter prejudice and hatred of the priests and rulers; but Satan was ready to suggest doubts and questions in their minds as to the divinity of this man of humble origin. Many had received the impression that Messiah would have no natural relationship to humanity, and it was not pleasant for them to think of him, whom they had hoped would be a mighty King of Israel, as one who

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sprung from poverty and obscurity. Therefore they said among themselves, "Howbeit we know this man knoweth whence he is; but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is." The minds of these men were closed to the prophecies, which pointed out how and when Christ was to come. {1Red 87.2}

While their minds were balancing between doubt and faith, Jesus took up their thoughts and answered them thus: "Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am; and I am not come of myself, but He that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath sent me." They claimed a knowledge of what the origin of Christ should be, while they were in reality utterly ignorant of it, and were locked in spiritual blindness. If they had lived in accordance with the will of the Father, they would have known his Son when he was manifested to them. {1Red 88.1}

The words of Jesus convinced many of those who listened; but the rage of the rulers was increased by this very fact, and they made an attempt to seize him; "but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" {1Red 88.2}

Jesus stood before his enemies with calm and dignified mien, declaring his mission to the world, and revealing the hidden sins and deadly designs of the Pharisees and rulers. Though these lofty persons would gladly have sealed his lips, and though they had the will to destroy him where he stood, they were prevented by an invisible influence, which put a limit to their rage and said to them, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther."

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{1Red 88.3}

The words of Jesus found a place in many hearts, and, like seed sown in goodly soil, they afterward bore abundant harvests. The spies scattered throughout the throng now report to the chief priests and elders that Jesus is gaining great influence among

the people and that many are already acknowledging their belief in him. The priests therefore secretly lay their plans to arrest Jesus; but they arrange to take him when he is alone, for they dare not risk the effect upon the people of seizing him while in their presence. Jesus, divining their malevolent intents, declares in words of solemn pathos:-- {1Red 89.1}

"Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, thither ye cannot come." Soon the Saviour of the world will find a refuge from the persecution of his enemies, where their scorn and hate will be powerless to harm him. He will ascend to his Father, to be again the Adored of angels; and thither his murderers can never come. {1Red 89.2}

The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated to commemorate the time when the Hebrews dwelt in tents during their sojourn in the wilderness. While this great festival lasted, the people were required to leave their houses and live in booths made of green branches of pine or myrtle. These leafy structures were sometimes erected on the tops of the houses, and in the streets, but oftener outside the walls of the city, in the valleys and along the hill-sides. Scattered about in every direction, these green camps presented a very picturesque appearance.

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{1Red 89.3}

The feast lasted one week, and during all that time the temple was a festal scene of great rejoicing. There was the pomp of the sacrificial ceremonies; and the sound of music, mingled with hosannas, made the place jubilant. At the first dawn of day, the priests sounded a long, shrill blast upon their silver trumpets; and the answering trumpets, and the glad shouts of the people from their booths, echoing over hill and valley, welcomed the festal day. Then the priest dipped from the flowing waters of the Kedron a flagon of water, and, lifting it on high, while the trumpets were sounding, he ascended the broad steps of the temple, keeping time with the music with slow and measured tread, chanting meanwhile: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!" {1Red 90.1}

He bore the flagon to the altar which occupied a central position in the temple court. Here were two silver basins, with a priest standing at each one. The flagon of water was poured into one basin, and a flagon of wine into the other; and the contents of both flowed into a pipe which communicated with the Kedron, and was conducted to the Dead Sea. This display of the consecrated water represented the fountain that flowed from the rock to refresh the Hebrews in the wilderness. Then the jubilant strains rang forth:-- {1Red 90.2}

"The Lord Jehovah is my strength and song;" "therefore with joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation!" All the vast assembly joined in triumphant chorus with musical instruments and deep-toned trumpets, while competent choristers conducted the grand harmonious concert of praise.

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{1Red 90.3}

The festivities were carried on with an unparalleled splendor. At night the temple and its court blazed so with artificial light that the whole city was illuminated. The music, the

waving of palm-branches, the glad hosannas, the great concourse of people, over which the light streamed from the hanging lamps, the dazzling array of the priests, and the majesty of the ceremonies, all combined to make a scene that deeply impressed all beholders. {1Red 91.1}

The feast was drawing to a close. The morning of the last, crowning day found the people wearied from the long season of festivity. Suddenly Jesus lifted up his voice in tones that rang through the courts of the temple:-- {1Red 91.2}

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." The condition of the people made this appeal very forcible. They had been engaged in a continued scene of pomp and festivity, their eyes had been dazzled with light and color, and their ears regaled with the richest music; but there had been nothing to meet the wants of the spirit, nothing to satisfy the thirst of the soul for that which perishes not. Jesus invited them to come and drink of the fountain of life, of that which should be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. {1Red 91.3}

The priest had that morning performed the imposing ceremony which represented the smiting of the rock in the wilderness and the issuing therefrom of the water. That rock was a figure of Christ. His words were the water of life. As Jesus spoke thus to the people, their hearts

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thrilled with a strange awe, and many were ready to exclaim, with the woman of Samaria, "Give me of this water, that I thirst not." {1Red 91.4}

The words of the Divine Teacher presented his gospel in a most impressive figure. More than eighteen hundred years have passed since the lips of Jesus pronounced those words in the hearing of thousands of thirsty souls; but they are as comforting and cheering to our hearts today, and as full of hope, as to those who accepted them in the Jewish temple. Jesus knew the wants of the human soul. Hollow pomp, riches and honor, cannot satisfy the heart. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me." The rich, the poor, the high, the low, are alike welcomed. He promises to relieve the burdened mind, to comfort the sorrowing, and give hope to the despondent. Many of those who heard Jesus were mourners over disappointed hopes, some were nourishing a secret grief, some were seeking to satisfy the restless longing of the soul with the things of this world and the praise of men; but when all this was gained, they found that they had toiled to reach only a broken cistern, from which they could not quench their fever thirst. Amid all the glitter of the joyous scene they stood, dissatisfied and sad. That sudden cry, "If any man thirst--" startles them from their sorrowful meditation, and as they listen to the words that follow, their minds kindle with a new hope. They look upon the Lifegiver standing in majesty before them, divinity flashing through his humanity, and revealing his heavenly power in words that thrill their hearts. {1Red 92.1}

The cry of Christ to the thirsty soul is still

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going forth. It appeals to us with even greater power than to those who heard it in the temple on that last day of the feast. The weary and exhausted ones are offered the refreshing draught of eternal life. Jesus invites them to rest in him. He will take their

burdens. He will give them peace. Centuries before the advent of Christ, Isaiah described him as a "hiding-place from the wind," a "covert from the tempest," as "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." All who come to Christ receive his love in their hearts, which is the water that springs up unto everlasting life. Those who receive it impart it in turn to others, in good works, in right examples, and in Christian counsel. {1Red 92.2}

The day was over, and the Pharisees and rulers waited impatiently for a report from the officers whom they had set upon the track of Jesus, in order to arrest him. But their emissaries return without him. They are angrily asked, "Why have ye not brought him?" The officers, with solemn countenances, answer, "Never man spake like this man." Dealing with violence and crime had naturally hardened the hearts of these men; but they were not so unfeeling as the priests and elders, who had resolutely shut out the light, and given themselves up to envy and malice. {1Red 93.1}

The officers had heard the words of Jesus in the temple, they had felt the wondrous influence of his presence, and their hearts had been strangely softened and drawn toward him whom they were commanded to arrest as a criminal. They were unequal to the task set them by the priests and rulers; they could not summon courage

to lay hands upon this pure Being who stood, with the light of Heaven upon his countenance, preaching a free salvation. As they stand excusing themselves for not obeying their orders, and saying, "Never man spake like this man," the Pharisees, enraged that even these tools of the law should be influenced by this Galilean peasant, cry out angrily:-- {1Red 93.2}

"Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed." They then proceed to lay plans to condemn and execute Jesus immediately, fearful that if he is left free any longer he will gain all the people. They decide that their only hope is to speedily silence him. But Nicodemus, one of the Pharisees, and he who had come to Jesus in the night and had been taught of him concerning the new birth, speaks out boldly:-- {1Red 94.1}

"Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" For a moment silence falls on the assembly. Nicodemus was a rich and influential man, learned in the law, and holding a high position among the rulers. What he said was true, and came home to the Pharisees with startling, emphasis; they could not condemn a man unheard. But this was not the only reason that the haughty rulers remained confounded, gazing at him who had so boldly spoken in favor of justice. They were startled and chagrined that one of their own number had been so impressed by the power of Jesus as to openly defend him in the council. When they recovered from their astonishment, they addressed him with cutting sarcasm:--

{1Red 94.2}

"Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." But they were nevertheless unable to carry their purpose, and condemn Jesus without a hearing. They were defeated and crest-fallen for the time, and "every man went unto his own house."

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{1Red 95.1}

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Chapter VII. - Go and Sin No More.

Early on the following morning, Jesus "came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them." {1Red 95.2}

While Jesus was engaged in teaching, the scribes and Pharisees brought to him a woman whom they accused of the sin of adultery, and said to him, Master, "now Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not." {1Red 95.3}

The scribes and Pharisees had agreed to bring this case before Jesus, thinking that whatever decision he made in regard to it, they would therein find occasion to accuse and condemn him. If he should acquit the woman, they would accuse him of despising the law of Moses, and condemn him on that account; and if he should declare that she was guilty of death, they would accuse him to the Romans as one who was stirring

up sedition and assuming authority which alone belonged to them. But Jesus well knew for what purpose this case had been brought to him; he read the secrets of their hearts, and knew the character and life-history of every man in his presence. He seemed indifferent to the question of the Pharisees, and while they were talking and pressing about him, he stooped and wrote carelessly with his finger in the sand. {1Red 95.4}

Although doing this without apparent design, Jesus was tracing on the ground, in legible characters, the particular sins of which the woman's accusers were guilty, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest. At length the Pharisees become impatient at the indifference of Jesus, and his delay in deciding the question before him, and drew nearer, urging the matter. But as their eyes fell upon the words written in the sand, fear and surprise took possession of them. The people, looking on, saw their countenances suddenly change, and pressed forward to discover what they were regarding with such an expression of astonishment and shame. Many of those who thus gathered round also read the record of hidden sin inscribed against these accusers of another. {1Red 96.1}

Then Jesus "lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground." The accusers saw that Jesus not only knew the secrets of their past sins, but was acquainted with their purpose in bringing this case before him, and had in his matchless wisdom defeated their deeply laid scheme. They now became fearful lest Jesus

would expose their guilt to all present, and they therefore "being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst." {1Red 96.2}

There was not one of her accusers but was more guilty than the conscience-stricken woman who stood trembling with shame before him. After the Pharisees had hastily left the presence of Christ, in their guilty consternation, he arose and looked upon the woman, saying, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more." {1Red 97.1}

Jesus did not palliate sin nor lessen the sense of crime; but he came not to condemn; he came to lead the sinner to eternal life. The world looked upon this erring woman as one to be slighted and scorned; but the pure and holy Jesus stooped to address her with words of comfort, encouraging her to reform her life. Instead of to condemn the guilty, his work was to reach into the very depths of human woe and degradation, lift up the debased and sinful, and bid the trembling penitent to "sin no more." When the woman stood before Jesus, cowering under the accusation of the Pharisees and a sense of the enormity of her crime, she knew that her life was trembling in the balance, and that a word from Jesus would add fuel to the indignation of the crowd, so that they would immediately stone her to death. {1Red 97.2}

Her eyes droop before the calm and searching glance of Christ. Stricken with shame, she is

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unable to look upon that holy countenance. As she thus stands waiting for sentence to be passed upon her, the words fall upon her astonished ears that not only deliver her from her accusers, but send them away convicted of greater crimes than hers. After they are gone, she hears the mournfully solemn words: "Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more." Her heart melts with penitential grief; and, with gratitude to her Deliverer, she bows at the feet of Jesus, sobbing out in broken accents the emotions of her heart, and confessing her sins with bitter tears. {1Red 97.3}

This was the beginning of a new life to this tempted, fallen soul, a life of purity and peace, devoted to the service of God. In raising this woman to a life of virtue, Jesus performed a greater act than that of healing the most grievous bodily malady; he cured the sickness of the soul which is unto death everlasting. This penitent woman became one of the firmest friends of Jesus. She repaid his forgiveness and compassion, with a self-sacrificing love and worship. Afterward, when she stood sorrow-stricken at the foot of the cross, and saw the dying agony on the face of her Lord, and heard his bitter cry, her soul was pierced afresh; for she knew that this sacrifice was on account of sin; and her responsibility as one whose deep guilt had helped to bring about this anguish of the Son of God, seemed very heavy indeed. She felt that those pangs which pierced the Saviour's frame were for her; the blood that flowed from his wounds was to blot out her record of sin; the groans which escaped from his dying lips were caused by her transgression. Her heart ached with a sorrow

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past all expression, and she felt that a life of self-abnegating atonement would poorly

compensate for the gift of life, purchased for her at such an infinite price. {1Red 98.1}

In his act of pardoning, and encouraging this fallen woman to live a better life, the character of Jesus shines forth in the beauty of a perfect righteousness. Knowing not the taint of sin himself, he pities the weakness of the erring one, and reaches to her a helping hand. While the self-righteous and hypocritical Pharisees denounce, and the tumultuous crowd is ready to stone and slay, and the trembling victim waits for death--Jesus, the Friend of sinners, bids her, "Go, and sin no more." {1Red 99.1}

It is not the true follower of Christ who turns from the erring with cold, averted eyes, leaving them unrestrained to pursue their downward course. Christian charity is slow to censure, quick to detect penitence, ready to forgive, to encourage, to set the wanderer in the path of virtue, and stay his feet therein. {1Red 99.2}

The wisdom displayed by Jesus on this occasion, in defending himself against the designs of his enemies, and the evidence which he gave them that he knew the hidden secrets of their lives, the conviction that he pressed home upon the guilty consciences of the very men who were seeking to destroy him, were sufficient evidence of his divine character. Jesus also taught another important lesson in this scene: That those who are ever forward to accuse others, quick to detect them in wrong, and zealous that they should be brought to justice, are often guiltier in their own lives than those whom they accuse. Many who

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beheld the whole scene were led to compare the pardoning compassion of Jesus with the unrelenting spirit of the Pharisees, to whom mercy was a stranger; and they turned to the pitying Saviour as unto One who would lead the repentant sinner into peace and security. {1Red 99.3}

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of my life." Jesus had represented himself, in his relation to fallen man, as a fountain of living water, to which all who thirst may come and drink. The brilliant lights in the temple illuminated all Jerusalem, and he now used these lights to represent his relation to the world. In clear and thrilling tones he declared: "I am the light of the world." As the radiant lamps of the temple lit up the whole city, so Christ, the source of spiritual light, illuminated the darkness of a world lying in sin. His manner was so impressive, and his words carried with them such a weight of truth, that many were there convicted that he was indeed the Son of God. But the Pharisees, ever ready to contradict him, accused him of egotism, saying, "Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true." Jesus, answering their objections, asserted again his divine commission:-- {1Red 100.1}

"Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come and whither I go." They were ignorant of his divine character and mission because they had not searched the prophecies concerning the Messiah, as it was their privilege and duty to do. They

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had no connection with God and Heaven, and therefore did not comprehend the work of the Saviour of the world, and, though they had received the most convincing evidence that Jesus was that Saviour, yet they refused to open their minds to

understand. At first they had set their hearts against him, and refused to believe the strongest proof of his divinity, and, as a consequence, their hearts had grown harder until they were determined not to believe nor accept him. {1Red 100.2}

"Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet, if I judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Thus he declared that he was sent of God, to do his work. He had not consulted with priests nor rulers as to the course he was to pursue; for his commission was from the highest authority, even the Creator of the universe. Jesus, in his sacred office, had taught the people, had relieved suffering, had forgiven sin, and had cleansed the temple, which was his Father's house, and driven out its desecraters from its sacred portals; he had condemned the hypocritical lives of the Pharisees, and reproved their hidden sins; and in all this he had acted under the instruction of his Heavenly Father. For this reason they hated him and sought to kill him. Jesus declared to them: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above. Ye are of this world; I am not of this world." {1Red 101.1}

"When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me." "And he that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always

those things that please him." These words were spoken with thrilling power, and, for the time, closed the lips of the Pharisees, and caused many of those who listened with attentive minds to unite with Jesus, believing him to be the Son God. To these believing ones he said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." But to the Pharisees who rejected him, and who hardened their hearts against him, he declared: "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins; whither I go, ye cannot come." {1Red 101.2}

But the Pharisees took up his words, addressed to those who believed, and commented upon them, saying, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" Jesus looked upon these men,--the slaves of unbelief and bitter malice, whose thoughts were bent upon revenge,--and answered them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin." They were in the worst of bondage, ruled by the spirit of evil. Jesus declared to them that if they were the true children of Abraham, and lived in obedience to God, they would not seek to kill one who was speaking the truth that was given him of God. This was not doing the works of Abraham, whom they claimed as their father. {1Red 102.1}

Jesus, with startling emphasis, denied that the Jews were following the example of Abraham. Said he, "Ye do the deeds of your father." The Pharisees, partly comprehending his meaning, said, "We be not born of fornication; we have

one Father, even God." But Jesus answered them: "If God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." The Pharisees had turned from God, and refused to recognize his Son. If their minds had been open to the love of God, they would have acknowledged the Saviour who was sent to the world by him. Jesus boldly revealed their desperate condition:-- {1Red 102.2}

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." These words were spoken with sorrowful pathos, as Jesus realized the terrible condition into which these men had fallen. But his enemies heard him with uncontrollable anger; although his majestic bearing, and the mighty weight of the truths he uttered, held them powerless. Jesus continued to draw the sharp contrast between their position and that of Abraham, whose children they claimed to be:-- {1Red 103.1}

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." The Jews listened incredulously to this assertion, and said, sneeringly, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Jesus, with a lofty dignity that sent a thrill of conviction through their guilty souls, answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." For a moment, silence fell upon all the people, as the

grand and awful import of these words dawned upon their minds. But the Pharisees, speedily recovering from the influence of his words, and fearing their effect upon the people, commenced to create an uproar, railing at him as a blasphemer. "Then took they up stones to cast at him; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by." {1Red 103.2}

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2Red - Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ in The Wilderness (1877)

PAMPHLETS / 2Red - Redemption; or the Temptation of Christ in The Wilderness (1877) / PREFACE

PREFACE

PROBABLY THERE IS NO SUBJECT IN ALL THE RANGE OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY THAT IS MORE NEGLECTED, AND YET MORE IMPORTANT, THAN THE THREE-FOLD TEMPTATION OF CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS. HENCE, THIS LITTLE WORK FILLS A PLACE THAT NO OTHER DOES. THE PLAIN AND EARNEST STYLE OF THE WRITER, HER PRACTICAL APPEALS TOUCHING CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE, AND HER EXALTED VIEWS OF THE GREAT WORK OF THE REDEEMER IN CARRYING OUT THE PLAN OF SALVATION, MAKE THE WORK ONE OF INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE. MAY IT BE CAREFULLY READ, AND PROVE A PRECIOUS BLESSING TO THE CANDID READER.

PUBLISHERS.

The Temptation of Christ

After the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. When he had come up out of the water, he bowed upon Jordan's banks, and plead with the great Eternal for strength to endure the conflict with the fallen foe. The opening of the heavens and the descent of the excellent glory attested his divine character. The voice from the Father declared the close relation of Christ to his Infinite Majesty: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The mission of Christ was soon to begin. But he must first withdraw from the busy scenes of life to a desolate wilderness for the express purpose of bearing the three-fold test of temptation in behalf of those he had come to redeem. {2Red 5.1}

Satan, who was once an honored angel in Heaven, had been ambitious for the more exalted honors which God had bestowed upon his Son. He became envious of Christ, and represented to the angels, who honored him as covering cherub, that he had not the honor conferred upon him which his position demanded. He asserted that he should be exalted equal in honor with Christ. Satan obtained sympathizers. Angels in Heaven joined him in his rebellion, and fell with

their leader from their high and holy estate, and were therefore expelled from Heaven with him. {2Red 5.2}

The Creation.

God, in counsel with his Son, formed the plan of creating man in his own image. Man was to be placed upon probation. He was to be tested and proved; if he should bear the test of God, and remain loyal and true through the first trial, he was not to be beset with continual temptations, but was to be exalted equal with the angels, and made, thenceforth, immortal. {2Red 6.1}

Adam and Eve came forth from the hand of their Creator in the perfection of every physical, mental, and spiritual endowment. God planted for them a garden, and surrounded them with everything that was lovely and attractive to the eye, which their physical necessities required. This holy pair looked upon a world of unsurpassed loveliness and glory. A benevolent Creator had given them evidences of his goodness and love in providing them with fruits, vegetables, and grains, and in causing to grow out of the ground every variety of trees for usefulness and beauty. {2Red 6.2}

The holy pair looked upon nature as a picture of unsurpassed loveliness. The brown earth was clothed with a carpet of living green, diversified with an endless variety of self-perpetuating flowers. Shrubs, flowers, and trailing vines, regaled the senses with their beauty and fragrance. The many varieties of lofty trees were laden with delicious fruit of every kind, adapted to please the taste and meet the wants of the happy Adam and Eve. This Eden home God provided for our

first parents, giving them unmistakable evidences of his great love and care for them. {2Red 6.3}

Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as he had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of his hands. Man, made in the divine image, could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature. {2Red 7.1}

Adam and Eve could trace the skill and glory of God in every spire of grass, and in every shrub and flower. The natural loveliness which surrounded them reflected like a mirror the wisdom, excellence, and love, of their Heavenly Father. And their songs of affection and praise rose sweetly and reverentially to Heaven, harmonizing with the songs of the exalted angels, and with the happy birds who were caroling forth their music without a care. There was no disease, decay, nor death. Life was in everything the eye rested upon. The atmosphere was filled with life. Life was in every leaf, in every flower, and in every tree. {2Red 7.2}

Labor a Blessing.

The Lord knew that Adam could not be happy without labor; therefore, he gave him the pleasant employment of dressing the garden. And, as he tended the things of beauty and usefulness around him, he could behold the goodness and glory of God in his created works. Adam had themes for contemplation in the works of God in Eden, which was Heaven in miniature. God did

not form man merely to contemplate his glorious works; therefore, he gave him hands for labor, as well as a mind and heart for contemplation. If the happiness of man consisted in doing nothing, the Creator would not have given Adam his appointed work. Man was to find happiness in labor as well as in meditation. Adam could take in the grand idea that he was created in the image of God, to be like him in righteousness and holiness. His mind was capable of continual cultivation, expansion, refinement, and noble elevation; for God was his teacher, and angels were his companions. {2Red 7.3}

The Test of Probation.

The Lord placed man upon probation, that he might form a character of steadfast integrity for his own happiness and for the glory of his Creator. He had endowed Adam with powers of mind superior to any other creature that he had made. His mental powers were but little lower than those of the angels. He could become familiar with the sublimity and glory of nature, and understand the character of his Heavenly Father in his created works. Amid the glories of Eden, everything that his eye rested upon testified of his Father's love and infinite power. {2Red 8.1}

The first moral lesson given to Adam was that of self-denial. The reins of self-government were placed in his hands. Judgment, reason, and conscience, were to bear sway. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat;

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but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." {2Red 8.2}

Adam and Eve were permitted to partake of every tree in the garden save one. There was a single prohibition. The forbidden tree was as attractive and lovely as any of the trees in the garden. It was called the tree of knowledge because, in partaking of that tree of which God had said, "Thou shalt not eat of it," they would have a knowledge of sin, an experience in disobedience. Eve went from the side of her husband, viewing the beautiful things of nature, delighting her senses with the colors and fragrance of the flowers, and admiring the beauty of the trees and shrubs. She was thinking of the restrictions which God had laid upon them in regard to the tree of knowledge. She was pleased with the beauties and bounties which the Lord had furnished for the gratification of every want. All these, said she, God has given us to enjoy. They are all ours; for God has said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." {2Red 9.1}

Eve had wandered near the forbidden tree, and her curiosity was aroused to know how death could be concealed in the fruit of this fair tree. She was surprised to hear her queries taken up and repeated by a strange voice. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Eve was not aware that she had revealed her thoughts in audibly conversing with herself; therefore, she was greatly astonished to hear her queries repeated by a serpent. She really thought that the serpent had a knowledge
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of her thoughts, and that he must be very wise. She answered him, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." {2Red 9.2}

Here the father of lies made his assertion in direct contradiction to the expressed word of God. Satan assured Eve that she was created immortal, and that there was no possibility of her dying. He told her that God knew that if she and her husband should eat of the tree of knowledge, their understanding would be enlightened, expanded, and ennobled, making them equal with himself. And the serpent answered Eve that the command of God, forbidding them to eat of the tree of knowledge, was given to keep them in such a state of subordination that they should not obtain knowledge, which was power. He assured her that the fruit of this tree was desirable above every other tree, in the garden to make them wise, and to exalt them equal with God. He has, said the serpent, refused you the fruit of that tree which, of all the trees, is the most desirable for its delicious flavor and exhilarating influence. Eve thought that the serpent's discourse was very wise, and that the prohibition of God was unjust. She looked with longing desire upon the tree laden with fruit which appeared very delicious. The serpent was eating it with apparent delight. She longed for this fruit above
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every other variety which God had given her a perfect right to use. {2Red 10.1}

Eve had overstated the words of God's command. He had said to Adam and Eve, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In Eve's controversy with the serpent, she added "*Neither shall ye touch it*." Here the subtlety of the serpent appeared. This statement of Eve gave him advantage; he plucked the fruit and placed it in her hand, using her own words, He hath said, If ye touch it, ye shall die. You see no harm comes to you from touching the fruit, neither will you receive any harm by eating it. Eve yielded to the lying sophistry of the devil in the form of a serpent. She ate the fruit, and realized no immediate harm. She then plucked the fruit for herself and for her husband. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." {2Red 11.1}

Adam and Eve should have been perfectly satisfied with their knowledge of God derived from his created works, and received by the instruction of the holy angels. But their curiosity was aroused to become acquainted with that of which God designed they should have no knowledge. It was for their happiness to be ignorant of sin. The high state of knowledge to which they thought to attain by eating of the forbidden fruit, plunged them into the degradation of sin and guilt.

{2Red 11.2}

Paradise Lost.

Adam was driven from Eden, and the angels who, before his transgression, had been appointed to guard him in his Eden home, were now appointed to guard the gates of paradise and the way of the tree of life, lest he should return, gain access to the tree of life, and sin be immortalized. {2Red 12.1}

Sin drove man from paradise; and sin was the cause of the removal of paradise from the earth. In consequence of transgression of God's law, Adam lost paradise. In obedience to the Father's law, and through faith in the atoning blood of his Son, paradise may be regained. "Repentance toward God," because his law has been transgressed, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, as man's only Redeemer, will be acceptable with God. Notwithstanding man's sinfulness, the merits of God's dear Son in his behalf will avail with the Father. {2Red 12.2}

Satan was determined to succeed in his temptation of the sinless Adam and Eve. And he could reach even this holy pair more successfully through the medium of appetite than in any other way. The fruit of the forbidden tree seemed pleasant to the eye and desirable to the taste. They ate and fell. They transgressed God's just command and became sinners. Satan's triumph was complete. He then had the vantage-ground over the race. He flattered himself that, through his subtlety, he had thwarted the purpose of God in the creation of man. {2Red 12.3}

Satan made his exulting boasts to Christ and to loyal angels that he had succeeded in gaining a

portion of the angels in Heaven to unite with him in his daring rebellion, and now that he had succeeded in overcoming Adam and Eve, he claimed that their Eden home was his. He proudly boasted that the world which God had made, was his dominion; that having conquered Adam, the monarch of the world, he had gained the race as his subjects, and should now possess Eden, making that his head-quarters, and would there establish his throne, and be monarch of the world. {2Red 12.4}

But measures were immediately taken in Heaven to defeat Satan in his plans. Strong angels, with beams of light like flaming swords turning in every direction, were placed as sentinels to guard the way of the tree of life from the approach of Satan and the guilty pair. Adam and Eve had forfeited all right to their beautiful Eden home, and were now expelled from it. The earth was cursed because of Adam's sin, and was ever after to bring forth briers and thorns. While he lived, Adam was to be exposed to the temptations of Satan and was finally to pass through death to dust again. {2Red 13.1}

Plan of Redemption.

A council was held in Heaven, the result of which was that God's dear Son undertook to redeem man from the curse and the disgrace of Adam's failure, and to conquer Satan. Oh, wonderful condescension! The Majesty of Heaven, through love and pity for fallen man, proposed to become his substitute and surety. He would bear man's guilt. He would take the wrath of his Father

upon himself, which otherwise would have fallen upon man because of his disobedience. {2Red 13.2}

The law of God was unalterable. It could not be abolished, not yield the smallest part of its claim, to meet man in his fallen state. Man was separated from God by transgression of his expressed command, notwithstanding he had made known to Adam the consequences of such transgression. The sin of Adam caused a deplorable state of things. Satan would now have unlimited control over the race, unless a mightier being than was Satan before his fall, should take the field, conquer him, and ransom man. {2Red 14.1}

Christ's divine soul was exercised with infinite pity for the fallen pair. As their wretched, helpless condition came up before him, and as he saw that by transgression of God's law they had fallen under the power and control of the prince of darkness, he proposed the only means that could be acceptable with God, that would give them another trial, and place them again on probation. Christ consented to leave his honor, his kingly authority, his glory with the Father, and humble himself to humanity, and engage in contest with the mighty prince of darkness, in order to redeem man. Through his humiliation and poverty Christ would identify himself with the weakness of the fallen race, and by firm obedience show that man might redeem Adam's disgraceful failure, and by humble obedience regain lost Eden. {2Red 14.2}

The great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking the place of fallen Adam. With the sins of the world laid upon him, he would go over the ground where Adam stumbled. He would bear

a test infinitely more severe than that which Adam failed to endure. He would overcome on man's account, and conquer the tempter, that, through his obedience, his purity of character and steadfast integrity, his righteousness might be imputed to man, that, through his name, man might overcome the foe on his own account. {2Red 14.3}

What love! What amazing condescension! The King of glory proposed to humble himself to fallen humanity! He would place his feet in Adam's steps. He would take man's fallen nature, and engage to cope with the strong foe who triumphed over Adam. He would overcome Satan, and in thus doing he would open the way for the redemption from the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall, of all those who would believe on him. {2Red 15.1}

Angels on probation had been deceived by Satan, and had been led on by him in the great rebellion in Heaven against Christ. They failed to endure the test brought to bear upon them, and they fell. Adam was then created in the image of God and placed upon probation. He had a perfectly developed organism. All his faculties were harmonious. In all his emotions, words, and actions, there was a perfect conformity to the will of his Maker. After God had made every provision for the happiness of man, and had supplied his every want, he tested his loyalty. If the holy pair should be obedient, the race would, after a time, be made equal to the angels. As Adam and Eve failed to bear this test, Christ proposed to become a voluntary offering for man. {2Red 15.2}

Satan knew that if Christ was indeed the Son of God, the world's Redeemer, it was for

no good to himself that the Lord had left the royal courts of Heaven to come to a fallen world. He feared that his own power was thenceforth to be limited, and that his deceptive wiles would be discerned and exposed, and his influence over man would be weakened. He feared that his dominion and control of the kingdoms of the world were to be contested. He remembered the words which Jehovah addressed to him when he was summoned into his presence with Adam and Eve, whom he had ruined by his lying deceptions, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This declaration contained the first gospel promise to man. {2Red 15.3}

But these words, at the time they were spoken, were not fully understood by Satan. He knew that they contained a curse for him, because he had seduced the holy pair. And when Christ was manifested on the earth, Satan feared that he was indeed the One promised who should limit his power, and finally destroy him. {2Red 16.1}

Satan had peculiar interest in watching the development of events immediately after the fall of Adam, to learn how his work had affected the kingdom of God, and what the Lord would do with Adam because of his disobedience. The Son of God, undertaking to become the Redeemer of the race, placed Adam in a new relation to his Creator. He was still fallen; but a door of hope was opened to him. The wrath of God still hung over Adam, but the execution of the sentence of death was delayed, and the indignation of God was restrained, because Christ had entered upon the work of becoming man's

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Redeemer. Christ was to take the wrath of God which in justice should fall upon man. He became a refuge for man, and, although man was indeed a criminal, deserving the wrath of God, yet he could, by faith in Christ, run into the refuge provided, and be safe. In the midst of death, there was life if man chose to accept it. The holy and infinite God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable, could no longer talk with man. No communication could now exist directly between man and his Maker. {2Red 16.2}

God forbears, for a time, the full execution of the sentence of death pronounced upon man. Satan flattered himself that he had forever broken the link between Heaven and earth. But in this he was greatly mistaken and disappointed. The Father had given the world into the hands of his Son for him to redeem from the curse and the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall. Through Christ alone can man now find access to God. And through Christ alone will the Lord hold communication with man. {2Red 17.1}

Christ volunteered to maintain and vindicate the holiness of the divine law. He was not to do away the smallest part of its claims in the work of redemption for man, but, in order to save man, and maintain the sacred claims and justice of his Father's law, he gave himself a sacrifice for the guilt of man. Christ's life did not, in a single instance, detract from the claims of his Father's law, but, through firm obedience to all its precepts, and by dying for the sins of those who had transgressed it, he established it immutability. {2Red 17.2}

After the transgression of Adam, Satan saw
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that the ruin was complete. The human race was brought into a deplorable condition. Man was cut off from intercourse with God. It was Satan's design that the state of man should be the same as that of the fallen angels, in rebellion against God, uncheered by a gleam of hope. He reasoned that if God pardoned sinful man whom he had created, he would also pardon him and his angels, and receive them into his favor. But he was disappointed. {2Red 17.3}

The divine Son of God saw that no arm but his own could save fallen man, and he determined to help man. He left the fallen angels to perish in their rebellion, but stretched forth his hand to rescue perishing man. The angels who were rebellious were dealt with according to the light and experience they had abundantly enjoyed in Heaven. Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, once had an exalted position in Heaven. He was next in honor to Christ. The knowledge which he, as well as the angels who fell with him, had of the character of God, of his goodness, his mercy, wisdom, and excellent glory, made their guilt unpardonable. {2Red 18.1}

There was no possible hope for the redemption of those who had witnessed and enjoyed the inexpressible glory of Heaven, and had seen the terrible majesty of God, and, in presence of all this glory, had rebelled against him. There were no new and wonderful exhibitions of God's exalted power that could impress them so deeply as those they had already experienced. If they could rebel in the very presence of glory inexpressible, they could not be placed in a more favorable condition to be proved. There was no reserve force of power, nor were
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there any greater heights and depths of infinite glory to overpower their jealous doubts and rebellious murmuring. Their guilt and their punishment must be in proportion to their exalted privileges in the heavenly courts. {2Red 18.2}

Sacrificial Offerings.

Fallen man, because of his guilt, could no longer come directly before God with his supplications; for his transgression of the divine law had placed an impassable barrier between the holy God and the transgressor. But a plan was devised that the sentence of death should rest upon a substitute. In the plan of redemption there must be the shedding of blood, for death must come in consequence of man's sin. The beasts for sacrificial offerings were to prefigure Christ. In the slain victim, man was to see the fulfillment for the time being of God's word, "Ye shall surely die." And the flowing of the blood from the victim would also signify an atonement. There was no virtue in the blood of animals; but the shedding of the blood of beasts was to point forward to a Redeemer who would one day come to the world and die for the sins of men. And thus Christ would fully vindicate his Father's law. {2Red 19.1}

Satan watched every event in regard to the sacrificial offerings with intense interest. The devotion and solemnity connected with the shedding of the blood of the victim caused him great uneasiness. To him, this ceremony was clothed with mystery; but he was not a dull scholar, and he soon learned that the sacrificial offerings typified some future atonement for

man. He saw that these offerings signified repentance for sin. This did not agree with his purposes, and he at once commenced to work upon the heart of Cain, to lead him to rebellion against the sacrificial offering which prefigured a Redeemer to come. {2Red 19.2}

Adam's repentance, evidenced by his sorrow for his transgression and his hope of salvation through Christ, shown by his works in the sacrifices offered, were a disappointment to Satan. He hoped forever to gain Adam to unite with him in murmuring against God, and in rebelling against his authority. Cain and Abel were representatives of the two great classes. Abel, as priest, in solemn faith offered his sacrifice. Cain was willing to offer the fruit of his ground, but refused to connect with his offering the blood of beasts. His heart refused to show his repentance for sin, and his faith in a Saviour, by offering the blood of beasts. He refused to acknowledge his need of a Redeemer. This, to his proud heart, was dependence and humiliation. {2Red 20.1}

But Abel, by faith in a future Redeemer, offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. His offering the blood of beasts signified that he was a sinner, and had sins to put away, and that he was penitent and believed in the efficacy of the blood of the future great offering. Satan is the parent of unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion. He filled Cain with doubt and with madness against his innocent brother, and against God because his sacrifice was refused, and Abel's was accepted. And he slew his brother in his insane madness. {2Red 20.2}

The sacrificial offerings were instituted to be a standing pledge to man of God's

pardon

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through the great offering to be made, typified by the blood of beasts. Through this ceremony man signified repentance, obedience, and faith in a Redeemer to come. That which made Cain's offering offensive to God was his lack of submission and obedience to the ordinance of his appointment. He thought that his own plan, in offering to God merely the fruit of the ground, was nobler, and not as humiliating as the offering of the blood of beasts, which showed dependence upon another, thus expressing his own weakness and sinfulness. Cain slighted the blood of the atonement. {2Red 20.3}

Adam, in transgressing the law of Jehovah, had opened the door for Satan, who had planted his banner in the midst of the first family. He was made to feel, indeed, that the wages of sin was death. Satan designed to gain Eden by deceiving our first parents; but in this he was disappointed. Instead of securing to himself Eden, he now feared that he would lose all he had claimed out of Eden. His sagacity could trace the signification of these offerings, that they pointed man forward to a Redeemer, and, for the time being, were a typical atonement for the sin of fallen man, opening a door of hope to the race. {2Red 21.1}

The rebellion of Satan against God was most determined. He worked, in warring against the kingdom of God, with perseverance and fortitude worthy of a better cause. {2Red 21.2}

Appetite and Passion.

The world had become so corrupt through indulgence of appetite and debased passion in

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the days of Noah that God destroyed its inhabitants by the waters of the flood. And as men again multiplied upon the earth, the indulgence in wine to intoxication, perverted the senses, and prepared the way for excessive meat-eating and the strengthening of the animal passions. Men lifted themselves up against the God of Heaven; and their faculties and opportunities were devoted to glorifying themselves rather than honoring their Creator. Satan found easy access to the hearts of men. He is a diligent student of the Bible, and is much better acquainted with the prophecies than many religious teachers. He knows that it is for his interest to keep well informed in the revealed purposes of God, that he may defeat the plans of the Infinite. So infidels frequently study the Scriptures more diligently than some who profess to be guided by them. Some of the ungodly search the Scriptures that they may become familiar with Bible truth, and furnish themselves with arguments to make it appear that the Bible contradicts itself. And many professed Christians are so ignorant of the word of God, through neglect of its study, that they are blinded by the deceptive reasoning of those who pervert sacred truth, that they may turn souls away from the counsel of God in his word. {2Red 21.3}

Satan saw in the typical offerings an expected Redeemer who was to ransom man from his control He laid his plans deep, to rule the hearts of men from generation to

generation, and to blind their understanding of the prophecies, that when Jesus should come, the people would refuse to accept him as their Saviour. {2Red 22.1}

God appointed Moses to lead out his people

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from their bondage in the land of Egypt, that they might consecrate themselves to serve him with perfect hearts, and be to him a peculiar treasure. Moses was their visible leader, while Christ stood at the head of the armies of Israel, their invisible leader. If they could have always realized this, they would not have rebelled, and provoked God in the wilderness by their unreasonable murmurings. God said to Moses, "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him." {2Red 22.2}

When Christ, as the guiding, guarding angel, condescended to lead the armies of Israel through the wilderness to Canaan, Satan was provoked, for he felt that his power could not so well control them. But as he saw that the armies of Israel were easily influenced and incited to rebellion by his suggestions, he hoped to lead them to murmuring and sin which would bring upon them the wrath of God. And as he saw that his power was submitted to by men, he became bold in his temptations, inciting them to crime and violence. Through Satan's devices, each generation was becoming more feeble in physical, mental, and moral power. This gave him courage to think that he might succeed in his warfare against Christ in person when he should be manifested. {2Red 23.1}

A few in every generation from Adam resisted his every artifice and stood forth as noble representatives of what it was in the power of man to do and to be, while Christ should

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co-operate with human efforts, to help man in overcoming the power of Satan. Enoch and Elijah are the correct representatives of what the race might be through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Satan was greatly disturbed because these noble, holy men were untainted amid the moral pollution surrounding them, perfecting righteous characters, and accounted worthy for translation to Heaven. As they had stood forth in moral power, in noble uprightness, overcoming Satan's temptations, he could not bring them under the dominion of death. He triumphed that he had power to overcome Moses with his temptations, and that he could mar his illustrious character and lead him to the sin of taking to himself glory before the people which belonged to God. {2Red 23.2}

Christ resurrected Moses, and took him to Heaven. This enraged Satan, and he accused the Son of God of invading his dominion by robbing the grave of his lawful prey. Jude says of the resurrection of Moses, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." {2Red 24.1}

When Satan succeeds in tempting men whom God has especially honored to commit grievous sins, he triumphs; for he has gained to himself a great victory and has done harm to the kingdom of Christ. {2Red 24.2}

Birth and Life of Christ.

At the birth of Christ, Satan saw the plains of Bethlehem illuminated with the brilliant glory

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of a multitude of heavenly angels. He heard their song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The prince of darkness saw the amazed shepherds filled with fear as they beheld the illuminated plains. They trembled before the exhibitions of bewildering glory which seemed to entrance their senses. The rebel chief himself trembled at the proclamation of the angel to the shepherds, "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." He had met with good success in devising a plan to ruin men, and he had become bold and powerful. He had controlled the minds and bodies of men from Adam down to the first appearing of Christ. But now Satan was troubled and alarmed for his kingdom and his life. {2Red 24.3}

The song of the heavenly messengers proclaiming the advent of the Saviour to a fallen world, and the joy expressed at this great event, Satan knew boded no good to himself. Dark forebodings were awakened in his mind as to the influence this advent to the world would have upon his kingdom. He queried if this was not the coming One who would contest his power and overthrow his kingdom. He looked upon Christ from his birth as his rival. He stirred the envy and jealousy of Herod to destroy Christ by insinuating to him that his power and his kingdom were to be given to this new king. Satan imbued Herod with the very feelings and fears that disturbed his own mind. He inspired the corrupt mind of Herod to slay all the children in Bethlehem who were two years old and under, which

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plan he thought would succeed in ridding the earth of the infant king. {2Red 25.1}

But against his plans, Satan sees a higher power at work. Angels of God protected the life of the infant Redeemer. Joseph was warned in a dream to flee into Egypt, that in a heathen land he might find an asylum for the world's Redeemer. Satan followed him from infancy to childhood and from childhood to manhood, inventing means and ways to allure him from his allegiance to God, and overcome him with his subtle temptations. The unsullied purity of the childhood, youth, and manhood, of Christ which Satan could not taint, annoyed him exceedingly. All his darts and arrows of temptation fell harmless before the Son of God. And when he found that all his temptations prevailed nothing in moving Christ from the steadfast integrity, or in marring the spotless purity of the youthful Galilean, he was perplexed and enraged. He looked upon this youth as an enemy that he must dread and fear. {2Red 26.1}

That there should be one who walked the earth with moral power to withstand all his temptations, who resisted all his attractive bribes to allure him to sin, and over whom he could obtain no advantage to separate from God, chafed and enraged his satanic majesty. {2Red 26.2}

The childhood, youth, and manhood of John, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to do a special work in preparing the way for the world's Redeemer, were marked

with firmness and moral power. Satan could not move his integrity. When the voice of this prophet was heard in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," Satan

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was afraid for his kingdom. He felt that the voice, sounding forth in trumpet tones in the wilderness, caused sinners under his control to tremble. He saw that his power over many was broken. The sinfulness of sin was revealed in such a manner that men became alarmed; and some, by repentance of their sins, found the favor of God, and gained moral power to resist his temptations. {2Red 26.3}

He was on the ground at the time when Christ presented himself to John for baptism. He heard the majestic voice resounding through Heaven and echoing through the earth like peals of thunder. He saw the lightnings flash from the cloudless heavens, and heard the fearful words from Jehovah, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He saw the brightness of the Father's glory overshadowing the form of Jesus, thus pointing out in that crowd the One whom he acknowledged as his Son with unmistakable assurance. The circumstances connected with this baptismal scene had aroused the most intense hatred in the breast of Satan. He knew then for a certainty that unless he could overcome Christ, from thenceforth there would be a limitation of his power. He understood that the communication from the throne of God signified that Heaven was more directly accessible to man. {2Red 27.1}

As Satan had led man to sin, he had hoped that God's abhorrence of sin would forever separate him from man, and break the connecting link between Heaven and earth. The opening heavens, in connection with the voice of God addressing his Son, was like a death-knell to Satan. He feared that God was now to unite man more

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fully to himself, and give power to overcome his devices. And for this purpose Christ had come from the royal courts to the earth. Satan was well acquainted with the position of honor Christ had held in Heaven as the Son of God, the beloved of the Father. And that he should leave Heaven, and come to this world as a man, filled him with apprehension for his safety. He could not comprehend the mystery of this great sacrifice for the benefit of fallen man. He knew that the value of Heaven far exceeded the anticipation and appreciation of fallen man. The most costly treasures of the world, he knew, would not compare with its worth. As he had lost through his rebellion all the riches and pure glories of Heaven, he was determined to be revenged by causing as many as he could to undervalue Heaven, and to place their affections upon earthly treasures. {2Red 27.2}

It was incomprehensible to the selfish soul of Satan that there could exist benevolence and love for the deceived race so great as to induce the Prince of Heaven to leave his home and come to a world marred with sin and seared with the curse. He had knowledge of the inestimable value of eternal riches that man had not. He had experienced the pure contentment, the peace, exalted holiness, and unalloyed joys of the heavenly abode. He had realized, before his rebellion, the satisfaction of the full approval of God. He had once a full appreciation of the glory that enshrouded the Father, and knew that there was no limit to his power. {2Red 28.1}

Satan knew what he had lost. He now feared that his empire over the world was to be contested, his right disputed, and his power broken.

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He knew, through prophecy, that a Saviour was predicted and that his kingdom would not be established in earthly triumph and with worldly honor and display. He knew that ancient prophecies foretold a kingdom to be established by the Prince of Heaven upon the earth, which he claimed as his dominion. This kingdom would embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and then his power and his glory would cease and he would receive his retribution for the sins he had introduced into the world, and for the misery he had brought upon man. He knew that everything which concerned his prosperity was pending upon his success or failure in overcoming Christ with his temptations in the wilderness. He brought to bear upon Christ every artifice and force of his powerful temptations to allure him from his allegiance. {2Red 28.2}

It is impossible for man to know the strength of Satan's temptations to the Son of God. Every temptation that seems so afflicting to man in his daily life, so difficult to resist and overcome, was brought to bear upon the Son of God in as much greater degree as his excellence of character was superior to that of fallen man. {2Red 29.1}

Christ was tempted in all points like as we are. As man's representative, he stood the closest test and proving of God. He met the strongest force of Satan. His most wily temptations Christ has tested and conquered in behalf of man. It is impossible for man to be tempted above what he is able to bear while he relies upon Jesus, the infinite Conqueror.

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{2Red 29.2}

The Temptation.

In the desolate wilderness, Christ was not in so favorable a position to endure the temptations of Satan as was Adam when he was tempted in Eden. The Son of God humbled himself, and took man's nature, after the race had wandered four thousand years from Eden, and from their original state of purity and uprightness. Sin had been making its terrible marks upon the race for ages; and physical, mental, and moral degeneracy prevailed throughout the human family. {2Red 30.1}

When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden, he was without the taint of sin. He stood before God in the strength of perfect manhood. All the organs and faculties of his being were equally developed, and harmoniously balanced. {2Red 30.2}

Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure. Here Christ overcame in the sinner's behalf, four thousand years after Adam turned his back upon the light of his home. Separated from the presence of God, the human family had been departing, each successive generation, farther from the original purity, wisdom, and knowledge, which Adam possessed in Eden. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when he came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon him, he was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points on which man could be assailed. {2Red

30.3}

Adam was surrounded with everything his heart could wish. Every want was supplied. There was no sin, and no signs of decay in glorious

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Eden. Angels of God conversed freely and lovingly with the holy pair. The happy songsters carolled forth their free, joyous songs of praise to their Creator. The peaceful beasts in happy innocence played around Adam and Eve, obedient to their word. Adam was in the perfection of manhood, the noblest of the Creator's works. He was in the image of God, but a little lower than the angels. {2Red 30.4}

What a contrast the second Adam presented as he entered the gloomy wilderness to cope with Satan single-handed. Since the fall, the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth. In order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He who knew no sin became sin for us. He humiliated himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that he might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him. {2Red 31.1}

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." {2Red 31.2}

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." {2Red 31.3}

"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath

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suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." {2Red 31.4}

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." {2Red 32.1}

Satan had been at war with the government of God, since he first rebelled. His success in tempting Adam and Eve in Eden, and introducing sin into the world, had emboldened this arch foe; and he had proudly boasted to the heavenly angels that when Christ should appear, taking man's nature, he would be weaker than himself, and that he would overcome him by his power. He exulted that Adam and Eve in Eden could not resist his insinuations when he appealed to their appetite. The inhabitants of the old world he overcame in the same manner, through the indulgence of lustful appetite and corrupt passions. Through the gratification of appetite, he had overthrown the Israelites. He boasted that the Son of God himself, who was with Moses and Joshua, was not able to resist his power, and lead the favored people of his choice to Canaan; for nearly all who left Egypt died in the wilderness; also, that he had tempted the meek man, Moses, to take to himself glory which God claimed. David and Solomon, who had been especially favored of God, he had induced, through the indulgence of appetite and passion, to incur God's displeasure. And he boasted that he could yet succeed in thwarting the purpose of God in the salvation of man through Jesus Christ. {2Red 32.2}

In the wilderness of temptation, Christ was without food forty days. Moses had, on especial occasions, been thus long without food. But he

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felt not the pangs of hunger. He was not tempted and harassed by a vile and powerful foe, as was the Son of God. He was elevated above the human, and especially sustained by the glory of God which enshrouded him. {2Red 32.3}

Satan had succeeded so well in deceiving the angels of God, and in ruining noble Adam, that he thought he should be successful in overcoming Christ in his humiliation. He looked with pleased exultation upon the result of his temptations, and the increase of sin in the continued transgression of God's law, for more than four thousand years. He had worked the ruin of our first parents, and brought sin and death into the world, and led to ruin multitudes of all ages, countries, and classes. By his power, he had controlled cities and nations, until their sin provoked the wrath of God to destroy them by fire, water, earthquakes, sword, famine, and pestilence. By his subtility and untiring efforts, he had controlled the appetite, and excited and strengthened the passions, to so fearful a degree that he had defaced, and almost obliterated, the image of God in man. His physical and moral dignity were in so great a degree destroyed that he bore but a faint resemblance in character, and noble perfection of form, to the dignified Adam in Eden. {2Red 33.1}

At the first advent of Christ, Satan had brought man down from his original, exalted purity, and had dimmed that golden character with sin. The man whom God had created a sovereign in Eden, he had transformed into a slave in the earth groaning under the curse of sin. The halo of glory, which God had given holy Adam to cover him as a garment, departed from him after his

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transgression. The light of God's glory could not cover disobedience and sin. In the place of health and plenitude of blessings, poverty, sickness, and suffering of every type, were to be the portion of the children of Adam. {2Red 33.2}

Satan had, through his seductive power, led men to vain philosophy, to question, and finally disbelieve, the divine revelation, and the existence of God. He looked abroad upon a world of moral wretchedness, and a race exposed to the wrath of a sin-avenging God, with fiendish triumph that he had been so successful in darkening the pathway of so many, and had led them to transgress the law of God. He clothed sin with pleasing attractions, to secure the ruin of many. {2Red 34.1}

But his most successful scheme in deceiving man has been to conceal his real purposes and his true character, by representing himself to be man's friend--a benefactor of the race. He flatters men with the pleasing fable that there is no rebellious foe, no deadly enemy that they need to guard against, and that the existence of a personal devil is all a fiction; and while he thus hides his existence, he is gathering thousands under his control. He is deceiving many, as he tried to deceive Christ, telling them that he is an angel from Heaven, doing a good work for humanity. And the masses are so blinded by sin that they cannot discern the devices of Satan, and they honor him as they would a heavenly angel while he is working their eternal ruin. {2Red 34.2}

Christ had entered the world as Satan's destroyer, and the Redeemer of the captives *bound* by his power. He would leave an example in his own victorious life for man to follow, and thus overcome the temptations of Satan. As

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soon as Christ entered the wilderness of temptation, his visage changed. The glory and splendor which were reflected from the throne of God and his countenance, when the heavens opened before him, and the Father's voice acknowledged him as his Son in whom he was well pleased, were now gone. The weight of the sins of the world was pressing his soul, and his countenance expressed unutterable sorrow, a depth of anguish that fallen man had never realized. He felt the overwhelming tide of woe that deluged the world. He realized the strength of indulged appetite and unholy passion, which controlled the world, and had brought upon man inexpressible suffering. The indulgence of appetite had been increasing and strengthening with every successive generation since Adam's transgression, until the race was so feeble in moral power that they could not overcome in their own strength. Christ, in behalf of the race, was to overcome appetite, by standing the most powerful test upon this point. He was to tread the path of temptation alone, and there must be none to help him --none to comfort or uphold him. Alone he was to wrestle with the powers of darkness. {2Red 34.3}

As in his human strength man could not resist the power of Satan's temptations, Jesus volunteered to undertake the work, and to bear the burden for man, and overcome the power of appetite in his behalf. In man's behalf, he must show self-denial, perseverance, and firmness of principle, paramount to the gnawing pangs of hunger. He must show a power of control stronger than hunger and even death. {2Red 35.1}

When Christ bore the test of temptation upon the point of appetite, he did not stand in beautiful

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Eden, as did Adam, with the light and love of God seen in everything his eye rested upon; but he was in a barren, desolate wilderness, surrounded with wild beasts. Everything around him was repulsive. With these surroundings, he fasted forty days and forty nights, "and in those days he did eat nothing." He was emaciated through long fasting, and felt the keenest sense of hunger. His visage was indeed marred more than the sons of men. {2Red 35.2}

Christ thus entered upon his life of conflict to overcome the mighty foe, in bearing the very test which Adam failed to endure, that, through successful conflict, he might break the power of Satan, and redeem the race from the disgrace of the fall. {2Red 36.1}

All was lost when Adam yielded to the power of appetite. The Redeemer, in whom both the human and the divine were united, stood in Adam's place, and endured a terrible fast of nearly six weeks. The length of this fast is the strongest evidence of the great sinfulness of debased appetite, and the power it has upon the human family. {2Red 36.2}

The humanity of Christ reached to the very depths of human wretchedness, and identified itself with the weaknesses and necessities of fallen man, while his divine nature grasped the Eternal. His work in bearing the guilt of man's transgression was not to give him license to continue to violate the law of God; for transgression made man a

debtor to the law, and Christ himself was paying this debt by his own suffering. The trials and sufferings of Christ were to impress man with a sense of his great sin in breaking the law of God, and to bring him to repentance

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and obedience to that law, and through obedience to acceptance with God. He would impute his righteousness to man, and so raise him in moral value with God that his efforts to keep the divine law would be acceptable. Christ's work was to reconcile man to God through his human nature, and God to man through his divine nature. {2Red 36.3}

As soon as the long fast of Christ commenced, Satan was at hand with his temptations. He came to Christ, enshrouded in light, claiming to be one of the angels from the throne of God, sent upon an errand of mercy to sympathize with him, and to relieve him of his suffering condition. He tried to make Christ believe that God did not require him to pass through the self-denial and sufferings he anticipated; that he had been sent from Heaven to bear to him the message, that God only designed to prove his willingness to endure. {2Red 37.1}

Satan told Christ that he was to set his feet in the blood-stained path, but not to travel it, that, like Abraham, he was tested to show his perfect obedience. He also stated that he was the angel that stayed the hand of Abraham as the knife was raised to slay Isaac, and he had now come to save his life; that it was not necessary for him to endure this painful hunger and death from starvation; and that he would help him bear the work in the plan of salvation. {2Red 37.2}

The Son of God turned from all these artful temptations, and was steadfast in his purpose to carry out in every particular, in the spirit and in the very letter, the plan which had been devised for the redemption of the fallen race. But Satan had manifold temptations prepared to

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ensnare Christ, and obtain advantage of him; if he failed in one temptation, he would try another. He thought he would succeed, because Christ had humbled himself as a man. He flattered himself that his assumed character, as one of the heavenly angels, could not be discerned. He feigned to doubt the divinity of Christ, because of his emaciated appearance and unpleasant surroundings. {2Red 37.3}

Christ knew that, in taking the nature of man, he would not be equal, in appearance, to the angels of Heaven. Satan urged that, if he was indeed the Son of God, he should give him evidence of his exalted character. He approached Christ with temptations upon appetite. He had overcome Adam upon this point, and he had controlled his descendants, and through indulgence of appetite, had led them to provoke God by iniquity, until their crimes were so great that the Lord destroyed them from off the earth by the waters of the flood. {2Red 38.1}

Under Satan's direct temptations, the children of Israel suffered appetite to control reason, and they were, through indulgence, led to commit grievous sins which awakened the wrath of God against them, and they fell in the wilderness. He thought that he should be successful in overcoming Christ with the same temptation. Satan told Christ, that one of the exalted angels had been exiled to the earth, that his appearance

indicated that, instead of his being the king of Heaven, he was the angel fallen, and that this explained his emaciated and distressed appearance. {2Red 38.2}

He then called the attention of Christ to his own attractive appearance, clothed with light and strong in power. He claimed to be a messenger

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direct from the throne of Heaven, and asserted that he had a right to demand of Christ evidences of his being the Son of God. Satan would fain disbelieve, if he could, the words that came from Heaven to the Son of God at his baptism. He determined to overcome Christ, and, if possible, make his own kingdom and life secure. His first temptation to Christ was upon appetite. He had, upon this point, almost entire control of the world, and his temptations were so adapted to the circumstances and surroundings of Christ, that his temptations upon appetite were almost overpowering. {2Red 38.3}

Christ could have worked a miracle in his own behalf; but this would not have been in accordance with the plan of salvation. The many miracles in the life of Christ show his power to work miracles for the benefit of suffering humanity. By a miracle of mercy, he fed five thousand at once with five loaves and two small fishes. Therefore he had the power to work a miracle, and satisfy his own hunger. Satan flattered himself that he could lead Christ to doubt the words spoken from Heaven at his baptism. If he could tempt him to question his sonship, and doubt the truth of the word spoken by his Father, he would gain a great victory. {2Red 39.1}

He found Christ in the desolate wilderness without companions, without food, and in actual suffering. His surroundings were most melancholy and repulsive. Satan suggested to Christ that God would not leave his Son in this condition of want and suffering. He hoped to shake the confidence of Christ in his Father, who had permitted him to be brought into this condition of extreme suffering in the desert, where the feet

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of man had never trod. Satan hoped that he could insinuate doubts as to his Father's love, which would find a lodgment in the mind of Christ, and that, under the force of despondency and extreme hunger, he would exert his miraculous power in his own behalf, and take himself out of the hands of his Heavenly Father. This was indeed a temptation to Christ. But he cherished it not for a moment. He did not for a single moment doubt his Heavenly Father's love, although he was bowed down with inexpressible anguish. Satan's temptations, though skillfully devised, did not move the integrity of God's dear Son. His abiding confidence in his Father could not be shaken. {2Red 39.2}

Jesus did not condescend to explain to his enemy how he was the Son of God, and in what manner as such he was to act. In an insulting, taunting manner Satan referred to the present weakness and the distressed appearance of Christ in contrast with his own strength and glory. He taunted Christ with being a poor representative of the angels, much less of their exalted Commander, the acknowledged King in the royal courts, and that his present appearance indicated that he was forsaken of God and man. He said that, if Christ was indeed the Son of God, the monarch of Heaven, he had power equal with God, and he could give him evidence of this and relieve his hunger by working a miracle, by changing the stone just at his feet into bread. Satan promised

that, if Christ would do this, he would at once yield his claims of superiority, and that the contest between himself and Christ should there be forever ended. {2Red 40.1}

Christ did not appear to notice the reviling

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taunts of Satan. He was not provoked to give him proofs of his power, but meekly bore his insults without retaliation. The words spoken from Heaven at his baptism were precious evidence to him that his Father approved the steps he was taking in the plan of salvation, as man's substitute and surety. The opening heavens, and descent of the heavenly dove, were assurances that his Father would unite his power in Heaven with that of his Son upon the earth, to rescue man from the control of Satan, and that God accepted the effort of Christ to link earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite God. {2Red 40.2}

The tokens received from his Father were inexpressibly precious to the Son of God through all his severe sufferings, and the terrible conflict with the rebel chief. And while enduring the test of God in the wilderness, and through his entire ministry, he had nothing to do in convincing Satan of his power, and that he was the Saviour of the world. Satan had sufficient evidence of his exalted station. His unwillingness to ascribe to Jesus the honor due to him, and to manifest submission as a subordinate, ripened into rebellion against God, and shut him out of Heaven. {2Red 41.1}

It was not part of the mission of Christ to exercise his divine power for his own benefit, to relieve himself of suffering. This he had volunteered to take upon himself. He had condescended to take man's nature, and he was to suffer the inconveniences, ills, and afflictions of the human family. He was not to perform miracles on his own account; he came to save others. The object of his mission was to bring blessings, hope, and life, to the afflicted and oppressed. He was

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to bear the burdens and griefs of suffering humanity. {2Red 41.2}

Although Christ was suffering the keenest pangs of hunger he withstood the temptation. He repulsed Satan with the same scripture he had given Moses to repeat to rebellious Israel when their diet was restricted, and they were clamoring for flesh-meats in the wilderness, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In this declaration, and also by his example, Christ would show man that hunger for temporal food was not the greatest calamity that could befall him. Satan flattered our first parents that eating the fruit which God had forbidden them, would bring to them great good, and would insure them against death, the very opposite of the truth which God had declared to them. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." If Adam had been obedient, he would have known neither want, sorrow, nor death. {2Red 42.1}

If the people who lived before the flood had been obedient to the word of God, they would not have perished by the waters of the flood. If the Israelites had been obedient to the words of God, he would have bestowed upon them special blessings. But they fell in consequence of the indulgence of appetite and passion. They would not be obedient to the words of God. Indulgence of perverted appetite led them into numerous

and grievous sins. If they had made the requirements of God their first consideration, and their physical wants secondary, in submission to God's

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choice of proper food for them, not one of them would have fallen in the wilderness. They would have been established in the goodly land of Canaan, a holy, happy people with not a feeble one in all their tribes. {2Red 42.2}

The Saviour of the world became sin for the race. In becoming man's substitute, Christ did not manifest his power as the Son of God; but ranked himself among the sons of men. He was to bear the trial of temptation as a man, in man's behalf, under the most trying circumstances, and leave an example of faith and perfect trust in his Heavenly Father. Christ knew that his Father would supply him food when it would be for his glory. He would not in this severe ordeal, when hunger pressed him beyond measure, prematurely diminish one particle of the trial allotted to him, by exercising his divine power. {2Red 43.1}

Fallen man when brought into straightened places could not have the power to work miracles on his own behalf, to save himself from pain or anguish, or to give himself victory over his enemies. It was the purpose of God to test and prove the race, and give them an opportunity to develop character by bringing them frequently into trying positions to test their faith and confidence in his love and power. The life of Christ was a perfect pattern. He was ever, by his example and teachings, learning man that God was his dependence, and that in him should be his faith and firm trust. {2Red 43.2}

Christ knew that Satan was a liar from the beginning, and it required strong self-control to listen to the propositions of this insulting deceiver, and not instantly rebuke his bold assumptions. Satan was expecting that the Son of God

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would, in his extreme weakness and agony of spirit, give him an opportunity to obtain advantage over him by provoking him to engage in controversy with him. He designed to pervert the words of Christ and claim advantage, and call to his aid his fallen angels to use their utmost power to prevail against and overcome him. {2Red 43.3}

The Saviour of the world had no controversy with Satan, who was expelled from Heaven, because he was no longer worthy of a place there. He who could influence the angels of God against their Supreme Ruler, and against his Son, their loved commander, and enlist their sympathy for himself, was capable of any deception. Four thousand years he had been warring against the government of God, and had lost none of his skill or power to tempt and deceive. {2Red 44.1}

Because man fallen could not overcome Satan with his human strength, Christ came from the royal courts of Heaven to help him with his human and divine strength combined. Christ knew that Adam in Eden with his superior advantages might have withstood the temptations of Satan and conquered him. He also knew that it was not possible for man out of Eden, separated from the light and love of God since the fall, to resist the temptations of Satan in his own strength. In order to bring hope to man, and save him from complete ruin, he humbled himself to take man's nature, that with his divine power combined with the human he might reach man where he is. He obtained for the fallen sons and daughters of Adam that strength which it is impossible for them

to gain for themselves, that in his name they might overcome the temptations of Satan.
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{2Red 44.2}

The exalted Son of God in assuming humanity draws himself near to man by standing as the sinner's substitute. He identifies himself with the sufferings and afflictions of men. He was tempted in all points as man is tempted that he might know how to succor those who should be tempted. Christ overcame on the sinner's behalf. {2Red 45.1}

Jacob in the night vision saw earth connected with Heaven by a ladder reaching to the throne of God. He saw the angels of God, clothed with garments of heavenly brightness, passing down from Heaven and up to Heaven upon this shining ladder. The bottom of this ladder rested upon the earth, while the top of it reached to the highest Heavens, and rested upon the throne of Jehovah. The brightness from the throne of God beamed down upon this ladder, and reflected a light of inexpressible glory upon the earth. This ladder represented Christ who had opened the communication between earth and Heaven. {2Red 45.2}

In Christ's humiliation he descended to the very depths of human woe in sympathy and pity for fallen man, which was represented to Jacob by one end of the ladder resting upon the earth, while the top of the ladder, reaching unto Heaven, represents the divine power of Christ, grasping the Infinite, and thus linking earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite God. Through Christ the communication is opened between God and man. Angels may pass to and fro from Heaven to earth with messages of love to fallen man, and to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. It is through Christ alone that the heavenly messengers minister to men. {2Red 45.3}

Adam and Eve in Eden were placed under
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most favorable circumstances. It was their privilege to hold communion with God and angels. They were without the condemnation of sin. The light of God and angels was with them, and around about them. The Author of their existence was their teacher. But they fell beneath the power and temptations of the artful foe. Four thousand years had Satan been at work against the government of God, and he had obtained strength and experience from determined practice. {2Red 45.4}

Fallen men had not the advantages of Adam in Eden. They had been separating from God for four thousand years. The wisdom to understand, and power to resist, the temptations of Satan had become less and less, until Satan seemed to reign triumphant in the earth. Appetite and passion, the love of the world, and presumptuous sins were the great branches of evil out of which every species of crime, violence, and corruption grew. Satan was defeated in his object to overcome Christ upon the point of appetite. And here in the wilderness Christ achieved a victory in behalf of the race upon the point of appetite, making it possible for man, in all future time in his name to overcome the strength of appetite on his own behalf. {2Red 46.1}

But Satan was not willing to cease his efforts until he had tried every means to obtain victory over the world's Redeemer. He knew that with himself all was at stake, whether he or Christ should be victor in the contest. And in order to awe Christ with his

superior strength he carried him to Jerusalem and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and continued to beset him with temptations. He again demanded of Christ that

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if he was indeed the Son of God to give him evidence by casting himself from the dizzy height upon which he had placed him. He urged Christ to show his confidence in the preserving care of his Father by casting himself down from the temple. {2Red 46.2}

In Satan's first temptation upon the point of appetite he had tried to insinuate doubts in regard to God's love and care for Christ as his Son, by presenting his surroundings and his hunger as an evidence that he was not in favor with God. He was unsuccessful in this. He next tried to take advantage of the faith and perfect trust Christ had shown in his Heavenly Father, to urge him to presumption. "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Jesus promptly answered, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." {2Red 47.1}

The sin of presumption lies close beside the virtue of perfect faith and confidence in God. Satan flattered himself that he could take advantage of the humanity of Christ to urge him over the line of trust to presumption. Upon this point many souls are wrecked. Satan tried to deceive Christ through flattery. He admitted that he was right in the wilderness, in his faith and confidence that God was his Father under the most trying circumstances. He then urged Christ to give him one more proof of his entire dependence upon God, one more evidence of his faith that he was the Son of God, by casting himself from the temple. He told Christ that if he has indeed the Son of God he had nothing to

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fear, for angels were at hand to uphold him. Satan gave evidence that he understood the Scriptures by the use he made of them. {2Red 47.2}

The Redeemer of the world wavered not from his integrity, and showed that he had perfect faith in his Father's promised care. He would not put the faithfulness and love of his Father to a needless trial, although he was in the hands of an enemy, and placed in a position of extreme difficulty and peril. He would not at Satan's suggestion tempt God by presumptuously experimenting on his providence. Satan had brought in Scripture which seemed appropriate for the occasion, hoping to accomplish his designs by making the application to our Saviour at this special time. {2Red 48.1}

Christ knew that God could indeed bear him up if he had required him to throw himself from the temple. But to do this unbidden, and to experiment upon his Father's protecting care and love, because dared by Satan to do so would not show his strength of faith. Satan was well aware that if Christ could be prevailed upon, unbidden by his Father, to fling himself from the temple to prove his claim to his Heavenly Father's protecting care, he would in the very act show the weakness of his human nature. {2Red 48.2}

Christ came off victor in the second temptation. He manifested perfect confidence and trust in his Father during his severe conflict with the powerful foe. Our Redeemer, in the victory here gained, has left man a perfect pattern, showing him that his only

safety is in firm trust and unwavering confidence in God in all trials and perils. He refused to presume upon the mercy of his Father by placing himself in peril that would

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make it necessary for his Heavenly Father to display his power to save him from danger. This would be forcing providence on his own account, and he would not then leave for his people a perfect example of faith and firm trust in God. {2Red 48.3}

Satan's object in tempting Christ was to lead him to daring presumption, and to show human weakness that would not make him a perfect pattern for his people. He thought that should Christ fail to bear the test of his temptations there could be no redemption for the race, and his power over them would be completed. {2Red 49.1}

The humiliation and agonizing sufferings of Christ in the wilderness of temptation were for the race. In Adam all was lost by transgression. Through Christ was man's only hope of restoration to the favor of God. Man had separated himself at such distance from God by transgression of his law that he could not humiliate himself before God in any degree proportionate to the magnitude of his sin. The Son of God could fully understand the aggravating sins of the transgressor, and, in his sinless character, he alone could make an acceptable atonement for man, in suffering the agonizing sense of his Father's displeasure. The sorrow and anguish of the Son of God for the sins of the world were proportionate to his divine excellence and purity, as well as to the magnitude of the offense. {2Red 49.2}

Christ was our example in all things. As we see his humiliation in the long trial and fast to overcome the temptation of appetite in our behalf, we are to learn how to overcome when we are tempted. If the power of appetite is so strong upon the human family, and its indulgence

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so fearful, that the Son of God subjected himself to such a test, how important that we feel the necessity of having appetite under the control of reason. Our Saviour fasted nearly six weeks, that he might gain for man the victory upon the point of appetite. How can professed Christians, with enlightened consciences, and with Christ before them as their pattern, yield to the indulgence of those appetites which have an enervating influence upon the mind and body? It is a painful fact that habits of self-gratification at the expense of health and moral power are, at the present time, holding a large share of the Christian world in the bonds of slavery. {2Red 49.3}

Many who profess godliness do not inquire into the reason of Christ's long period of fasting and suffering in the wilderness. His anguish was not so much from the pangs of hunger as from his sense of the fearful result of the indulgence of appetite and passion upon the race. He knew that appetite would be man's idol, and would lead him to forget God, and would stand directly in the way of his salvation. {2Red 50.1}

Our Saviour showed perfect confidence that his Heavenly Father would not suffer him to be tempted above what he should give him strength to endure, but would bring him off conqueror, if he patiently bore the test to which he was subjected. Christ had not, of his own will, placed himself in danger. God had suffered Satan, for the time being, to have this power over his Son. Jesus knew that, if he preserved his integrity in this extremely trying position, an angel of God would be sent to relieve him if there was

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other way. He had taken humanity, and was the representative of the race. {2Red 50.2}

Satan saw that he prevailed nothing with Christ in his second great temptation. "And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine." {2Red 51.1}

In the first two great temptations, Satan had not revealed his true purposes or his character; he claimed to be an exalted messenger from the courts of Heaven, but he now throws off his disguise. In a panoramic view he presented before Christ all the kingdoms of the world in the most attractive light, while he claimed to be the prince of the world. {2Red 51.2}

This last temptation was the most alluring of the three. Satan knew that Christ's life must be one of sorrow, hardship, and conflict. And he thought he could take advantage of this fact to bribe Christ to yield his integrity. Satan brought all his strength to bear upon this last temptation; for this last effort was to decide his destiny as to who should be victor. He claimed the world as his dominion, and that he was the prince of the power of the air. He bore Jesus to the top of an exceeding high mountain, and then in a panoramic view presented before him all the kingdoms of the world that had been so long under his dominion, and offered them to him in one great gift. He told Christ that he could come into possession of all these kingdoms without suffering or peril. Satan promises to yield

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his scepter and dominion, and to make Christ the rightful Ruler, for one favor from him. All he requires in return for making over to him the kingdoms of the world that day presented before him, is that Christ shall do him homage as to a superior. {2Red 51.3}

The eye of Jesus for a moment rested upon the glory presented before him; but he turned away, and refused to look upon the entrancing spectacle. He would not endanger his steadfast integrity by dallying with the tempter. When Satan solicited homage, Christ's divine indignation was aroused, and he could no longer tolerate his blasphemous assumption, or even permit him to remain in his presence. Here Christ exercised his divine authority, and commanded Satan to desist. "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan, in his pride and arrogance, had declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all its riches and glory, claiming homage of all who lived in it, as though he had created the world and all things that were therein. Said he to Christ, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." He endeavored to make a special contract with Christ, to make over to him at once the whole of his claim, if he would worship him. {2Red 52.1}

This insult to the Creator moved the indignation of the Son of God to rebuke and dismiss him. Satan had flattered himself in his first temptation that he had so well concealed his true character and purposes that Christ did not recognize him as the

fallen rebel chief whom he had

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conquered and expelled from Heaven. The words of dismissal from Christ. "Get thee hence, Satan," evidenced that he was known from the first, and that all his deceptive arts had been unsuccessful upon the Son of God. Satan knew that if Jesus should die to redeem man, his power would end after a season, and he would be destroyed. Therefore it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man's redemption should fail, he would retain the kingdom which he then claimed, and if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of Heaven. {2Red 52.2}

When Jesus left Heaven, and there left his power and glory, Satan exulted. He thought that the Son of God was placed in his power. The temptation took so easily with the holy pair in Eden, that he hoped, with his satanic cunning and power, to overthrow even the Son of God, and thereby save his life and kingdom. If he could tempt Jesus to depart from the will of God, as he had done in his temptation with Adam and Eve, then his object would be gained. {2Red 53.1}

The time was to come when Jesus should redeem the possession of Satan by giving his own life, and after a season, all in Heaven and earth should submit to him. He was steadfast. He chose this life of suffering, this ignominious death, and, in the way appointed by his Father, to become a lawful ruler of the kingdoms of the earth, and have them given into his hands as an everlasting possession. Satan also will be given into his hands to be destroyed by death, never more to annoy Jesus nor the saints in glory.

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{2Red 53.2}

Jesus said to this wily foe, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan had asked Christ to give him evidence that he was the Son of God, and he had in this instance the proof he had asked. At the divine command of Christ, he was compelled to obey. He was repulsed and silenced. He had no power to withstand the peremptory dismissal. He was compelled without another word instantly to desist and leave the world's Redeemer. {2Red 54.1}

The hateful presence of Satan was withdrawn. The contest was ended. With inestimable suffering, Christ's victory in the wilderness was as complete as was the failure of Adam. And for a season he stood freed from the presence of his powerful adversary and his legions of angels. {2Red 54.2}

Christ's Temptation Ended.

After Satan had ended his temptations, he departed from Jesus for a little season. The foe was conquered, but the conflict had been long and exceedingly trying, and Christ was exhausted and fainting. He fell upon the ground as though dying. Heavenly angels who had bowed before him in the royal courts, and who had been with intense

and painful interest watching their loved commander, and with amazement had witnessed the terrible contest he had endured with Satan, now came and ministered unto him. They prepared him food and strengthened him, for he lay as one dead. Angels were filled with amazement and awe, as they knew the world's Redeemer was passing through inexpressible suffering to achieve the redemption of man. He who was

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equal with God in the royal courts, was before them emaciated from nearly six weeks of fasting. Solitary and alone he had been pursued by the rebel chief, who had been expelled from Heaven. He had endured a more close and severe test than would ever be brought to bear upon man. The warfare with the power of darkness had been long and intensely trying to Christ's human nature in his weak and suffering condition. The angels brought messages of love and comfort from the Father and the assurance that all Heaven triumphed in the full and entire victory he had gained in behalf of man. {2Red 54.3}

The cost of the redemption of the race can never be fully realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer, by the throne of God. And as they have capacity to appreciate the value of immortal life, and the eternal reward, they will swell the song of victory and immortal triumph, "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "And every creature," says John, "which is in Heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." {2Red 55.1}

Although Satan had failed in his strongest efforts, and most powerful temptations, yet he had not given up all hope that he might, at some future time, be successful in his efforts. He looked forward to the period of Christ's ministry, when he should have opportunities to try his artifices against him. Satan laid his plans to blind the

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understanding of the Jews, God's chosen people, that they should not discern in Christ the world's Redeemer. He thought he could fill their hearts with envy, jealousy, and hatred against the Son of God, so that they would not receive him, but would make his life upon earth as bitter as possible. {2Red 55.2}

Satan held a counsel with his angels, as to the course they should pursue to prevent the people from having faith in Christ as the Messiah whom the Jews had so long been anxiously expecting. He was disappointed and enraged that he had prevailed nothing against Jesus in the manifold temptations in the wilderness. He thought if he could inspire in the hearts of Christ's own people, unbelief as to his being the promised One, he might discourage Jesus in his mission and secure the Jews as his agents to carry out his purposes. {2Red 56.1}

Satan comes to man with his temptations as an angel of light, as he came to Christ. He has been working to bring man into a condition of physical and moral weakness, that he may easily overcome him and then triumph over his ruin. And he has been successful in tempting man to indulge appetite, regardless of the result. He well knows that it is impossible for man to discharge his obligations to God, and to his fellowmen,

while he impairs the faculties which God has given him. The brain is the capital of the body. If the perceptive faculties become benumbed through intemperance of any kind, eternal things are not discerned.

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{2Red 56.2}

Christian Temperance.

God gives man no permission to violate the laws of his being. But man, through yielding to Satan's temptations to indulge intemperance, brings the higher faculties in subjection to the animal appetites and passions, and when these gain the ascendency, man, who was created a little lower than the angels, with faculties susceptible of the highest cultivation, surrenders to the control of Satan. And he gains easy access to those who are in bondage to appetite. Through intemperance, some sacrifice one-half, and others two-thirds, of their physical, mental, and moral powers, and become playthings for the enemy. {2Red 57.1}

Those who would have clear minds to discern Satan's devices, must have their physical appetites under the control of reason and conscience. The moral and vigorous action of the higher powers of the mind are essential to the perfection of Christian character, and the strength or the weakness of the mind has very much to do with our usefulness in this world, and with our final salvation. The ignorance that has prevailed in regard to God's law in our physical nature, is deplorable. Intemperance of any kind is a violation of the laws of our being. Imbecility is prevailing to a fearful extent. Sin is made attractive by the covering of light which Satan throws over it, and he is well pleased when he can hold the Christian world in their daily habits under the tyranny of custom, like the heathen, and allow appetite to govern them. {2Red 57.2}

If men and women of intelligence have their moral powers benumbed through intemperance

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of any kind, they are, in many of their habits, elevated but little above the heathen. Satan is constantly drawing the people from saving light, to custom and fashion, irrespective of physical, mental, and moral health. The great enemy knows that if appetite and passion predominate, the health of body and strength of intellect are sacrificed upon the altar of self-gratification, and man is brought to speedy ruin. If enlightened intellect holds the reins, controlling the animal propensities and keeping them in subjection to the moral powers, Satan well knows that his power to overcome with his temptations is very small. {2Red 57.3}

In our day, people talk of the dark ages, and boast of progress. But with this progress wickedness and crime do not decrease. We deplore the absence of natural simplicity, and the increase of artificial display. Health, strength, beauty, and long life, which were common in the so-called "dark ages," are rare now. Nearly everything desirable is sacrificed to meet the demands of fashionable life. {2Red 58.1}

A large share of the Christian world have no right to call themselves Christians. Their habits, their extravagance, and general treatment of their own bodies, are violations of

physical law, and contrary to the Bible. They are working out for themselves, in their course of life, physical suffering, and mental and moral feebleness. {2Red 58.2}

Through his devices, Satan, in many respects, has made the domestic life one of care and complicated burdens, in order to meet the demands of fashion. His purpose in doing this is to keep minds occupied so fully with the things of this life that they can give but little attention to

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their highest interest. Intemperance in eating and in dressing has so engrossed the minds of the Christian world that they do not take time to become intelligent in regard to the laws of their being, that they may obey them. To profess the name of Christ is of but little account, if the life does not correspond with the will of God, revealed in his word. {2Red 58.3}

In the wilderness of temptation Christ overcame appetite. His example of self-denial, and self-control, when suffering the gnawing pangs of hunger, is a rebuke to the Christian world for their dissipation and gluttony. There is at this time nine times as much money expended for the gratification of appetite, and the indulgence of foolish and hurtful lusts, as there is given to advance the gospel of Christ. Were Peter upon the earth now, he would exhort the professed followers of Christ to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. And Paul would call upon the churches in general, to cleanse themselves from "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." And Christ would drive from the temple those who are defiled by the use of tobacco, polluting the sanctuary of God by their tobacconized breaths. He would say to these worshipers, as he did to the Jews, "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." We would say to such, your unholy offerings of ejected quids of tobacco defile the temple, and are abhorred of God. Your worship is not acceptable, for your bodies, which should be the temple for the Holy Ghost, are defiled. You also rob the treasury of God of thousands of dollars through the indulgence of unnatural appetite.

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{2Red 59.1}

If we would see the standard of virtue and godliness exalted, as Christians, we have a work devolving upon us individually to control appetite, the indulgence of which counteracts the force of truth, and weakens moral power to resist and overcome temptation. As Christ's followers, we should, in eating and drinking, act from principle. When we obey the injunction of the apostle, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," thousands of dollars which are now sacrificed upon the altar of hurtful lust will flow into the Lord's treasury, multiplying publications in different languages to be scattered like the leaves of autumn. Missions will be established in other nations, and then will the followers of Christ be indeed the light of the world. {2Red 60.1}

The adversary of souls is working in these last days with greater power than ever before, to accomplish the ruin of man through the indulgence of appetite and passions. And many who are held by Satan under the power of slavish appetite, are the professed followers of Christ. They profess to worship God, while *appetite* is their god.

Their unnatural desires for these indulgences are not controlled by reason or judgment. Those who are slaves to tobacco will see their families suffering for the conveniences of life, and for necessary food, yet they have not the power of will to forego their tobacco. The clamors of appetite prevail over natural affection, and this brute passion controls them. The cause of Christianity, and even humanity, would not in any case be sustained, if dependent upon those in the habitual use of tobacco and liquor. If they had means to use only in one direction, the

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treasury of God would not be replenished, but they would have their tobacco and liquor, for the tobacco idolater will not deny his appetite for the cause of God. {2Red 60.2}

It is impossible for such men to realize the binding claims and holiness of the law of God, for their brain and nerves are deadened by the use of this narcotic. They cannot value the atonement or appreciate the worth of immortal life. The indulgence of fleshly lusts wars against the soul. The apostle in the most impressive language addresses Christians, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." If the body is saturated with liquor and defiled by tobacco, it is not holy and acceptable to God. Satan knows that it cannot be, and for this reason he brings his temptations to bear upon the point of appetite, that he may bring us into bondage to this propensity and thus work our ruin. {2Red 61.1}

The Jewish sacrifices were all examined with careful scrutiny to see if any blemish was upon them, or if they were tainted with disease, and the least defect or impurity was a sufficient reason for the priests to reject them. The offering must be sound and valuable. The apostle has in view the requirements of God upon the Jews in their offerings when he in the most earnest manner appeals to his brethren to present their bodies a living sacrifice. Not a diseased, decaying offering, but a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. {2Red 61.2}

How many come to the house of God in feebleness, and how many come defiled by the indulgence of their own appetite! Those who

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have degraded themselves by wrong habits, when they assemble for the worship of God, give forth such emanations from their diseased bodies as to be disgusting to those around them. And how offensive must this be to a pure and holy God. {2Red 61.3}

A large proportion of all the infirmities that afflict the human family, are the results of their own wrong habits, because of their willing ignorance, or of their disregard of the light which God has given in relation to the laws of their being. It is not possible for us to glorify God while living in violation of the laws of life. The heart cannot possibly maintain consecration to God while the lustful appetite is indulged. A diseased body and disordered intellect, because of continual indulgence in hurtful lust, make sanctification of the body and spirit impossible. The apostle understood the importance of the healthful conditions of the body for the successful perfection of Christian character. He says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." He mentions the fruit of the Spirit, among which is temperance. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh

with the affections and lusts." {2Red 62.1}

Men and women indulge appetite at the expense of health and their powers of intellect, so that they cannot appreciate the plan of salvation. What appreciation can such have of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, and of the victory he gained upon the point of appetite. It is impossible for them to have exalted views of God, and to realize the claims of his law. The

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proposed followers of Christ are forgetful of the great sacrifice made by him on their account. The majesty of Heaven, in order to bring salvation within their reach, was smitten, bruised, and afflicted. He became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. In the wilderness of temptation he resisted Satan, although the tempter was clothed with the livery of Heaven. Christ, although brought to great physical suffering, refused to yield a single point, notwithstanding the most flattering inducements were presented to bribe and influence him to yield his integrity. All this honor, all this riches and glory, said the deceiver, will I give thee if thou wilt only acknowledge my claims. {2Red 62.2}

Christ was firm. Oh! where would now be the salvation of the race, if Christ had been as weak in moral power as man? No wonder that joy filled Heaven as the fallen chief left the wilderness of temptation, a conquered foe. Christ has power from his Father to give his divine grace and strength to man--making it possible for us, through his name, to overcome. There are but few professed followers of Christ who choose to engage with him in the work of resisting Satan's temptation as he resisted and overcame. {2Red 63.1}

Professed Christians, who enjoy gatherings of gaiety, pleasure, and feasting, cannot appreciate the conflict of Christ in the wilderness. This example of their Lord in overcoming Satan is lost to them. This infinite victory which Christ achieved for them in the plan of salvation, is meaningless. They have no special interest in the wonderful humiliation of our Saviour, and the anguish and sufferings he endured for sinful

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man, while Satan was pressing him with his manifold temptations. The scene of trial with Christ in the wilderness was the foundation of the plan of salvation, and gives to fallen man the key whereby he, in Christ's name, may overcome. {2Red 63.2}

Many professed Christians look upon this portion of the life of Christ as they would upon a common warfare between two kings, and as having no special bearing upon their own life and character. Therefore, the manner of warfare, and the wonderful victory gained, have but little interest for them. Their perceptive powers are blunted by Satan's artifices, so that they cannot discern that he who afflicted Christ in the wilderness, determined to rob him of his integrity as the Son of the Infinite, is to be their adversary to the end of time. Although he failed to overcome Christ, his power is not weakened over man. All are personally exposed to the temptations that Christ overcame, but strength is provided for them in the all-powerful name of the great conqueror. And all must, for themselves, individually overcome. Many fall under the very same temptations wherewith Satan assailed Christ. {2Red 64.1}

Although Christ gained a priceless victory in behalf of man in overcoming the temptations of Satan in the wilderness, this victory will not benefit him unless he also

gains the victory on his own account. {2Red 64.2}

Man now has the advantage over Adam in his warfare with Satan; for he has Adam's experience in disobedience and his consequent fall to warn him to shun his example. Man also has Christ's example in overcoming appetite and

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the manifold temptations of Satan, and in vanquishing the mighty foe upon every point, and coming off victor in every contest. If man stumbles and falls under the temptations of Satan, he is without excuse; for he has the disobedience of Adam as a warning, and the life of the world's Redeemer as an example of obedience and self-denial, and the promise of Christ that "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." {2Red 64.3}

Church Festivals.

Professed Christians engage in feastings and in scenes of amusement which degrade the religion of Jesus Christ. It is impossible for those who find pleasure in church socials, festivals, and numerous gatherings for pleasure, to have ardent love and sacred reverence for Jesus. His words of warning and instruction have no weight upon their minds. Should Christ come into the assembly of those who were absorbed in their plays and frivolous amusements, would the solemn melody of his voice be heard in benediction, saying, "Peace be to this house"? How would the Saviour of the world enjoy these scenes of gaiety and folly? {2Red 65.1}

Christians and the world unite, one in heart and one in spirit, in these festal occasions. The Man of sorrows, who was acquainted with grief, would find no welcome in these places of amusement. The lovers of pleasure and luxury, the thoughtless and the gay are collected in these rooms, and the glitter and tinsel of fashion are

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seen everywhere. The ornament of crosses of gold and pearl, which represent a Redeemer crucified, adorn their persons. But the one whom these highly-prized jewels represents, finds no welcome, no room. His presence would be a restraint upon their mirth and their sensual amusements, and would remind them of neglected duty, and bring to their remembrance hidden sins which caused that sorrowful countenance, and made those eyes so sad and tearful. {2Red 65.2}

The presence of Christ would be positively painful in these gatherings for pleasure. Surely, none could invite him there, for his countenance is marred with sorrows more than the sons of men, because of these very amusements which put God out of mind, and make the broad road attractive to the sinner. The enchantments of these exciting scenes pervert reason, and destroy reverence for sacred things. Ministers who profess to be Christ's representatives frequently take the lead in these frivolous amusements. "Ye are," says Christ, "the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." {2Red 66.1}

In what manner is the light of truth shining from that thoughtless, pleasure-seeking company? Professed followers of Jesus Christ who indulge in gaiety and feasting cannot be partakers with Christ of his sufferings. They have no sense of his sufferings.

They do not care to meditate upon self-denial and sacrifice. They find but little interest in studying the marked points in the history of the life of Christ upon which the plan of salvation rests, but imitate ancient Israel who ate and drank and rose up to play. In order

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to copy a pattern correctly we must carefully study its design. If we are indeed to overcome as Christ overcame, that we may mingle with the blood-washed, glorified company before the throne of God, it is of the highest importance that we become acquainted with the life of our Redeemer and deny self as did Christ. We must meet temptations and overcome obstacles, and through toil and suffering, in the name of Jesus, overcome as he overcame. {2Red 66.2}

The great trial of Christ in the wilderness on the point of appetite was to leave man an example of self-denial. This long fast was to convict men of sinfulness of the things in which professed Christians indulge. The victory which Christ gained in the wilderness was to show man the sinfulness of the very things in which he takes such pleasure. The salvation of man was in the balance, and to be decided by the trial of Christ in the wilderness. If Christ was a victor on the point of appetite, then there was a chance for man to overcome. If Satan gained the victory through his subtlety, man was bound by the power of appetite in chains of indulgence which he could not have moral power to break. Christ's humanity alone could never have endured this test, but his divine power combined with humanity gained in behalf of man an infinite victory. Our representative in this victory raised humanity in the scale of moral value with God. {2Red 67.1}

Christians, who understand the mystery of godliness, who have a high and sacred sense of the atonement, who realize in the sufferings of Christ in the wilderness a victory gained for them, would see such marked contrast between these things and the church gatherings for pleasure and the

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indulgence of appetite, as would turn them in disgust from these scenes of revelry. Christians would be greatly strengthened by earnestly and frequently comparing their lives with the true standard, the life of Christ. The numerous socials, festivals, and picnics, to tempt the appetite to over-indulgence, and the amusements which lead to levity and forgetfulness of God, can find no sanction in the example of Christ, the world's Redeemer, the only safe pattern for man to copy if he would overcome as Christ overcame. {2Red 67.2}

We present the faultless pattern to all Christians. Says Christ, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." The light of Heaven is to be reflected through Christ's followers to the world. This is the Christian's life-work to direct the minds of sinners to God. The Christian's life should awaken in the hearts of worldlings high and elevated views of the purity of the Christian religion. This will make believers the salt of

the earth, the saving power in our world; for a well-developed Christian character is harmonious in all its parts. {2Red 68.1}

We tremble for the youth of our day, because of the example that is given them by those who profess to be Christians. We cannot close the

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door of temptation to the youth, but we can educate them that their words and their actions may have a direct bearing upon their future happiness or misery. They will be exposed to temptation. They will meet foes without and foes within, but they can be instructed to stand firm in their integrity, having moral principle to resist temptation. The lessons given our youth by world-loving professors are doing great harm. The festal gatherings, the gluttonous feasts, the lotteries, tableau and theatrical performances, are doing a work that will bear a record with its burden of results to the Judgment. {2Red 68.2}

All these inconsistencies, sanctioned by professed Christians under a garb of Christian beneficence, to collect means to pay church expenses, have their influence with the youth to make them lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. They think if Christians can encourage and engage in these lotteries and scenes of festivities, and connect them with sacred things, why may not they be safe in taking an interest in lotteries, and in engaging in gambling to win money for special objects. {2Red 69.1}

It is Satan's studied plan to clothe sin with garments of light to hide its deformity, and make it attractive. And ministers and people professing righteousness unite with the adversary of souls to help him in his plans. Never was there a time when every member of the church should feel his responsibility to walk humbly and circumspectly before God as at the present. Vain philosophy, false creeds, and infidelity, are on the increase. And many who bear the name of Christ's followers are, through pride of heart, seeking popularity, and are drifting away from

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the established landmarks. The plain commands of God in his word are discarded because they are so plain and old-fashioned, while vain and vague theories attract the mind and please the fancy. In these scenes of church festivities, there is a union with the world that the word of God does not justify. Christians and worldlings are united in them. {2Red 69.2}

But the apostle inquires:-- {2Red 70.1}

"What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." {2Red 70.2}

When we are able to comprehend the temptations and victories of the Son of God while in severe conflict with Satan, we shall have a more correct idea of the greatness of the work before us in overcoming. Satan knew that if he failed, his case was

hopeless. If he succeeded, he had gained a victory over the entire race, and his life and kingdom he thought would be established. {2Red 70.3}

In professedly Christian gatherings, Satan throws a religious garment over delusive pleasures and unholy revelings to give them the appearance of sanctity, and the consciences of many are quieted because means are raised by these to

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defray church expenses. Men refuse to give for the love of Christ; but for the love of pleasure, and the indulgence of appetite for selfish considerations, they will part with their money. {2Red 70.4}

Is it because there is not power in the lessons of Christ upon benevolence, and in his example, and the grace of God upon the heart, to lead men to glorify God with their substance, that such a course must be resorted to in order to sustain the church? The injury sustained to the physical, mental, and moral health in these scenes of amusement and gluttony, is not small. And the day of final reckoning will show souls lost through the influence of these scenes of gaiety and folly. {2Red 71.1}

It is a deplorable fact that sacred and eternal considerations do not have that power to open the hearts of the professed followers of Christ to make free-will offerings to sustain the gospel as the temptation of feasting and general merriment. It is a sad reality that these inducements will prevail when sacred and eternal things will have no force to influence the heart to engage in works of benevolence. {2Red 71.2}

The plan of Moses in the wilderness to raise means was highly successful. There was no compulsion necessary. Moses made no grand feast, and he did not invite the people to scenes of gaiety, dancing, and general amusement. Neither did he institute lotteries or anything of this profane order to obtain means to erect the tabernacle of God in the wilderness. God commanded Moses to invite the children of Israel to bring their offerings. Moses was to accept gifts of every man that gave willingly from his heart. But the free-will offerings came in so great

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abundance that Moses proclaimed it was enough. They must cease their presents; for they had given abundantly, more than they could use. {2Red 71.3}

Satan's temptations succeed with the professed followers of Christ on the point of indulgence of pleasure and appetite. Clothed as an angel of light he will quote Scripture to justify the temptations he places before men to indulge the appetite, and in worldly pleasures which suit the carnal heart. The professed followers of Christ are weak in moral power, and are fascinated with the bribe which Satan has presented before them, and he gains the victory. How does God look upon churches that are sustained by such means? Christ cannot accept these offerings, because they were not given through their love and devotion to him, but through their idolatry of self. But what many would not do for the love of Christ, they will do for the love of delicate luxuries to gratify the appetite, and for love of worldly amusements to please the carnal heart. {2Red 72.1}

The conflict of Christ with Satan in the wilderness will be regarded with sacred interest by every true follower of Christ. We should have feelings of the deepest gratitude to our Redeemer for teaching us by his own example how to resist and overcome Satan. Jesus did not visit scenes of gaiety and feasting to attain the victory

so essential to our salvation; but he went into a desolate wilderness. Many do not even contemplate this scene of Christ in conflict with the fallen chief. They do not enter into sympathy with their Redeemer. Some even doubt whether Christ really felt the pangs of hunger in his abstinence from food during the period of forty days and forty nights.

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{2Red 72.2}

He who suffered death for us on Calvary's cross, just as surely suffered the keenest pangs of hunger as that he died for us. And no sooner did this suffering commence than Satan was at hand with his temptations. We have a foe no less vigilant to contend with. Satan adapts his temptations to our circumstances. In every temptation he will present some bribe, some apparent good to be gained. But in the name of Christ we may have complete victory in resisting his devices. {2Red 73.1}

It is more than eighteen hundred years since Christ walked upon the earth as a man among men. He found suffering and wretchedness abounding everywhere. What humiliation on the part of Christ! For, though he was in the form of God, he took upon himself the form of a servant. He was rich in Heaven, crowned with glory and honor, and for our sakes he became poor. What an act of condescension of the Lord of life and glory, that he might lift up fallen man. {2Red 73.2}

Jesus did not come to men with commands and threatenings, but with love that is without a parallel. Love begets love; and thus the love of Christ displayed upon the cross woos and wins the sinner, and binds him repenting to the cross, believing and adoring the matchless depths of a Saviour's love. Christ came to the world to perfect a righteous character for many and to elevate the fallen race. But only a few of the millions in our world will accept the righteousness and excellency of his character, and fulfill the requirements given to secure their happiness. {2Red 73.3}

His lessons of instruction and his holy life, if followed, would stay the tide of physical and

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moral wretchedness that has so defiled the moral image of God in man that he bears scarcely a resemblance to the noble Adam as he stood in Eden in his holy innocency. Every prohibition of God is for the health and eternal well-being of man. In obedience to all the requirements of God, there will be peace and happiness unaccompanied with shame or reproaches of conscience. {2Red 73.4}

But very few of the Christian world are following their Master in a course of humble obedience, progressing in holiness and perfection of Christian character. Intemperance and licentiousness are greatly increasing, and are practiced to a large extent under the cloak of Christianity. This deplorable state of things is not because men are obedient to God's law, but because their hearts rise in rebellion to his holy precepts. {2Red 74.1}

Repentance toward God, because his law has been transgressed, and faith in Jesus Christ, are the only means whereby we may be elevated to purity of life and reconciliation with God. Were all the sins, which have brought the wrath of God upon cities and nations, fully understood, their woes and calamities would be found to be the results of uncontrolled appetites and passions. {2Red 74.2}

More Than One Fall.

If the race had ceased to fall when Adam was driven from Eden, we should now be in a far more elevated condition physically, mentally, and morally. But while men deplore the fall of Adam, which has resulted in such unutterable woe, they disobey the express injunctions of God, as did

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Adam, although they have his example to warn them from doing as he did in violating the law of Jehovah. Would that man had stopped falling with Adam. But there has been a succession of falls. Men will not take warning from Adam's experience. They will indulge appetite and passion in direct violation of the law of God, and at the same time continue to mourn Adam's transgression, which brought sin into the world. {2Red 74.3}

From Adam's day to ours there has been a succession of falls, each greater than the last, in every species of crime. God did not create a race of beings so devoid of health, beauty, and moral power as now exists in the world. Disease of every kind has been fearfully increasing upon the race. This has not been by God's especial providence, but directly contrary to his will. It has come by man's disregard of the very means which God has ordained to shield him from the terrible evils existing. Obedience to God's law in every respect would save men from intemperance, licentiousness, and disease of every type. No one can violate natural law without suffering the penalty. {2Red 75.1}

What man would, for any sum of money, deliberately sell his mental capabilities? Should one offer him money if he would part with his intellect he would turn with disgust from the insane suggestion. Yet thousands are parting with health of body, vigor of intellect, and elevation of soul, for the sake of gratifying appetite. Instead of gain, they experience only loss. This they do not realize because of their benumbed sensibilities. They have bartered away their God-given faculties. And for what? Answer. Groveling sensualities and degrading vices. The

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gratification of taste is indulged at the cost of health and intellect. {2Red 75.2}

Christ commenced the work of redemption just where the ruin began. He made provision to re-instate man in his God-like purity, if he accepted the help brought him. Through faith in his all-powerful name--the only name given under Heaven whereby we may be saved--man could overcome appetite and passion, and, through his obedience to the law of God, health would take the place of infirmities and corrupting diseases. Those who overcome will follow the example of Christ by bringing bodily appetites and passions under the control of enlightened conscience and reason. {2Red 76.1}

If ministers who preach the gospel would do their duty, and would also be ensamples to the flock of God, their voices would be lifted up like a trumpet to show the people their transgressions and the house of Israel their sins. Ministers who exhort sinners to be converted should distinctly define what sin is and what conversion from sin is. Sin is the transgression of the law. The convicted sinner must exercise repentance toward God for the transgression of his law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. {2Red 76.2}

The apostle gives us the true definition of sin. "Sin is the transgression of the law."

The largest class of Christ's professed ambassadors are blind guides. They lead the people away from the path of safety by representing the requirements and prohibitions of the ancient law of Jehovah as arbitrary and severe. They give the sinner license to overstep the limits of God's law. In this they are like the great adversary of souls, opening before them a life of freedom in violation

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of God's commandments. With this lawless freedom the basis of moral responsibility is gone. {2Red 76.3}

Those who follow these blind leaders close the avenues of their souls to the reception of truth. They will not allow the truth with its practical bearings to affect their hearts. The largest number brace their souls with prejudice against new truths, and also against the clearest light which shows the correct application of an old truth, the law of God, which is as old as the world. The intemperate and licentious delight in the oft-repeated assertion that the law of the ten commandments is not binding in this dispensation. Avarice, thefts, perjuries, and crimes of every description, are carried on under the cloak of Christianity. {2Red 77.1}

Health and Happiness.

And why should not men do these things if the law forbidding them is abolished? No message from earth or Heaven can forcibly impress the intemperate and the licentious who are deluded with the theory that the law of ten commandments is abolished. Many professed ministers of Christ exhort the people to holiness of life, while they themselves yield to the power of appetite, and the defilement of tobacco. These teachers, who are leading the people to despise physical and moral law, will have a fearful record to meet by-and-by. {2Red 77.2}

Health, truth, and happiness, can never be advanced without an intelligent knowledge of, and full obedience to, the law of God, and perfect faith in Jesus Christ. The Lord uses no other medium through which to reach the human heart. Many professed Christians acknowledge

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that in the use of tobacco they are indulging a filthy, expensive, and hurtful practice. But they excuse themselves by saying that the habit is formed and they cannot overcome it. In this acknowledgement they yield homage to Satan, saying, by their actions, if not in words, that, "Although God is powerful, Satan has greater power." By profession they say, "We are the servants of Jesus Christ," while their works say that they yield subjection to Satan's sway because it costs them the least inconvenience. Is this overcoming as Christ overcame? Or is it being overcome by temptation? And the above apology is urged by men in the ministry, who profess to be Christ's ambassadors. {2Red 77.3}

Many are the temptations and besetments on every side to ruin the prospects of young men, both for this world and the next. But the only path of safety is for young and old to live in strict conformity to the principles of physical and moral law. The path of obedience is the only path that leads to Heaven. Alcohol and tobacco inebriates would,

at times, give any amount of money if they could by so doing overcome their appetite for these body and soul-destroying indulgences. And they who will not subject the appetites and passions to the control of reason, will indulge them at the expense of physical and moral obligations. {2Red 78.1}

The victims of a depraved appetite, goaded on by Satan's continual temptations, will seek indulgence at the expense of health and even life, and will go to the bar of God as self-murderers. Many have so long allowed habit to master them that they have become slaves to appetite. They have not the moral courage to persevere in

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self-denial, and to endure suffering for a time through restraint and denial of the taste, in order to master the vice. This class refuse to overcome as did their Redeemer. Did not Christ endure physical suffering and mental anguish on man's account in the wilderness? {2Red 78.2}

Many have so long allowed appetite and taste to control reason that they have not moral power to persevere in self-denial, and endure suffering for a time, until abused nature can take up her work, and healthy action be established in the system. Very many with perverted tastes shrink at the thought of restricting their diet, and they continue their unhealthful indulgences. They are not willing to overcome as did their Redeemer. {2Red 79.1}

What a scene of unexampled suffering was that fast of nearly six weeks, while Jesus was assailed with the fiercest temptations! How few can understand the love of God for the fallen race in that he withheld not his divine Son from taking upon him the humiliation of humanity. He gave up his dearly beloved to shame and agony, that he might bring many sons and daughters to glory. {2Red 79.2}

When sinful man can discern the inexpressible love of God in giving his Son to die upon the cross, we shall better understand that it is infinite gain to overcome as Christ overcame. And we shall understand that it is eternal loss if we gain the whole world, with all its pleasure and glory, and yet lose the soul. Heaven is cheap enough at any cost. {2Red 79.3}

On Jordan's banks the voice from Heaven, attended by the manifestation from the excellent glory, proclaimed Christ to be the Son of the Eternal. Satan was to personally encounter the

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Head of the kingdom which he came to overthrow. If he failed, he knew that he was lost. Therefore the power of his temptations was in accordance with the greatness of the object which he would lose or gain. For four thousand years, ever since the declaration was made to Adam that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, he had been planning his manner of attack. {2Red 79.4}

He put forth his strongest efforts to overcome Christ on the point of appetite, who endured the keenest pangs of hunger. The victory gained was designed, not only to set an example to those who have fallen under the power of appetite, but to qualify the Redeemer for his special work of reaching to the very depths of human woe. By experiencing in himself the strength of Satan's temptation, and of human sufferings and infirmities, he would know how to succor those who should put forth efforts to help

themselves. {2Red 80.1}

No amount of money can buy a single victory over the temptations of Satan. But that which money is valueless to obtain, which is integrity, determined effort, and moral power, will, through the name of Christ, obtain noble victories upon the point of appetite. What if the conflict should cost man even his life? What if the slaves to these vices do really die in the struggle to free themselves from the controlling power of appetite? they die in a good cause. And if the victory be gained at the cost of human life, it is not too dearly earned if the victor can come up in the first resurrection, and have the overcomer's reward. {2Red 80.2}

Everything, then, is gained. But life will not be sacrificed in the struggle to overcome depraved

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appetites. And it is a certainty that unless we do overcome as Christ overcame we cannot have a seat with him upon his throne. Those who in the face of light and truth destroy mental, moral, and physical health by indulgence of any kind will lose Heaven. They sacrifice their God-given powers to idols. God deserves and claims our first and loftiest thoughts, and our holiest affections. {2Red 80.3}

At an infinite cost, Christ our Redeemer has purchased every faculty and our very existence, and all our blessings in life have been purchased for us with the price of his blood. Shall we accept the blessings, and forget the claims of the Giver? Can any of us consent to follow our inclination, indulge appetites and passions, and live without God? Shall we eat and drink like the beast, and no more associate the thought of God with every good we enjoy than the dumb animals? {2Red 81.1}

Those who make determined efforts in the name of the Conqueror to overcome every unnatural craving of appetite will not die in the conflict. In their efforts to control appetite, they are placing themselves in right relation to life, so that they may enjoy health and the favor of God, and have a right hold on the immortal life. {2Red 81.2}

Thousands are continually selling physical, mental, and moral vigor for the pleasure of taste. Each of the faculties has its distinctive office, and yet they all have a mutual dependence upon each other. And if the balance is carefully preserved, they will be kept in harmonious action. Not one of these faculties can be valued by dollars and cents. And yet, for a good dinner, for

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alcohol, or tobacco, they are sold. And while paralyzed by the indulgence of appetite, Satan controls the mind, and leads to every species of crime and wickedness. God has enjoined upon us to preserve every faculty in healthful vigor, that we may have a clear sense of his requirements, and that we may perfect holiness in his fear. {2Red 81.3}

Strange Fire.

Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, who ministered in the holy office of priesthood, partook freely of wine, and, as was their usual custom, went in to minister before the Lord. The priests who burned incense before the Lord were required to use the fire of God's kindling, which burned day and night, and was never extinguished. God gave

explicit directions how every part of his service should be conducted, that all connected with his sacred worship might be in accordance with his holy character. And any deviation from the express directions of God in connection with his holy service was punishable with death. No sacrifice would be acceptable to God which was not salted nor seasoned with divine fire, which represented the communication between God and man that was opened through Jesus Christ alone. The holy fire which was to be put upon the censer was kept burning perpetually. And while the people of God were without, earnestly praying, the incense kindled by the holy fire was to arise before God mingled with their prayers. This incense was an emblem of the mediation of Christ. {2Red 82.1}

Aaron's sons took the common fire which God did not accept, and they offered insult to the

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infinite God by presenting this strange fire before him. God consumed them by fire for their positive disregard of his express directions. All their works were as the offering of Cain. There was no divine Saviour represented. Had these sons of Aaron been in full command of their reasoning faculties they would have discerned the difference between the common and sacred fire. The gratification of appetite debased their faculties and so beclouded their intellect that their power of discernment was gone. They fully understood the holy character of the typical service, and the awful solemnity and responsibility assumed of presenting themselves before God to minister in sacred service. {2Red 82.2}

Some may inquire, How could the sons of Aaron have been accountable when their intellects were so far paralyzed by intoxication that they were not able to discern the difference between sacred and common fire? It was when they put the cup to their lips that they made themselves responsible for all their acts committed while under the influence of wine. The indulgence of appetite cost those priests their lives. God expressly forbade the use of wine that would have an influence to becloud the intellect. {2Red 83.1}

"And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations; and that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."

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{2Red 83.2}

The special injunction of God to the Hebrews in reference to the use of intoxicating liquors should be regarded in this dispensation. But many who are holding the highest responsibilities in our country are, in too many cases, liquor-and-tobacco slaves. {2Red 84.1}

Jurors in our courts, by whose verdict the innocence or guilt of their fellow-men is decided, are many of them liquor-drinkers and tobacco-inebriates. And, while under the influence of these, which becloud the intellect and debase the soul, judgment is given

upon the liberty and life of their fellow-men. {2Red 84.2}

Perverted judgment in many cases clears from all punishment the greatest criminals, when the safety of society demands they should receive the full penalty of the law which they have violated. {2Red 84.3}

The men who are legislating, and those who are executing the laws of our government while they are violating the laws of their being in debasing appetites, which stupefy and paralyze the intellect, are not fitted to decide the destiny of their fellow-men. Those only who feel the necessity of keeping soul, body, and spirit, in conformity to natural law, to the end that they may preserve the right balance of their mental powers, are fitted to decide important questions in reference to the execution of the law of our land. This was the mind of God by decrees to the Hebrews that wine should not be used by those who ministered in holy office. {2Red 84.4}

Here we have the most plain directions of God, and his reasons for prohibiting the use of wine; that their power of discrimination and discernment might be clear, and in no way confused;

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that their judgment might be correct, and they be ever able to discern between the clean and unclean. Another reason of weighty importance why they should abstain from anything which would intoxicate, is also given. It would require the full use of unclouded reason to present to the children of Israel all the statutes which God had spoken to them. {2Red 84.5}

Anything in eating and drinking which disqualifies the mental powers for healthful and active exercise is an aggravating sin in the sight of God. Especially is this the case with those who minister in holy things, who should at all times be examples to the people, and be in a condition to properly instruct them. {2Red 85.1}

Notwithstanding they have this striking example before them, some professed Christians will desecrate the house of God with breaths polluted with the fumes of liquor and tobacco. And the spittoons are sometimes filled with the ejected spittle and quids of tobacco. The effluvia is constantly arising from these receptacles, polluting the atmosphere. Men professing to be Christians bow to worship God, and dare to pray to him, with their lips stained by tobacco, while their half-paralyzed nerves tremble from the exhausting use of this powerful narcotic. And this is the devotion they offer to a holy, and sin-hating God. Ministers in the sacred desk, with mouth and lips defiled, dare to take the sacred word of God in their polluted lips. They think God does not notice their sinful indulgence. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." God will no more receive a sacrifice from the

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hands of those who thus pollute themselves, and offer with their service the incense of tobacco and liquor, than he would receive the offering of the sons of Aaron, who offered incense with strange fire. {2Red 85.2}

God has not changed. He is as particular and exact in his requirements now as he was in the days of Moses. But in the sanctuaries of worship in our day, with the songs of praise, the prayers, and the teaching from the pulpit, there is not merely strange fire,

but positive defilement. Instead of truths being preached with holy unction from God, it is sometimes spoken under the influence of tobacco and brandy. Strange fire indeed! Bible truth and Bible holiness are presented to the people, and prayers are offered to God, mingled with the stench of tobacco! Such incense is most acceptable to Satan! A terrible deception is this! What an offense in the sight of God! What an insult to him who is holy, dwelling in light unapproachable! {2Red 86.1}

If the faculties of the mind were in healthful vigor, professed Christians would discern the inconsistency of such worship. Like Nadab and Abihu, their sensibilities are so blunted that they make no difference between the sacred and common. Holy and sacred things are brought down upon a level with their tobacconized breaths, benumbed brains, and their polluted souls, defiled through indulgence of appetite and passion. Professed Christians eat and drink, smoke and chew tobacco, and become gluttons and drunkards, to gratify appetite, and still talk of overcoming as Christ overcame!!

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{2Red 86.2}

Sin of Presumption.

There are many who fail to distinguish between the rashness of presumption and the intelligent confidence of faith. Satan thought that by his temptations he could delude the world's Redeemer, to make one bold move in manifesting his divine power, to create a sensation, and to surprise all by the wonderful display of the power of his Father in preserving him from injury. He suggested that Christ should appear in his real character, and by this masterpiece of power, establish his right to the confidence and faith of the people, that he was indeed the Saviour of the world. If Christ had been deceived by Satan's temptations, and had exercised his miraculous power to relieve himself from difficulty, he would have broken the contract made with his Father, to be a probationer in behalf of the race. {2Red 87.1}

It was a difficult task for the Prince of Life to carry out the plan which he had undertaken for the salvation of man, in clothing his divinity with humanity. He had received honor in the heavenly courts, and was familiar with absolute power. It was as difficult for him to keep the level of humanity as for men to rise above the low level of their depraved natures, and be partakers of the divine nature. {2Red 87.2}

Christ was put to the closest test, requiring the strength of all his faculties to resist the inclination when in danger, to use his power to deliver himself from peril, and triumph over the power of the prince of darkness. Satan showed his knowledge of the weak points of the human

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heart, and puts forth his utmost power to take advantage of the weakness of the humanity, which Christ had assumed in order to overcome his temptations on man's account. {2Red 87.3}

God has given man precious promises upon conditions of faith and obedience; but they are not to sustain him in any rash act. If men needlessly place themselves in peril,

and go where God does not require them to go, and self-confidently expose themselves to danger, disregarding the dictates of reason, God will not work a miracle to relieve them. He will not send his angels to preserve any from being burned if they choose to place themselves in the fire. {2Red 88.1}

Adam was not deceived by the serpent, as was Eve, and it was inexcusable in Adam to rashly transgress God's positive command. Adam was presumptuous because his wife had sinned. He could not see what would become of Eve. He was sad, troubled, and tempted. He listened to Eve's recital of the words of the serpent, and his constancy and integrity began to waver. Doubts arose in his mind in regard to whether God did mean just as he said. He rashly ate the tempting fruit. {2Red 88.2}

Spiritualism.

Spiritualists make the path to hell most attractive. Spirits of darkness are clothed by these deceptive teachers in pure robes of Heaven, and they have power to deceive those not fortified with Bible truth. Vain philosophy is employed in representing the path to hell as a path of safety. With the imagination highly wrought, and voices musically tuned, they picture the

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broad road as one of happiness and glory. Ambition holds before deluded souls, as Satan presented to Eve, a freedom and bliss for them to enjoy which they never conceived was possible. Men are praised who have traveled the broad path to hell, and after they die are exalted to the highest positions in the eternal world. Satan, clothed in robes of brightness, appearing like an exalted angel, tempted the world's Redeemer without success. But as he comes to man robed as an angel of light he has better success. He covers his hideous purposes, and succeeds too well in deluding the unwary who are not firmly anchored upon eternal truth. {2Red 88.3}

Riches, power, genius, eloquence, pride, perverted reason, and passion, are enlisted as Satan's agents in doing his work in making the broad road attractive, strewing it with tempting flowers. But every word they have spoken against the world's Redeemer will be reflected back upon them, and will one day burn into their guilty souls like molten lead. They will be overwhelmed with terror and shame as they behold the exalted One coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Then shall the bold defier, who lifted himself up against the Son of God, see himself in the true blackness of his character. The sight of the inexpressible glory of the Son of God will be intensely painful to those whose characters are stained with sin. The pure light and glory emanating from Christ will awaken remorse, shame, and terror. They will send forth wails of anguish to the rocks and mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him who sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his

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wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" {2Red 89.1}

Spiritualists claim superior light and power. They have opened the door and invited the prince of darkness in, and have made him their honored guest. They have allied

themselves to the powers of darkness which are developing in these last days in signs and wonders, that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. Spiritualists claim that they can do greater miracles than Christ did. Satan made the same boasts to Christ. Because the Son of God had linked himself to the weakness of humanity, to be tempted in all points like as man should be tempted, Satan triumphed over him, and taunted him. He boasted of his superior strength, and dared him to open a controversy with him. {2Red 90.1}

Spiritualists are increasing in numbers. They will come to men who have the truth as Satan came to Christ, tempting them to manifest their power, and work miracles, and give evidence of their being favored of God, and of their being the people who have the truth. Satan said to Christ, "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they be made bread." Herod and Pilate asked Christ to work miracles when he was on trial for his life. Their curiosity was aroused, but Christ did not work a miracle to gratify them. {2Red 90.2}

Spiritualists will press the matter to engage in controversy with ministers who teach the truth. If they decline, they will dare them. They will quote Scripture, as did Satan to Christ. "Prove all things," say they. But their idea of proving is to listen to their deceptive reasonings, and in attending their circles. But in their gatherings, the angels of darkness assume the

forms of dead friends, and communicate with them as angels of light. {2Red 90.3}

Their loved ones will appear in robes of light, as familiar to the sight as when they were upon the earth. They will teach them, and converse with them. And many will be deceived by this wonderful display of Satan's power. The only safety for the people of God is to be thoroughly conversant with their Bibles, and be intelligent upon the reasons of our faith in regard to the sleep of the dead. {2Red 91.1}

Satan is a cunning foe. And it is not difficult for the evil angels to represent both saints and sinners who have died, and make these representations visible to human eyes. These manifestations will be more frequent, and developments of a more startling character will appear as we near the close of time. We need not be astonished at anything in the line of deceptions to allure the unwary, and deceive, if possible, the very elect. Spiritualists quote, "Prove all things." But God has, for the benefit of his people who live amid the perils of the last days, proved this class, and given the result of his proving. {2Red 91.2}

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." {2Red 91.3}

John, upon the Isle of Patmos, saw the things which should come upon the earth in the last

days. Revelation 13:13; 16:14: "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire

come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." {2Red 91.4}

The apostle Peter distinctly points out the class which will be manifested in these last days. {2Red 92.1}

2 Peter 2:10-14: "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas, angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption, and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls; a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children." {2Red 92.2}

God, in his word, has placed his stamp upon the heresies of spiritualism as he placed his mark upon Cain. The godly need not be deceived if they are students of the Scriptures and obedient to follow the plain path marked out for them in the word of God. {2Red 92.3}

The boastful spiritualist claims great freedom, and in smooth, flowery language seeks to fascinate and delude unwary souls to choose the

broad path of pleasure and sinful indulgence, rather than the narrow path and the straight way. Spiritualists call the requirements of God's law bondage, and say those who obey them live a life of slavish fear. With smooth words and fair speeches they boast of their freedom, and seek to cover their dangerous heresies with the garments of righteousness. They would make the most revolting crimes be considered as blessings to the race. {2Red 92.4}

They open before the sinner a wide door to follow the promptings of the carnal heart, and violate the law of God, especially the seventh commandment. Those who speak these great swelling words of vanity, and who triumph in their freedom in sin, promise those whom they deceive the enjoyment of freedom in a course of rebellion against the revealed will of God. These deluded souls are themselves in the veriest bondage to Satan and are controlled by his power, and yet promising liberty to those who will dare to follow the same course of sin that they themselves have chosen. {2Red 93.1}

The Scriptures are indeed fulfilled in this, that the blind are leading the blind. For by whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. These deluded souls are under the most abject slavery to the will of demons. They have allied themselves to the powers of darkness and have no strength to go contrary to the will of demons. This is their boasted liberty. By Satan are they overcome and brought into bondage, and the great liberty promised to those they deceive is helpless slavery to sin and Satan. {2Red 93.2}

We are not to attend their circles, neither are our ministers to engage in controversy with them.

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They are of that class specified whom we should not invite into our houses, or bid them God speed. We have to compare their teachings with the revealed will of God. We are not to engage in an investigation of spiritualism. God has investigated this for us, and told us definitely that a class would arise in the last days who would deny Christ who has purchased them with his own blood. The character of spiritualists is so plainly described that we need not be deceived by them. If we obey the divine injunction, we shall have no sympathy with spiritualists, however smooth and fair may be their words. {2Red 93.3}

The beloved John continues his warning against seducers: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also.)" {2Red 94.1}

In Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians, he exhorts to be on guard, and not depart from the faith. He speaks of Christ's coming as an event to immediately follow the work of Satan in spiritualism in these words: "Even him, whose coming is after the workings of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." {2Red 94.2}

In the epistle of Paul to Timothy, he foretells what will be manifested in the latter days. And

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this warning was for the benefit of those who should live when these things should take place. God revealed to his servant the perils of the church in the last days. He writes, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron." {2Red 94.3}

The faithful Peter speaks of the dangers to which the Christian church would be exposed in the last days, and more fully describes the heresies which would arise and the blaspheming seducers who would seek to draw away souls after them. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." {2Red 95.1}

Here God has worked out for us the proof of the class mentioned. They have refused to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God, and they have no more reverence for the eternal Father than for his Son, Jesus Christ. They have neither the Son nor the Father. And like their great leader, the rebel chief, they are in rebellion against the law of God, and they despise the blood of Christ. {2Red 95.2}

We may rejoice in every condition of life, and triumph under all circumstances, because the Son of God came down from Heaven and submitted to bear our infirmities,

and to endure sacrifice and death in order to give to us immortal life. He will ever bear the marks of his earthly

humiliation in man's behalf. While the redeemed host and the pure angelic throng shall do him honor and worship him, he will carry the marks of one that has been slain. The more fully we appreciate the infinite sacrifice made in our behalf by a sin-atoning Saviour, the more closely do we come into harmony with Heaven. {2Red 95.3}

We have characters to form here. God will test us and prove us by placing us in positions to develop the most enduring strength, purity and nobility of soul, with perfect patience on our part, and entire trust in a crucified Saviour. We shall meet with reverses, affliction, and severe trials, for these are God's tests. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver and purge his people as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. {2Red 96.1}

The cross of Christ is all covered with reproach and stigma, yet it is the hope of life and exaltation to man. No one can comprehend the mystery of godliness so long as he is ashamed to bear the cross of Christ. None will be able to discern and appreciate the blessings which Christ has purchased for man at infinite cost to himself, unless they are willing to joyfully sacrifice earthly treasures that they may become his followers. Every self-denial and sacrifice made for Christ enriches the giver, and every suffering and reproach endured for his dear name increases the final joy and immortal reward in the kingdom of glory. {2Red 96.2}

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PAMPHLETS / 3Red - Redemption: Or the Miracles of Christ, the Mighty One (1877) / NOTE TO THE READER

NOTE TO THE READER

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST ARE OF SUCH VAST IMPORTANCE, IN EVIDENCING HIS DIVINE POWER, AND IN IMPRESSING HIS MORAL LESSONS UPON THE MINDS OF THE PEOPLE, THAT IT IS WITH PLEASURE THE PUBLISHERS PRESENT TO THEIR READERS THIS LITTLE BOOK TO AID THEM IN THEIR PERUSAL OF THE MIGHTY MIRACLES OF CHRIST, AS SET FORTH IN THE GOSPELS. THIS WORK, TOGETHER WITH THE MINISTRY AND TEACHINGS OF CHRIST, AS CONTAINED IN FORMER PAMPHLETS OF THIS SERIES BY THE SAME AUTHOR, FORMS A STUDY THAT CANNOT FAIL TO PROFIT THE CANDID READER.

THE PUBLISHERS

The Miracles of Christ

The Marriage at Cana.

In entering upon the great work of his earthly life, Jesus chose five disciples; John, Andrew, Simon, Philip, and Nathanael. These men were called from their humble occupations to accompany the Saviour in his ministry, receive his divine teachings, and witness his mighty miracles, that they might publish them to the world. {3Red 3.1}

There was to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The parties were relatives of Joseph and Mary. Christ knew of this family gathering, and that many influential persons would be brought together there, so, in company with his newly-made disciples, he made his way to Cana. As soon as it was known that Jesus had come to the place, a special invitation was sent to him and his friends. This was what he had purposed, and so he graced the feast with his presence. {3Red 3.2}

He had been separated from his mother for quite a length of time. During this period he had been baptized by John and had endured the temptations in the wilderness. Rumors had reached Mary concerning her son and his sufferings. John, one of the new disciples, had searched for Christ and had found him in his humiliation,

emaciated, and bearing the marks of great physical and mental distress. Jesus, unwilling that John should witness his humiliation, had gently yet firmly dismissed him from his presence. He wished to be alone; no human eye must behold his agony, no human heart be called out in sympathy with his distress. {3Red 3.3}

The disciple had sought Mary in her home and related to her the incidents of this meeting with Jesus, as well as the event of his baptism, when the voice of God was heard in acknowledgment of his Son, and the prophet John had pointed to Christ, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." For thirty years this woman had been treasuring up evidences that Jesus was the Son of God, the promised Saviour of the world. Joseph was dead, and she had no one in whom to confide the cherished thoughts of her heart. She had fluctuated between hope and perplexing doubts, but always feeling more or less of an assurance that her son was indeed the Promised One. {3Red 4.1}

She had been very sorrowful for the past two months, for she had been separated from her son, who had ever been faithful and obedient to her wishes. The widowed mother had mourned over the sufferings that Jesus had endured in his loneliness. His Messiahship had caused her deep sorrow as well as joy. Yet strangely, as it appears to her, she meets him at the marriage feast, the same tender, dutiful son, yet not the same, for his countenance is changed; she sees the marks of his fierce conflict in the wilderness of temptation, and the evidence of his high mission in his holy expression and the gentle dignity

of his presence. She sees that he is accompanied by a number of young men who address him with reverence, calling him Master. These companions tell Mary of the wonderful things they have witnessed, not only at the baptism, but upon numerous other occasions, and they conclude by saying, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, who is the long-looked-for Messiah." {3Red 4.2}

The heart of Mary was made glad by this assurance that the cherished hope of long years of anxious waiting was indeed true. It would have been strange enough if, mingled with this deep and holy joy, there had not been a trace of the fond mother's natural pride. But the guests assembled and time passed on. At length an incident occurred that caused much perplexity and regret. It was discovered that from some cause the wine had failed. The wine used was the pure juice of the grape, and it was impossible to provide it at the late hour. It was unusual to dispense with it on these occasions; so the mother of Christ, who, in her capacity of relative had a prominent part to perform at the feast, spoke to her son, saying, "They have no wine." In this communication was a hidden request, or rather, suggestion, that He to whom all things were possible would relieve their wants. But Jesus answered, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." {3Red 5.1}

His manner was respectful, yet firm; he designed to teach Mary that the time for her to control him as a mother, was ended. His mighty work now lay before him, and no one must direct concerning the exercise of his divine power.

There was danger that Mary would presume upon her relationship to Christ, and feel that she had special claims upon him and special rights. As Son of the Most High, and Saviour of the world, no earthly ties must hold him from his divine mission, nor influence the course he must pursue. It was needful that he should stand free from every personal consideration, ready to do the will of his Father in Heaven. {3Red 5.2}

Jesus loved his mother tenderly; for thirty years he had been subject to parental control; but the time had now come when he was to go about his Father's business. In rebuking his mother, Jesus also rebukes a large class who have an idolatrous love for their family, and allow the ties of relationship to draw them from the service of God. Human love is a sacred attribute; but should not be allowed to mar our religious experience, or draw our hearts from God. {3Red 6.1}

The future life of Christ was mapped out before him. His divine power had been hidden, and he had waited in obscurity and humiliation for thirty years, and was in no haste to act until the proper time should arrive. But Mary, in the pride of her heart, longed to see him prove to the company that he was really the honored of God. It seemed to her a favorable opportunity to convince the people present of his divine power, by working a miracle before their eyes, that would place him in the position he should occupy before the Jews. But he answered that his hour had not yet come. His time to be honored and glorified as King was not yet come; it was his lot to be a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. {3Red 6.2}

The earthly relation of Christ to his mother

was ended. He who had been her submissive son was now her divine Lord. Her only hope, in common with the rest of mankind, was to believe him to be the Redeemer of the world, and yield him implicit obedience. The fearful delusion of the Roman church exalts the mother of Christ equal with the Son of the Infinite God; but he, the Saviour, places the matter in a vastly different light, and in a pointed manner indicates that the tie of relationship between them in no way raises her to his level, or insures her future. Human sympathies must no longer affect the One whose mission is to the world. {3Red 6.3}

The mother of Christ understood the character of her Son, and bowed in submission to his will. She knew that he would comply with her request if it was best to do so. Her manner evidenced her perfect faith in his wisdom and power, and it was this faith to which Jesus responded in the miracle that followed. Mary believed that Jesus was able to do that which she had desired of him, and she was exceedingly anxious that everything in regard to the feast should be properly ordered, and pass off with due honor. She said to those serving at table," "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." Thus she did what she could to prepare the way. {3Red 7.1}

At the entrance of the dwelling there stood six stone water-pots. Jesus directed the servants to fill these pots with water. They readily obeyed this singular order. The wine was wanted for immediate use, and Jesus commanded, "Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast." The servants beheld with astonishment, that instead of the crystal water with which they had just filled those vessels, there

flowed forth wine. Neither the ruler of the feast nor the guests generally were aware that the supply of wine had failed; so, upon testing it, the ruler was astonished, for it was superior to any wine he had ever before drank, and vastly different from that which had been served at the commencement of the feast. {3Red 7.2}

He addressed the bridegroom, saying, "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now." In this miracle, Jesus illustrates the truth that while the world presents its best gifts first, to fascinate the senses and please the eye, he gives good gifts, ever fresh and new unto the end. They never pall upon the taste, the heart never sickens and tires of them. The pleasures of the world are unsatisfying, its wine turns to bitterness, its gayety to gloom. That which was begun with songs and mirth ends in weariness and disgust. But Jesus provides a feast of the soul that never fails to give satisfaction and joy. Each new gift increases the capacity of the receiver to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of his Lord. He gives, not with stinted measure, but above what is asked or expected. {3Red 8.1}

This donation of Christ to the marriage supper was a symbol of the means of salvation. The water represented baptism into his death, the wine, the shedding of his blood for the purifying of the sins of the world. The provision made for the wedding-guests was ample, and not less abundant is the provision for blotting out the iniquities of men. {3Red 8.2}

Jesus had just come from his long fast in the wilderness, where he had suffered in order to

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break the power of appetite over man, which, among other evils, had led to the free use of intoxicating liquor. Christ did not provide for the wedding guests wine that from fermentation or adulteration was of an intoxicating character, but the pure juice of the grape, clarified and refined. Its effect was to bring the taste into harmony with a healthful appetite. {3Red 8.3}

The guests remarked upon the quality of the wine, and presently inquiries were made that drew from the servants an account of the wonderful work that the youthful Galilean had performed. The company listened with unbounded amazement, and exchanged words of doubt and surprise. At length they looked for Jesus, that they might pay him due respect and learn how he had accomplished this miraculous conversion of water into wine; but he was not to be found. He had, with dignified simplicity, performed the miracle, and had then quietly withdrawn. {3Red 9.1}

When it was ascertained that Jesus had really departed, the attention of the company was directed to his disciples who had remained behind. For the first time they had the opportunity of acknowledging themselves to be believers in Jesus of Nazareth as Saviour of the world. John related what he had heard and seen of his teachings. He told of the wonderful manifestations at the time of the baptism of Jesus, by the prophet John, in the river Jordan; how the light and glory from Heaven had descended upon him in the form of a dove, while a voice from the cloudless heavens proclaimed him to be the Son of the Infinite Father. John narrated these facts with convincing clearness and accuracy. The curiosity of all present was aroused, and many anxious

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ones who were looking and longing for the Messiah, thought it was indeed possible that this might be the Promised One of Israel. {3Red 9.2}

The news of this miracle wrought by Jesus spread through all that region and even reached Jerusalem. The priests and elders heard with wonder. They searched with new interest the prophecies pointing to the coming of Christ. There was the most intense anxiety to know the aim and mission of this new Teacher, who came among the people in so unassuming a manner, yet did that which no other man had ever done. Unlike the Pharisees and other dignitaries who preserved an austere seclusion, he had joined the mixed assembly of a festal gathering, and, while no shadow of worldly levity marred his conduct, he had sanctioned the social gathering with his presence. {3Red 10.1}

Here is a lesson for the disciples of Christ through all time, not to exclude themselves from society, renouncing all social communion and seeking a strict seclusion from their fellow-beings. In order to reach all classes, we must meet them where they are; for they will seldom seek us of their own accord. Not alone from the pulpit are the hearts of men and women touched by divine truth. Christ awakened their interest by going among them as one who desired their good. He sought them at their daily avocations, and manifested an unfeigned interest in their temporal affairs. He carried his instruction into the households of the people, bringing whole families in their own homes under the influence of his divine presence. His strong personal sympathies helped to win hearts to his cause. {3Red 10.2}

This example of the great Master should be

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closely followed by his servants. However instructive and profitable may be their public discourses, they should remember there is another field of action, humbler it may be, but full as promising of abundant harvests. It is found in the lowly walks of life, as well as the more pretentious mansions of the great, at the board of hospitality and gatherings for innocent social enjoyment. {3Red 10.3}

The course of Jesus in this respect was in direct contrast to that of the exclusive leaders of the Jews. They shut themselves up from sympathy with the people, and sought neither to benefit them nor win their friendship. But Christ linked himself with the interests of humanity, and so should those who preach his word. This should not be, however, from a desire to gratify the inclinations for personal enjoyment, or love of change and pleasure; but for the purpose of embracing every opportunity to do good, and shed the light of truth upon the hearts of men, keeping the life pure and uncorrupted by the follies and vanities of society. {3Red 11.1}

The special object of Jesus in attending this marriage feast was to commence the work of breaking down the exclusiveness which existed with the Jewish people, and to open the way for their freer mingling with the people. He had come not only as the Messiah of the Jews, but the Redeemer of the world. The Pharisees and elders refrained from associating with any class but their own. They held themselves aloof, not only from the Gentiles, but from the majority of their own people; and their teaching led all classes to separate themselves from the rest of the world, in a manner calculated to render them self-righteous,
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egotistical, and intolerant. This rigorous seclusion and bigotry of the Pharisees had narrowed their influence and created a prejudice which Christ would have removed, that the influence of his mission might be felt upon all classes. {3Red 11.2}

Those who think to preserve their religion by hiding it within stone walls to escape the contamination of the world, lose golden opportunities to enlighten and benefit humanity. The Saviour sought men in the public streets, in private houses, on the boats, in the synagogue, by the shores of lakes, and at the marriage feasts. He spent much time in the mountains, engaged in earnest prayer, in order to come forth braced for the conflict, strengthened for his active toil among men in real life, enlightening and relieving the poor, the sick, the ignorant, and those bound by the chains of Satan, as well as teaching the rich and honorable. {3Red 12.1}

The ministry of Christ was in marked contrast with that of the Jewish elders. They held themselves aloof from sympathy with men; considering that they were the favored ones of God, they assumed an undue appearance of righteousness and dignity. The Jews had so far fallen from the ancient teachings of Jehovah that they held that they would be righteous in the sight of God, and receive the fulfillment of his promises, if they strictly kept the letter of the law given them by Moses. {3Red 12.2}

The zeal with which they followed the teachings of the elders gave them an air of great piety. Not content with performing those services which God had specified to them through Moses, they were continually reaching for more rigid
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and difficult duties. They measured their holiness by the multitude of their ceremonies, while their hearts were filled with hypocrisy, pride, and avarice. The curse of God was upon them for their iniquities, while they professed to be the only righteous nation upon earth. {3Red 12.3}

They had received unsanctified and confused interpretations of the law, they had added tradition to tradition, they had restricted freedom of thought and action, till the commandments, ordinances, and service of God, were lost in a ceaseless round of meaningless rites and ceremonies. Their religion was a yoke of bondage. They had become so fettered that it was impossible for them to attend to the essential duties of life, without employing the Gentiles to do many necessary things which were forbidden the Jews to do for fear of contamination. They were in continual dread that they should become defiled. Dwelling constantly upon these matters had dwarfed their minds and narrowed the orbit of their lives. {3Red 13.1}

Jesus commenced the work of reformation by bringing himself into close sympathy with humanity. He was a Jew, and he designed to leave a perfect pattern of one who was a Jew inwardly. While he rebuked the Pharisees for their pretentious piety, endeavoring to free the people from the senseless exactions that bound them, he showed the greatest veneration for the law of God, and taught obedience of its precepts. {3Red 13.2}

Jesus rebuked intemperance, self-indulgence, and folly; yet he was social in his nature. He accepted invitations to dine with the learned and noble, as well as the poor and afflicted. On these occasions, his conversation was elevating

and instructive, holding his hearers entranced. He gave no license to scenes of dissipation and revelry, yet innocent happiness was pleasing to him. A Jewish marriage was a solemn and impressive occasion, the pleasure and joy of which were not displeasing to the Son of Man. This miracle pointed directly toward breaking down the prejudices of the Jews. The disciples of Jesus learned a lesson of sympathy and humanity from it. His relatives were drawn to him with warm affection, and when he left for Capernaum, they accompanied him. {3Red 13.3}

By attending this feast, Jesus sanctioned marriage as a divine institution, and through all his subsequent ministry he paid the marriage covenant a marked respect in illustrating many important truths by it. {3Red 14.1}

The Centurion's Son.

After laboring two days with the Samaritans, Jesus left them to continue his journey to Galilee. He made no tarry at Nazareth, where he had spent his youth and early manhood. His reception in the synagogue there, when he announced himself as the Anointed One, was so unfavorable that he decided to seek more fruitful fields, to preach to ears that would listen, and to hearts that would receive his message. He declared to his disciples that a prophet hath no honor in his own country. This saying sets forth that natural reluctance which many people have to acknowledge any wonderfully admirable development in one who has unostentatiously lived in their midst,

and whom they have intimately known from childhood. At the same time, these
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same persons might become wildly excited over the pretensions of a stranger and an adventurer. {3Red 14.2}

The miracle that Jesus had performed in Cana prepared the way for his cordial reception. The people who had returned from the passover had brought back the report of his marvelous cleansing of the desecrated temple, followed by his miracles of healing the sick and restoring sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. The judgment passed upon his acts by the dignitaries of the temple, opened his way at Galilee; for many of the people lamented the abuse of the temple and the lofty arrogance of the priests, and hoped that this man, who had the power to put these rulers to flight, might indeed be the looked-for Deliverer. {3Red 15.1}

The news that Jesus had returned from Judea to Cana soon spread throughout Galilee and the region round about. It reached the ears of a nobleman in Capernaum, who was a Jew of some honor. He was much interested in what he had heard of the power of Jesus to heal the sick, for he had a son suffering with disease. The father had consulted the most learned physicians among the Jews, and they had pronounced the case incurable, and told him that his son must soon die. {3Red 15.2}

But when he heard that Jesus was in Galilee his heart was encouraged; for he believed that one who could miraculously change water into wine, and drive out the desecrators of the temple, could raise his son to health even from the brink of the grave. Capernaum was quite a distance from Cana, and the centurion feared that, if he left his home to seek Jesus and present his plea to him, the child, who was very low, might die in his absence. Yet he dared not trust this
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errand to a servant; for he hoped that the prayers of a fond parent might touch the heart of the great Physician with pity, and induce him to accompany the father to the bedside of his dying son. {3Red 15.3}

He went to Cana, hastening for fear of being too late. Forcing a passage through the crowd that surrounded Jesus, he at length stood before him. But his faith faltered when he saw only a plainly dressed man, dusty and worn with travel. He doubted that this person could do what he had come to ask of him; yet he determined to make a trial. He secured a hearing from Jesus, told him his errand, and besought the Saviour to accompany him to his home for the purpose of healing his son. But Jesus already knew of his sorrow. Even before the centurion had left his home, the pitying Redeemer had read the father's grief, and his great heart of love had gone out in sympathy for the suffering child. {3Red 16.1}

But he was also aware that the father had made conditions in his mind concerning his belief in the Saviour. Unless his petition should be granted he would not have faith in him as the Messiah. While the father waited in an agony of suspense, Jesus addressed him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." He here revealed the superficial faith of the centurion, that would lead him to accept or reject Christ according as he did or did not perform the work required of him. {3Red 16.2}

Jesus designed, not only to heal the child, but to illuminate the darkened mind of the

father. He saw unbelief struggling with his faith. He knew that this man had sought his help as a last and only hope. In this centurion he saw

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represented the condition of many of his nation. They were interested in Jesus from selfish motives; they desired some special benefit that they hoped to receive through his power, but they were ignorant as to their spiritual disease, and saw not their terrible need of divine grace, but staked their faith on the granting of some temporal favor. Jesus met this case as illustrating the position of many of the Jewish people. He contrasted this questioning unbelief with the faith of the Samaritans, who were ready to receive him as a teacher sent by God, and to accept him as the promised Messiah without a sign or miracle to establish his divinity. {3Red 16.3}

The father's soul was stirred to its depths with the thought that his doubts might cost him the life of his son. The words of Jesus had the desired effect; the centurion saw that his motives in seeking the Saviour were purely selfish; his vacillating faith appeared before him in its true light; he realized that he was indeed in the presence of One who could read the hearts of men, and to whom all things were possible. This thought brings his suffering child to his mind with new vividness, and he cries out in an agony of supplication, "Sir, come down ere my child die!" {3Red 17.1}

He fears that while he has been doubting and questioning, death may have closed the scene. This was enough. The father in his need seizes the merits of Jesus as his Saviour. In demanding him to come down ere his child dies, he clings alone to the strength of Jesus as his only hope. His faith is as imperative as was that of Jacob, when, wrestling with the mighty angel, he cried, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!" {3Red 17.2}

Jesus responds to the demands of the centurion

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by commanding him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." These brief and simple words thrill through the heart of the father; he feels the holy power of the speaker in every tone. Instead of going to Capernaum, Jesus, by a flash of divine telegraphy, sends the message of healing to the bedside of the suffering son. He dismisses the suppliant, who, with unspeakable gratitude, and perfect faith in the words of the Saviour, turns his steps homeward with a peace and joy he has never felt before. {3Red 17.3}

At the same hour the watchers stood around the dying child, in the distant home of the centurion. The form that had been so strong and symmetrical in its youthful grace, was now worn and emaciated. The hollow cheeks burned with a hectic fire. Suddenly the fever leaves him, intelligence beams from his eyes, his mind becomes clear, and health and strength return to his body. The fever has left him in the very heat of the day. The attendants behold the change with amazement; the family is summoned, and great is the rejoicing. No signs of his malady linger about the child, his burning flesh has become soft and moist, and he sinks into the peaceful slumber of childhood. {3Red 18.1}

Meanwhile the father hastens on his way with a hopeful heart. He went to Jesus with grief and trembling. He leaves him in joy and confidence. He feels the solemn assurance that he has talked with One whose power is unlimited. No doubt crosses his mind that Jesus has really healed his son at Capernaum. While still some distance from

home, his servants meet him with the glad tidings that his son has recovered. With a light heart he hurries on, and, as he

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approaches his house, is met by the child, bounding out to receive him, radiant in health and beauty. He clasps him to his heart as one restored from the dead, and thanks God again and again for this miraculous restoration. {3Red 18.2}

The centurion and all his household become disciples of Jesus. Thus their affliction was sanctified to the conversion of the entire family. They published this miracle through all Capernaum, and thus opened the way for Christ's further labors there. Many of his most wonderful works were done at that place. {3Red 19.1}

This case of the centurion should be a lesson to all the followers of Christ. He would have them place implicit faith in him as their Redeemer, ready and willing to save all who come unto him. But he sometimes delays bestowing his precious gifts, in order to impress our hearts with a sense of our deep need of that true piety which entitles us to ask of him what we will. We are to lay by the selfishness that is frequently the sole cause of seeking him, and, confessing our helplessness and bitter need, trust in his promises. He invites all to come unto him who are weary and heavy-laden, and he will give them rest. {3Red 19.2}

Jesus at Bethesda.

"After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went

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down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." {3Red 19.3}

Jesus did not hold himself aloof from the poor, the suffering, and sinful. His great heart of love went out in yearning tenderness for wretched objects who needed his help. He was acquainted with the sufferers who had learned to look forward to the period when it was thought that the waters were agitated by a supernatural power. Many suffering from different maladies visited the pool; but so great was the crowd at the appointed time, that they rushed forward, trampling under foot men, women, and children weaker than themselves. {3Red 20.1}

Hundreds were pressed back and could not get near the water. Many disappointed sufferers, who had, by great pains and effort, succeeded in reaching the pool, died upon its brink without being able to make the first plunge into its depths. Shelters had been erected about the place that the sick might be protected from the scorching rays of the sun and the chilliness of the night. Some wretched sufferers spent their nights in the porches, and would drag their diseased bodies to the favored spot day after day in the vain hope of obtaining relief. {3Red 20.2}

One man had been afflicted by an incurable disease for thirty-eight years, and he

had repeatedly visited the pool. Those who pitied his helplessness would bear him to and fro at the time when the waters were supposed to be troubled. But those stronger than himself would rush in before him and seize the opportunity that he coveted. Thus the poor, palsied sufferer waited by the

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pool day and night, hoping that the favored moment would at length come when he could plunge into the water and be healed. His persistent efforts toward this object, and the doubt and anxiety of his mind, were fast wearing away the poor remnant of his strength. {3Red 20.3}

Jesus visited this retreat of misery, and his eye rested upon this helpless invalid. The poor creature was weak and despairing, but as the looked-for moment arrived, he gathered his feeble energies in a last effort to reach the water, but, just as he had almost gained his object, another stepped in before him. He crept back to his pallet to die. But a pitying face bends over him, saying, "Wilt thou be made whole?" The desponding man looked up, thinking it might be some one who had come to assist him into the pool; but the faint glow of encouragement faded out of his heart when he remembered that it was too late, his opportunity for that time was gone, and, in his state of sickness and exposure, he could scarcely hope that he might live to see another. {3Red 21.1}

He turned away wearily, saying, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." Poor man! how could he hope to contend successfully with the selfish, scrambling crowd! Jesus did not ask this wretched sufferer to exercise faith in him; but with a voice of command said, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." A sudden vigor was communicated to the paralyzed cripple. His whole being was stirred with a healing power, new blood and strength leaped into every limb and member. He bounded to his feet in obedience to the Saviour's command, and stooped to take up his

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bed, which was only a simple rug and blanket. As he straightened himself again, with a sense of delight at standing upon his feet after so many years of helpless infirmity, he looked around for his deliverer, but he was nowhere to be seen. Jesus was lost in the crowd, and the restored paralytic feared that he would not know him again if he should see him. He was disappointed, for he longed to pour forth his gratitude to the stranger. As he hurried on toward Jerusalem, with firm, free step, praising God as he went, and rejoicing in his new-found strength, he met the Pharisees, and immediately related to them the wonderful cure he had experienced. He was surprised at the coolness with which they listened to his story. {3Red 21.2}

Presently they interrupted him by asking why he was carrying that bed on the Sabbath day. They sternly reminded him that it was not lawful for him to bear burdens upon the Lord's day. In his joy the man had forgotten that it was the Sabbath; yet he felt no condemnation for obeying the command of one who had power from God to perform so wonderful a miracle. He answered boldly, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." The Pharisees were not delighted at the cure which had been effected upon this poor invalid of thirty-eight years. They overlooked

the object of the wondrous miracle, and, with their characteristic bigotry, seized upon the act as a violation of the Sabbath law. {3Red 22.1}

They excused the restored man from blame, but appeared shocked at the guilt of him who had assumed the responsibility of ordering a man to take up his bed upon the Sabbath day. They

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asked him who it was that had done this thing, but he could not enlighten them on that subject. These rulers knew very well that only one person had shown himself able to do this deed; but they wished to get direct proof that it was Jesus, for they then hoped to be able to condemn him as a Sabbath-breaker. They considered that he had not only broken the law in healing the sick man on the Sabbath, but had committed an act of sacrilege in bidding him take up his bed and bear it away. {3Red 22.2}

Jesus did not come into the world to lessen the dignity of the law, but to exalt it. The Jews had perverted it by their traditions and misconceptions. They had made it a yoke of bondage. Their meaningless exactions and requirements had become a by-word among all other nations. Especially was the Sabbath hedged in by all manner of senseless restrictions which made that holy day almost unendurable. A Jew was not allowed to kindle a fire upon the Sabbath, nor even to light a candle on that day. The views of the people were so narrow that they had become slaves to their own useless regulations. As a consequence, they were dependent upon the Gentiles to do many services which their rules forbade them to do for themselves. {3Red 23.1}

They did not reflect that if these necessary duties of life were sins they were full as guilty in employing others to perform them as in doing them themselves. They thought salvation was restricted to the Jews, and the condition of all others, being entirely hopeless, could neither be improved nor made worse. But a just God has given no commandment which cannot be

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consistently kept by all. His laws sanction no meaningless usages nor clumsy restrictions. {3Red 23.2}

Soon after, Jesus met the man he had healed in the temple. He had come to bring a trespass-offering, a sin-offering, and a thank-offering for the great mercy he had received. Jesus, finding him among the worshipers, made himself known to him. The great Physician addressed him with a timely warning, "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." He who had suffered for thirty-eight years, as the result, in part, of his own dissipation, was thus plainly warned to avoid the sins that had caused him such suffering. {3Red 24.1}

The healed man was overjoyed to behold his deliverer, and, ignorant of the malice which the Jews held against Jesus, informed the Pharisees, who had before questioned him, that this was he who had wrought the wondrous cure. The Jewish dignitaries had only waited for proof that it was Jesus; from the first they had been confident that it could be no other. Now, a great uproar ensued in the court of the temple; for they sought to slay Jesus, but were prevented by the people, many of whom recognized in him a friend who had healed them from their infirmities and relieved their sorrows. {3Red 24.2}

A controversy now took place in regard to the true claims of the Sabbath law. Jesus had purposely chosen the Sabbath day upon which to perform the miracle at the pool. He could have healed the sick man as well on any other day of the week; also he might have simply cured him, and avoided arousing the indignation of the Jews, by bidding him take up his bed and depart. But a wise purpose underlay every act of Christ's

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life on earth; everything he did was important in itself and its teaching. He came to vindicate his Father's law and make it honorable. The Sabbath, instead of being the blessing it was designed to be, had become a curse through the added requirements of the Jews. Jesus wished to rid it of these incumbrances and leave it standing upon its own holy dignity. {3Red 24.3}

Therefore he chose the Sabbath for this special work. He selected the worst case among the afflicted ones at the pool of Bethesda upon whom to exercise his miraculous healing power, and bade him carry his bed through the city in order to publish the great work that had been wrought upon him, to call the attention of the people to his case, to the circumstances attending his cure, and to Him by whom it had been accomplished. This would raise the question of what it was lawful to do on the Sabbath day, and would give him an opportunity to denounce the narrow prejudice and restrictions of the Jews in regard to the Lord's day, and declare their bigotry and traditions void. {3Red 25.1}

Jesus stated to them that the work of relieving the sufferings of the afflicted was in harmony with the Sabbath law, whether it was relative to the salvation of souls or the removal of physical pain. Such work was in harmony with that of God's angels, who were ever descending and ascending between Heaven and earth to minister to suffering humanity. Jesus answered their accusations by declaring, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." All days are God's, in which to carry out his great plans for the human race. If the Jews interpretation of the law was correct, then Jehovah was at fault,

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whose work had upheld and quickened creation since first he laid the foundations of the earth, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. He who pronounced his work good, and established the institution of the Sabbath to commemorate its completion, must put a period to his labor, and stop the never-ending routine of the universe. {3Red 25.2}

Should God forbid the sun to do its office upon the Sabbath, cut off its genial rays from warming the earth and nourishing vegetation? Must the system of worlds stand still through that holy day? Should he command the babbling brooks to stay their course from watering the fields and forests, and bid the advancing and receding waves to still their ceaseless ebbing and flowing? Must the wheat and corn stop growing, and the ripening cluster defer its purple bloom for a single day? Must the waving trees and the delicate flowers put forth no bud nor blossom on the Sabbath? {3Red 26.1}

Surely in such a case man would miss the fruit of the earth and the blessings that make life desirable. Nature must continue her unvarying course; God must not stay his hand a single moment, or man would faint and die. And, in a like proportion, man has a labor to perform on this day. The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must

be cared for, the wants of the needy must be met. God does not hold him guiltless who stays his hand from relieving the suffering on the Sabbath day. The holy Sabbath was made for man, and acts of mercy and benevolence are always in order upon that day. God does not desire his

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creatures to suffer an hour's pain that may be relieved upon the Sabbath or any other day. {3Red 26.2}

Jesus sought to impress upon the narrow minds of the Jews a sense of the folly of their view of the Sabbath. He showed them that God's work never ceases. It is even greater upon the Sabbath than upon ordinary occasions, for at that time his people leave their usual employments and spend the time in prayerful meditation and worship. They ask more favors of him upon the Sabbath than upon other days, they demand his special attention, they crave his choicest blessings, they offer importunate prayers for special favors. God does not wait for the Sabbath to pass before he grants those requests, but he deals to the petitioners, with judicious wisdom, whatever is best for them to have. {3Red 27.1}

Heaven's work never ceases for a moment, and men should never rest from doing good. The Sabbath law forbids labor on the sanctified rest-day of the Lord. The toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon the Lord's day; but the work of Christ in healing the sick did honor to the holy Sabbath. Jesus claimed equal rights with God in doing a work equally sacred and of the same character with that which engaged his Father in Heaven. But the Pharisees were still more incensed, because he had not only broken the law, according to their understanding, but added to this offense the heinous sin of declaring himself equal with God. Nothing but the interference of the people prevented the Jewish authorities from slaying him on the spot. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of

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himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth; and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." {3Red 27.2}

Here Jesus elevated himself to his true station before the Jews, and declared himself to be the the Son of God. He then, in mild and dignified language, instructed them regarding the Sabbath. He told them that the rest-day which Jehovah had sanctified and set apart for a special purpose, after he had completed the work of creation, was not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. As God ceased his labor of creating, and rested upon that day and blessed it, so man was to leave the occupation of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds. {3Red 28.1}

The rulers of the people could not answer these elevated truths that were brought home to their consciences. They had no arguments with which to meet them; they could only cite their customs and traditions, and these seemed weak and vapid

compared with the strong arguments that Jesus had drawn from the work of God and the unceasing round of nature. Had they felt any desire to receive light, their hearts would have been convinced that Jesus spoke the truth. But they evaded the points he made concerning the Sabbath, and sought to stir up anger against him because he had made himself equal with God. The fury of the rulers knew no bounds, and it

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was with difficulty that they were prevented from seizing upon Jesus to put him to death. {3Red 28.2}

But the people were not excited to violence, and put the rulers to shame by the candor with which they listened to the words of Jesus. They justified him in healing the poor sufferer who had been afflicted for thirty-eight years. So the priests and elders were obliged to restrain their hatred for the time, and wait for a more favorable opportunity to carry out their evil designs. {3Red 29.1}

Jesus declared that he could do nothing of himself "but what he seeth the Father do." His relationship with God forbade him from working independent of him, and he could do nothing against his will. What a rebuke were these words to men, and especially to those who were calling the Son of God to task for the very work that he was sent upon earth to do. They had separated themselves from God by wicked acts, and, in their pride and vanity, were moving independent of him, feeling sufficient in themselves for all things, and realizing no need of a higher wisdom than their own, to aid them in the direction of their acts. {3Red 29.2}

Few realize the full force of Christ's words in regard to his connection with the Father. They teach man that he should consider himself inseparably bound to his Heavenly Parent, that, whatever position he may occupy, he is responsible to God, who holds all destinies in his hands. He has appointed man to do his work, he has endowed him with faculties and means for that purpose, and so long as man is faithful to his high stewardship, he may feel warranted in claiming the blessings and promises of his Master. But if, when raised to a position of sacred trust, he

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becomes exalted in his own estimation,--depending upon his own wisdom and power, taking affairs into his own hands, and separating himself from Him whom he professes to serve,--God will call him to an account for his unauthorized acts; he has not worked in unison with his Commander. {3Red 29.3}

Jesus now stood before the Jews in his true character. He declared that whatsoever things the Father did, those did also the Son in like manner, by the exercise of a like power, and with like results. He also promised those who heard him that they should witness greater acts than he had yet performed in healing the sick, the lame, and the blind. The Sadducees were in opposition to the Pharisees regarding the resurrection of the dead. The former claimed that there would be no resurrection of the body. But Jesus tells them that one of the greatest works of his Father is raising up the dead, and even so the Son of God has power in himself to raise from the dead. "Marvel not," said he, "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." {3Red 30.1}

The humble Nazarene asserts his real nobility. He rises above humanity, throws off the guise of sin and shame, and stands revealed, the Honored of the angels, the Son of God, equal with the Creator of the universe. The rulers of the Jews, and the listening multitude are spell-bound before his mighty truths, and the lofty dignity of his bearing. No man had ever spoken words like these, nor borne himself with such a kingly majesty. His utterances were clear and plain,

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fully declaring his mission and the duty of the world. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father who hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." {3Red 30.2}

Here Jesus throws back upon the rulers their accusations against him, and their attempts to prescribe his work, and to judge, by their narrow bigotry, his acts of mercy and benevolence. He declared himself their Judge, and the Judge of all the world. When he came to earth as the Redeemer, it was given into his hands, and all men are responsible unto him. He took the burden of humanity that he might save men from the consequences of their sins. He is in one their Advocate and Judge. Having tasted the very dregs of human affliction and temptation, he is qualified to understand the frailties and sins of men, and to pronounce judgment upon them. Therefore, the Father has given this work into the hands of his Son, knowing that He who victoriously withstood the temptations of Satan, in behalf of man, will be all-wise, just, and gracious in his dealing with him.

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{3Red 31.1}

The words of Jesus were more impressive because the controversy had risen very high. He was virtually summoned before the dignitaries of the Jews to be tried for his life. He, the Lord of the Sabbath, was arraigned before an earthly tribunal, to answer to the charge of breaking the Sabbath law. When he so boldly made known his mission and work, his judges looked upon him with mingled astonishment and rage, but his words were unanswerable and they could not condemn him. {3Red 32.1}

He denied the right of the Pharisees to question him or to interfere with his business. The Jewish system invested them with no such authority; their claims were based upon their own pride and arrogance. He refused to plead guilty to any wrong or submit to being catechised by them. {3Red 32.2}

After presenting before them these grand truths concerning his work in connection with the Father, he binds his assertions with the testimonies that have been borne of him: "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear

witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man; but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." From his sublime height he reads the secrets of their hearts and reminds them that for a time they had

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accepted John as a prophet of God and rejoiced in the message that he brought them. He affirms that the mission of John was solely to prepare the way of himself, whom the prophet testified was the Christ, the Redeemer of the world. {3Red 32.3}

But no man could witness concerning the mysterious connection of Jesus with the Father; human knowledge cannot reach the courts of Heaven. Jesus assures them that he does not refer to the testimony of John in order to sustain his claims, but only that his persecutors may be convinced of their blindness and inconsistency in defiantly opposing him whom John had stated was the Son of God. They were not in ignorance regarding the evidence of John, for they had sent a deputy to him who had brought back his statement of the baptism of Jesus and the wonderful manifestations of God at that time. {3Red 33.1}

Jesus speaks of John that they may see how, in rejecting himself, they also reject the prophet whom they had received with joy. He further declares: "But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." Had not the heavens opened and light from the throne of God encircled him with glory, while the voice of Jehovah proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"? Besides all this, his own works declared his divinity. He who had been arraigned as a Sabbath-breaker stood before his accusers clothed with divine grace, and uttering words that pierced them like arrows of truth. Instead of apologizing for the act of which they complained, or explaining his

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purpose in doing it, he turns upon the rulers, and the accused becomes the accuser. {3Red 33.2}

He rebukes them for the hardness of their hearts, for the blind ignorance with which they read the Scriptures, while they boasted of their superiority over every other people. They who assume to be teachers of the Scriptures and expounders of the law are themselves basely ignorant of its claims. He denounces their worldliness, their love of praise and power, their avarice and want of compassion. He charges them with disbelieving the Scriptures which they profess to revere, carrying out its forms and ceremonies while ignoring the great principles of truth that are the foundation of the law. He declares that they have rejected the word of God, inasmuch as they have rejected him whom God has sent. He commands them to "search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." {3Red 34.1}

The truth spoken by Jesus collided with their prejudices and customs, and they cast it from them, hardening their hearts against it. They refused to listen to the teachings of Christ, because those teachings directly condemned their cherished sins. Had the Son

of Man come flattering their pride and justifying their iniquity, they would have hastened to do him honor. Said Jesus, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." Pretenders, who could present no evidence of divine authority, might arise, who by prophesying smooth things, and gratifying the vanity of the rich and unsanctified, might secure their firm allegiance. These

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false prophets would lead their followers to eternal ruin. {3Red 34.2}

Jesus declared that there was no necessity for him to accuse them to the Father, for Moses, whom they professed to believe, had already accused them. "For," said he, "had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" Jesus knew that the Jews were determined to take his life, yet in this discourse he fully explained to them his Sonship, the relation he bore to the Father and his equality with him. This left them without an excuse for their blind opposition and insane rage against the Saviour. But, though baffled in their designs, and overawed by his divine eloquence and truth, the murderous hatred of the priests and elders was not quenched. Fear seized them, for they could not close their understanding to the convincing power which attended the ministry of Christ. But they were so bound by the chains of pride and arrogance that they rejected the evidence of his divine power, resisted his appeals, and locked themselves in darkness. {3Red 35.1}

They had signally failed to subvert the authority of Jesus, or to turn from him the respect and attention of the people, many of whom were powerfully affected, and deeply convicted, by his impressive discourse. His mighty works had first arrested their notice and aroused their wonder, and when his searching words disclosed his true character, they were ready to acknowledge his divine authority. On the other hand, his words had thrilled the hearts of the rulers with condemnation for their course. He had pressed their guilt home upon their consciences, yet this

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only made them more bitter against him, and they were fully determined to take his life. They sent messengers all over the country to warn the people against Jesus, whom they denounced as an impostor. Spies were sent to watch him and report what he said and did. The precious Saviour was now most surely standing under the shadow of the cross. {3Red 35.2}

Jesus at Capernaum.

After the work of healing that Jesus had performed upon the Sabbath at the Pool of Bethesda, the malice of the leading Jews was so kindled against him that they plotted against his life, and it was no longer safe for him to remain in Jerusalem. Therefore he repaired to Galilee, making Capernaum the scene of his labors. At this place he taught; and upon the Sabbaths, multitudes gathered to listen to his doctrine. Here his way seemed to be unobstructed, although spies were upon his track, watching for something whereof they might accuse him. {3Red 36.1}

The hearts of the common people were open to receive his divine instruction. His heart was overflowing with sympathy for suffering humanity, and it was with joy that he saw men respond to his teachings of love and benevolence. His hearers were charmed with the eloquent simplicity with which he preached the truth. His illustrations were drawn from scenes transpiring in their every-day lives. He adapted his language to all classes and conditions of men. {3Red 36.2}

Jesus did not go to Capernaum to avoid society nor to find rest from his labors. Capernaum was a great thoroughfare of travel; people from

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many countries passed through the city, or tarried there for rest in their journeyings to and fro. Here the great Teacher could meet all nations and all ranks. He could give lessons that would not only be received by those present, but would be carried to other countries and into many households. Investigations of the prophecies would thus be excited, notice would be directed to the Saviour, and his work and mission would be brought before the world. {3Red 36.3}

Here he had a better opportunity than elsewhere of meeting the representatives of all classes, as they mingled together, every one intent upon his own errand. The rich who were courted for their wealth could here be reached by his ministrations, as well as the poor and needy. Christ presented himself to the people as the Saviour of the world. As soon as it was known that he was in Capernaum, multitudes crowded to hear his words of heavenly wisdom. Jesus had taken his disciples up into a mountain for a little season of retirement, but when he saw the people flocking to him he had not the heart to turn them away. {3Red 37.1}

The feast of the Jews was near, and many had come in from the region about Jerusalem, seeking Jesus, of whose wonderful miracles they had heard. The sick and the afflicted were brought to him, and he healed their maladies. As he witnessed the joy of those whom he had relieved, his own heart of love rejoiced with those who had received his blessing. He made many families happy by restoring their suffering ones to health. He caused light to dawn upon households that had been plunged into the shadows of affliction. The sorrowing were comforted, the ignorant

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instructed, and hope was wakened in the hearts of the despairing. {3Red 37.2}

The people received the message that he brought them, and believed his words. None were more willing to accept the truth than the poor and humble, who were not separated from their Saviour by vanity and pride, the treasures of this world, or the praise of men. They found in him a consolation for all their toil and privations. He turned none away. He was touched with tender pity for the distress of those who sought his aid, and they left his presence, bearing evidence in their own persons of his healing and life-giving power. The hearts of the people went out in reverential love for their Benefactor, and he was a partaker of their joy. His labors while in Capernaum resulted in great good, and many were led to believe on him. His acts of matchless mercy won the hearts of the multitudes. {3Red 38.1}

The scribes and Pharisees were confounded; their purposes in regard to Jesus were defeated They had listened to his teachings in order to catch him in his words, and turn

the minds of the people from him to themselves. They knew that since the ministry of Jesus had commenced, their own influence over the people had greatly decreased. The sympathetic hearts of the multitude accepted lessons of love and kindly benevolence in preference to the cold forms and rigid ceremonies exacted by the priests. {3Red 38.2}

Although the Pharisees were astonished by the miracles that Jesus wrought, they were all the more anxious to remove one, who, by his great power, was most dangerous to their claims and pretensions.

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{3Red 38.3}

Bodily diseases, however aggravated and apparently hopeless, were met and baffled by his divine power; but the disease of the soul, fastened in unbelief and blind prejudice, took firmer hold upon those who closed their eyes against the light. The most powerful evidence that could be produced only strengthened their opposition. Leprosy and palsy were not so terrible as bigotry and unbelief. Jesus turned from the teachers of Israel, and their chains of darkness and skepticism tightened about them. {3Red 39.1}

The inhabitants of Capernaum had been greatly astonished by the sudden and effectual cure of the ruler's son at a word from Jesus, when he was more than twenty miles distant from the sufferer. They were rejoiced to learn that he who possessed such miraculous power was in their own city. On the Sabbath day, the synagogue where he spoke was packed with people, and yet many who desired to enter were unable to do so. As usual, a great number came through curiosity, but there were many who earnestly desired to learn regarding the gospel of the kingdom of God. {3Red 39.2}

All who heard him were astonished, "for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." His words were a demonstration of the Spirit of God, and they struck home to the souls of men with divine power. The teaching of the scribes and elders was cold and formal, like a lesson learned by rote. They explained the law as a matter of custom, but no authority from God sanctified their utterances, no holy inspiration stirred their own hearts and those of their hearers. {3Red 39.3}

Jesus had nothing to do with the various

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subjects of dissension among the Jews. His words were so simple that a child could understand them, yet lofty enough in their grand simplicity to charm the highest mind with their noble truths. He spoke of a new kingdom which he came to set up among them, in opposition to the kingdom of this world, and of his power to wrest from Satan his dominion, and deliver the captives bound by his power. {3Red 39.4}

There was a man in the synagogue who was possessed of the spirit of Satan. He broke in upon the discourse of Jesus with a piercing shriek, that chilled the blood of the hearers with a nameless terror. "Let us alone!" he cried. "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God!" {3Red 40.1}

Devils even believed and trembled, but the Israel of God had closed their eyes and ears to divine evidences, and knew not the time of their visitation. Satan's object in leading his wretched victim to the synagogue, was to distract the attention of the people from Jesus to the paroxysms of the poor sufferer and prevent the words of truth from

reaching the hearts of the people. But the darkened understanding of the man comprehended that the teachings of Jesus were from Heaven. The power of divinity aroused the terror of the demon which controlled his mind, and a conflict ensued between it and his remnant of reason. {3Red 40.2}

As the victim realized that the Healer was near to release him, his heart was aroused to long for freedom from Satan's power. The demon resisted this power and held control over the poor wretch who was wrestling against him. The

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sufferer tried to appeal to Jesus for help, but when he opened his lips, the demon put words in his mouth so that he shrieked out in an agony of fear, "Let us alone! what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?" The darkened reason of the poor man partially comprehended that he was in the presence of one who could free him from the bondage that had so long enslaved him; but when he sought to come within reach of that mighty hand, another's will held him back, another's words found utterance through him. {3Red 40.3}

By his own sinful course, this man had placed himself on the enemy's ground, and Satan had taken possession of all his faculties, so that when the gloom of his understanding was pierced by feeble rays of light from the Saviour's presence, the conflict between his desire for freedom and the devil's power threw him into terrible contortions, and drew from him unearthly cries. The demon exerted all his hellish power to retain the control of his victim. To lose ground here would be to give Jesus a victory. He who had, in his own person, conquered the prince of the power of darkness in the wilderness of temptation, was now again brought face to face with his enemy. {3Red 41.1}

It seemed that the tortured man must lose his life in the terrible struggle with the demon that had been the ruin of his manhood. Only one power could break this cruel tyranny. Jesus spoke with a voice of authority and set the captive free. The demoniac spirit made a last effort to rend the life from his victim before he was forced to depart. Then the man who had been possessed stood before the wondering people happy in the freedom of self-possession. In the synagogue on the Sabbath day, before the assembled

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congregation, the prince of darkness was again met and conquered. And even the demon had testified to the divine power of the Saviour, crying, "Thou Jesus of Nazareth! Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God!" {3Red 41.2}

The man whose reason was thus suddenly restored praised God for his deliverance. The eye that had so lately glared with the fire of insanity, now beamed with intelligence and overflowed with grateful tears. The people were dumb with amazement. As soon as they recovered speech they marveled one with another, saying, "What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out!" {3Red 42.1}

It was not according to the will of God that this man should be visited with so terrible an affliction as to be delivered wholly into the hands of Satan. The secret source of his

calamity, which had made him a fearful spectacle to his friends and a burden to himself, was in his own life. The pleasures of sin had fascinated him, the path of dissipation had looked bright and tempting, he had thought to make life a grand carnival. He did not dream of becoming a disgust and terror to the world and the reproach of his family. He thought his time could be spent in innocent folly; but once on the downward path, his feet rapidly descended till he had broken the laws of health and morality. Intemperance and frivolity chained his senses, the fine qualities of his mind were perverted, and Satan stepped in and took absolute control of him. {3Red 42.2}

Remorse came too late, and though he would

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then have sacrificed wealth and pleasure to regain his lost manhood, he had become helpless in the hands of the evil one. Satan had allured that young man with many charming presentations; he had cloaked vice with a flowery mantle that the victim might clasp it to his breast; but when his object was once accomplished and the wretched man was in his power, the fiend had become relentless in his cruelty, and terrible in his fierce and angry visitations. So it is ever with those who succumb to evil; the fascinating pleasure of their early career ends in the darkness of despair, or the madness of a lost and ruined soul. {3Red 42.3}

But he who conquered the arch-enemy in the wilderness, wrested this writhing captive from the grasp of Satan. Jesus well knew that although assuming another form, this demon was the same evil spirit that had tempted him in the wilderness. Satan seeks by various devices to gain his object. The same spirit that saw and recognized the Saviour, and cried out to him, "Let us alone! What have we to do with thee?" possessed the wicked Jews who rejected Christ and scorned his teachings. But with them he assumed an air of piety and learning, seeking to deceive them as to their real motives in refusing the Saviour. {3Red 43.1}

Jesus then retired from the synagogue while the people were still spell-bound with wonder and admiration. This miracle was then followed by another quite as wonderful. Jesus sought the house of Peter for a little rest; but there was no rest for the Son of Man. He was told that the mother of Peter's wife was sick of a fever. His sympathetic heart was at once called out to

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relieve the suffering woman. He rebuked the disease, and it was at once removed from her. She rose from the bed, filled with joy and gratitude, and ministered with willing hands to the wants of the Master and his disciples. {3Red 43.2}

These miracles and works of healing were spread abroad throughout the city. Yet these acts of mercy only made the bitterness of the Pharisees more intense. They closely watched all the movements of Jesus, seeking for cause to accuse him. Their influence prevented many from applying to Jesus for relief from their infirmities upon the Sabbath day. They feared being stigmatized as transgressors of the law. But no sooner had the sun passed out of sight in the west than a great commotion ensued. The diseased flocked to Jesus from every quarter. Those who had sufficient strength came by themselves, but a much larger number were borne by their friends to the great Physician. {3Red 44.1}

They were in every condition of helplessness and approaching death. Some were burning with fevers, others were paralyzed, stricken with dropsy, blind, deaf, and lame. And in the distance was heard the pitiful cry of the leper, Unclean! Unclean! as he stretched his decaying hands toward the Healer. The work of Jesus commenced when the first afflicted one was brought before him. The supplicants were healed by a word from his lips or a touch of his hand. With gratitude and rejoicing they returned to gladden with their enlightened minds and healthy bodies the homes that they had so recently left as helpless invalids. {3Red 44.2}

Those who had carefully borne them from their couches to the presence of Jesus returned with

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them, weeping tears of joy, and shouting the praises of the Saviour. Little children were not overlooked, but the puny sufferers were handed back to their happy mothers rosy with life and health. These living evidences of the divine power of Jesus created a great excitement in all that region. Never before had Capernaum witnessed a day like this. The air was filled with the voice of triumph and shouts of deliverance. {3Red 44.3}

The heart of the blessed Saviour, who had worked so great cures, was joyful in the joy he had awakened in the hearts of suffering humanity. He had healed every one who had applied to him for help. His great love for man was stirred to its very depths as he witnessed the suffering of those who had come to him, and he rejoiced in his power to restore them to health and happiness. {3Red 45.1}

The Leper.

Jesus was frequently obliged to hide himself from the people; for the crowds collected so densely about him to witness his miracles, and the enthusiasm ran so high, that it became necessary to take precautions, lest the priests and rulers should take advantage of the great assemblies to arouse the Roman authorities to fear an insurrection. {3Red 45.2}

Never had there been such a period as this for the world. Heaven was brought down to men. All who came to Jesus for the purpose of instruction realized indeed that the Lord was gracious and full of wisdom. They received precious lessons of divine knowledge from the great source of intelligence. Many hungering and thirsting

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souls that had waited long for the redemption of Israel now feasted upon the bounteous grace of a merciful Saviour. The expected Teacher had come, and a favored people were living under the full splendor of his light, yet many comprehended it not, and turned from the divine radiance with indifference or unbelief. {3Red 45.3}

Jesus healed many and various cases of bodily disease, while he was preaching and ministering to sin-sick souls. Many hearts were liberated from the cruel bondage of sin. Unbelief, discouragement, and despair, gave place to faith, hope, and happiness. But when the sick and wretched applied to the Saviour for help, he first relieved the poor, suffering body before he attempted to minister to the darkened mind. When the present misery of the suppliant was removed, his thoughts could better be directed into

the channel of light and truth. {3Red 46.1}

Leprosy was the most fearful and loathsome disease of the East. It was looked upon with great dread by all classes on account of its contagious character and its horrible effect upon its victim. Great precautions were taken to prevent the disease from spreading among the people. With the Hebrews the leper was pronounced unclean. He was isolated from his family, restricted from the privileges of society, and cut off from the congregation of Israel. He was doomed to associate only with those who were similarly afflicted with himself. {3Red 46.2}

Away from his friends and kindred he must bear the curse of his terrible malady. No affectionate hands could soothe his pain. He was obliged to publish his own calamity, to rend his garment, and sound the alarm, warning all to flee

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from his polluted and decaying body. The cry, Unclean! Unclean! coming with mournful tone from the lonely exile, was a signal heard with fear and abhorrence. {3Red 46.3}

There were many of these loathsome subjects in the region of Christ's ministry. The news of the great Healer had reached even them in their isolation, and a gleam of hope sprang up in their hearts that if they could come into the presence of Jesus he might relieve them. But as they were debarred from entering any city or village, it seemed impossible for them to reach the great Physician, whose chief work lay among the populace. {3Red 47.1}

There was one leper who had been a man of high distinction. It was with the greatest grief that he and his family had become convinced that he was a victim to the fatal disease. Physicians of note had been consulted, and they had examined his case thoroughly, and anxiously searched their books to obtain further knowledge; but they were reluctantly compelled to acknowledge that their skill was baffled, the disease was incurable. It was then the duty of the priest to make an examination; this resulted in a decision that his was the worst form of leprosy. This verdict sentenced him to a living death separated from his friends and the society in which he had held so lofty a position. But now those who had courted his favor and accepted his hospitality fled from his presence with horror. He went out an exile from his home. {3Red 47.2}

Jesus was teaching by the lake outside the city limits, and many were gathered to hear his words. The leper, who in his seclusion had heard of some of his mighty works, come out to see him, and

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drew as near as he dared. Since his exile, the disease had made fearful inroads upon his system. He was now a loathsome spectacle, his decaying body was horrible to look upon. Standing afar off, he heard some of the words of Jesus, and saw him laying hands upon the sick to heal them. He beheld, with amazement, the lame, the blind, the paralytic and those dying of various maladies, rise up at a word from the Saviour, restored to health and praising God for their salvation. He looked upon his own wretched body and wondered if this great Physician could not cure even him. The more he heard, and saw, and considered the matter, the more he was convinced that this was really the promised Saviour of the world, to whom all things were possible. None could perform such miracles but Him who was authorized of God, and the leper longed

to come into his presence and be healed. {3Red 47.3}

He had not intended to approach near enough to endanger the people; but now his mind was so powerfully wrought upon that he forgot the restrictions that had been placed upon him, the safety of the people, and the horror with which they regarded him. He thought only of his blessed hope that the power of Jesus could set him free from his infirmity. His faith laid hold of the Saviour, and he pressed forward, heedless of the frightened multitude that fell back as he approached and crowded over and upon each other to avoid him. {3Red 48.1}

Some thought to prevent him from approaching Jesus, but their efforts were in vain. He neither saw nor heard them. The expressions of loathing and looks of horror that greeted his appearance were lost upon him. He saw only

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the Son of God, he heard only the voice that was giving health and happiness to the suffering and unfortunate. As he came before Jesus, his pent-up feelings found vent, he prostrated his foul, decaying body before him, crying out, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." His words were few, but comprehended his great need. He believed that Christ was able to give him life and health. {3Red 48.2}

Jesus did not shrink from his approach, but drew near him. The people fell back, and even the disciples were filled with terror, and would fain have prevented their Master from touching him; for by the law of Moses he who touched a leper was himself unclean. But Jesus, with calm fearlessness, laid his hand upon the supplicant and answered his petition with the magic words, "Be thou clean!" {3Red 49.1}

No sooner were these life-giving words spoken than the dying body of corruption was changed to a being of healthy flesh, sensitive nerves, and firm muscle. The rough, scaly surface peculiar to leprosy was gone, and a soft glow, like that upon the skin of a healthy child, appeared in its place. The eager multitude now lose their terror, and crowd around to behold this new manifestation of divine power. {3Red 49.2}

Jesus charged the cleansed leper not to make known the work he had wrought upon him, saying, "See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Accordingly the now happy man went to the same priests who had previously examined him, and whose

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decision had banished him from his family and friends. {3Red 49.3}

Joyfully he presented his offering to the priests and magnified the name of Jesus who had restored him to health. This irrefutable testimony convinced the priests of the divine power of Jesus, although they still refused to acknowledge him as the Messiah. The Pharisees had asserted that his teachings were directly opposed to the law of Moses, and for the purpose of exalting himself; yet his special directions to the cleansed leper to make an offering to the priest according to the law of Moses, evidenced to the people that these accusations were false. {3Red 50.1}

The priests were not allowed to accept an offering from the hands of one who had been afflicted with leprosy, unless they first thoroughly examined him and proclaimed to the people that he was entirely free from the infectious disease, was in sound health,

and could again unite with his family and friends without endangering them. However unwilling the priest might have been to accredit this marvelous cure to Jesus, he could not evade an examination and decision of the case. The multitude were anxious to learn the result of the investigation, and when he was pronounced free from disease, and privileged to return to his family and friends, great was the excitement. Such a thing had never before been known. {3Red 50.2}

But notwithstanding the caution of Jesus to the cleansed leper he published the matter abroad. Conceiving that it was only the retiring modesty of Jesus that laid these restrictions upon him, he went about proclaiming the mighty power of this great Healer. He did not understand that every

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new manifestation of divine power on the part of Jesus only made the chief priests and elders more determined to destroy him. The restored man felt the boon of health was very precious. The pure blood coursing through his veins quickened his entire being with a new and delightful animation. He rejoiced in the full vigor of manhood and in his restoration to his family and society. He felt it impossible to refrain from giving full glory to the Physician who had made him whole. {3Red 50.3}

But the publicity of this affair created so great a commotion that Jesus was obliged to retire beyond the city. "And they came to him from every quarter." These miracles were not worked for display; the acts of Christ were in direct contrast to those of the Pharisees, whose greatest ambition was to secure the praise and honor of men. Jesus well knew that if the fact of his cleansing the leper was noised abroad, those in a similar condition would be urgent to obtain the same cure. This would raise the cry that the people would be contaminated by contact with the loathsome disease of leprosy. His enemies would seize such an opportunity to accuse and condemn him. {3Red 51.1}

Jesus knew that many of the lepers who would seek him did not deserve the blessing of health, nor would they use it to the honor and glory of God should they obtain it. They had no real faith nor principle, but only a strong desire to be delivered from the certain doom that awaited them. The Saviour also knew that his enemies were ever seeking to limit his work and turn the people from him. If they could use the case of the cleansed leper for that purpose they would

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do so. But in directing the healed man to present his offering to the priest, as enjoined by the law of Moses, he would convince them that he was not opposed to the Jewish code, if their minds were open to conviction. {3Red 51.2}

The Loaves and Fishes.

Jesus, to obtain a little season of repose, and for the benefit of his disciples, proposed that they should go with him into a desert place and rest awhile. There were suitable places for such retirement beyond the sea from Capernaum, and they entered a boat to make their way thither. But some who were searching for Jesus saw him depart from the shore, and the anxious people gathered together watching the slowly receding boat. The news spread from city to city that Jesus was crossing the sea; and

many who were eager to see and hear him flocked to the place where it was thought that his boat would land, while others followed him over the water in boats. So when Jesus and his disciples landed they found themselves in the midst of a multitude of people, pressing forward on all sides to meet them. {3Red 52.1}

Hundreds of the sick and maimed had been brought for Jesus to relieve, and were disposed upon the ground in positions favorable to arrest his attention. The crowd had awaited his coming with intense anxiety, and their numbers were continually increasing. The Saviour could not here find the rest he sought, for the waiting company commanded his attention; their needs enlisted his immediate sympathy and aid. He could not steal away with his disciples to secure the

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coveted retirement, and disappoint this expectant people. All maladies were represented among the sick who claimed his notice. Some were burning with fever and unconscious of the anxious friends that ministered to them. There were the deaf, the blind, the palsied, the lame, and lunatic. In looking upon this wretched throng the heart of Jesus melted with compassion. {3Red 52.2}

He was so pressed upon by the multitude that he went a little apart upon a grassy eminence, where he could be seen and heard by all the people. Here he taught them through the entire day, and healed all the sick and afflicted that were brought to him. Those who had been confused in their belief, and longed for some intelligent doctrine to relieve their uncertainty, found their darkness dispelled by the beams of righteousness from the presence of Christ, and were charmed with the simplicity of the truths he taught. {3Red 53.1}

His discourse was often interrupted by the delirious ravings of some fever-stricken sufferer, or the piercing shriek of the insane, whose friends were trying to press through the crowd and bear the afflicted to the Healer. The voice of wisdom was also often lost in shouts of triumph as the victims of hopeless disease were instantly restored to health and strength. The great Physician patiently submitted to these interruptions, and spoke calmly and kindly to all. He came from the other side of the sea because he was weary, but lo, he found more pressing cases for his attention than at the place from which he had secretly departed. {3Red 53.2}

At length the day was spent, the sun was sinking

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out of sight in the west, and yet the people lingered. Many had come miles to hear the words of Jesus and had eaten nothing all day. The Master had labored through all that time without food or repose, and the disciples, seeing him pale with weariness and hunger, besought him to rest from his toil and take some refreshment Their entreaties being of no avail, they consulted together as to the propriety of forcibly removing him from the eager multitude, fearing that he would die of fatigue. Peter and John each took an arm of their blessed Master and kindly endeavored to draw him away. But he refused to be removed from the place. His work was imperative; every applicant for his mercy felt his own case to be the most urgent. The crowd press about the Saviour; they sway him hither and thither. In their efforts to more nearly approach him, they trample upon each other. {3Red 53.3}

Jesus, perceiving all this, beckons to Peter, who is in his boat on the sea, to come nigh. The disciple obeys the signal, and comes to shore. Jesus presses through the throng, and steps into the boat, bidding Peter to thrust out a little from the land. He now sits in the rocking boat of the fisherman, and, in full sight and hearing of the crowd, finishes the long and toilsome day by speaking precious truths to them. The Son of God, leaving the royal courts of Heaven, takes not his position upon David's throne; but from the swaying seat of a fisherman's boat, speaks the words of eternal wisdom which are to be immortalized in the minds of his disciples and given to the world as the legacy of God. {3Red 54.1}

As the sun was setting, Jesus saw before him

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five thousand people besides women and children, who had been all day without food. He inquired of Philip concerning the probability of obtaining bread for so large a number, that they might not return to their homes unrefreshed nor faint by the way. This he did to test the faith of his disciples, for he himself was at no loss how to provide food. He who would not work a miracle to satisfy his own hunger in the wilderness, would not allow the multitude to suffer for lack of food. Philip looked over the sea of heads and thought how impossible it would be to obtain sufficient food to satisfy the wants of such a crowd. He answered that two hundred pennyworth of bread would not be nearly enough to divide among them so that each one might have a little. Jesus inquired how much food could be found among the company. He was told that Andrew had discovered a lad who had with him five barley loaves, and two small fishes. But this was nothing among so many, and they were in a desert place, where no more could be obtained. {3Red 54.2}

Jesus commanded that this meager store should be brought to him. This being done, he directed his disciples to seat the people upon the grass in parties of fifty, and one hundred, to preserve order, and that all might witness the miracle he was about to do. This marshaling of five thousand people into companies, was at length satisfactorily accomplished, and they were all seated in the presence of the Saviour. He then took the loaves and fishes, and, having given thanks, distributed them to the disciples and to the multitudes, in quantities sufficient to satisfy their appetites. {3Red 55.1}

The people had arranged themselves in the

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required order wondering what was to be done, but their amazement knew no bounds when the problem was solved, and they beheld food portioned out to that vast assembly from the slender store scarcely sufficient for a score of persons. The food did not diminish, as Jesus handed it to his disciples, who in their turn served the people. As often as they returned to him for a fresh supply, it was furnished them. After all had been satisfied, he directed the disciples to gather up the fragments that nothing might be lost; and the broken fragments filled twelve baskets. {3Red 55.2}

During this remarkable feast, there was much earnest reflection among those who were so miraculously served. They had followed Jesus to listen to words such as had never before fallen upon their ears. His teachings had sunk into their hearts. He had healed their sick, had comforted their sorrow, and, at last, rather than send them away

hungering, he had fed them bounteously. His pure and simple doctrine laid hold of their minds, and his tender benevolence won their hearts. While eating the food he had provided for them, they decided that this was indeed the Messiah. No other one could do so mighty a miracle. No human power could create from five barley-loaves and two small fishes, food sufficient to feed thousands of hungry people. His teachings and work of healing had already nearly convinced them of his divinity, and this miracle crowned their growing conviction with entire belief. {3Red 56.1}

They decided that this was the Prince of Life, the promised Deliverer of the Jews. They perceive that he makes no effort to win the applause of the people. In this he is essentially different

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from the chief priests and rulers, who are ambitious for titles and the honor of men. They fear that he will never claim his right as King of Israel and take his place on David's throne in Jerusalem. But they decide that what he will not assume for himself, they will claim for him. They need no greater evidence of his divine power nor will they wait for any further proof. They quietly consult among themselves, and arrange to take him by force, and bear him upon their shoulders, proclaiming him the King of Israel. The disciples unite with the people in declaring that the throne of David is the rightful inheritance of their Master. Let the arrogant priests and rulers be humbled, and compelled to yield honor to Him who comes clothed with the authority of God. They begin to devise means to accomplish their purpose; but Jesus discerns their plans, which, if followed out, would defeat the very work he designs to do, and put a period to his instruction and deeds of mercy and benevolence. {3Red 56.2}

Already the priests and rulers look upon him as one who has turned the hearts of the people from them to himself. Already they so dread his growing influence among them that they seek to take his life. He knows that violence and insurrection would be the result of his exaltation as Israel's king. He did not come into the world to set up a temporal kingdom; his kingdom, as he had stated, was not of this world. The multitude do not perceive the dangers arising from the movement they contemplate; but the calm eye of divine wisdom discovers all the hidden evils. Jesus sees that it is time to change the current of feeling among the people. He calls his disciples to him and directs them to immediately

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take the boat and return to Capernaum, leaving him to dismiss the people. He promises to meet them that night or on the following morning. The disciples are loth to submit to this arrangement. They are ambitious that Jesus should receive his true merits, and be lifted above the persecutions of the priests and rulers. The favored moment seems to have arrived, when, by the unanimous voice of the people, Christ can be elevated to his true dignity. {3Red 57.1}

They cannot feel reconciled that all this enthusiasm shall come to naught. The people were assembling from all quarters to celebrate the passover at Jerusalem. They were all anxious to see the great Prophet whose fame had spread through all the land. This, to the faithful followers of Jesus, seemed the golden opportunity to establish their beloved Master as Israel's king. It seemed, in the glow of this new ambition, a very hard

thing for them to go away by themselves and leave their Master alone upon the desolate shore, surrounded by high and barren mountains. {3Red 58.1}

They remonstrate against this arrangement: but Jesus is firm in his decision, and commands them to follow his directions with an authority that he had never before assumed toward them. They obey in silence. Jesus then turns to the multitude, and perceives that they are thoroughly decided to force him into becoming their king. Their movements must be checked at once. The disciples had already departed, and he now, standing before them with a grand dignity, dismisses them in so firm and decisive a manner that they dare not disobey his commands. The words of praise and exaltation die upon their

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lips. Their steps are stayed as they are in the very act of advancing to seize him, and the glad and eager looks fade from their countenances. There were men of strong minds and firm determination in that throng, but the kingly bearing of Jesus, and his few quiet words of authority, quelled the tumult in a moment and frustrated all their designs. Like meek, submissive children, they obey the command of their Lord, submitting humbly, and without question, to a power that they recognize as above all earthly authority. {3Red 58.2}

Jesus looked upon the retreating multitude with yearning compassion. He felt that they were as scattered sheep without a shepherd. The priests, who should have been teachers in Israel, were but machines for performing unmeaning ceremonies and repeating the law they did not themselves understand nor practice. When he was left alone he went up into the mountain, and, for many hours, bent in supplication before the Father with bitter agony and tears. Not for himself were those earnest prayers, but for man, depraved and lost but for redeeming grace. It was for man that the Son of God wrestled with his Father, asking that the poor sinful creature might turn from his guilt to the light of salvation. {3Red 59.1}

The Saviour knew that his days of personal effort for men upon earth were numbered. He who read the hearts of men knew that comparatively few would accept him as their Redeemer, acknowledging themselves lost without his divine aid. The Jews were rejecting the very help that God had sent to save them from utter ruin. They were fastening the chains that bound them

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in hopeless night. They were bringing upon themselves the certain wrath of God for their blind and obstinate wickedness. Hence the grief of Jesus, and his tears and strong cries for his mistaken people, who spurned his love that would shelter them, and his mercy that would save them from the retribution of their sins. Deep emotion shakes that noble form as he keenly realizes the doom of the people he has come to save. In every trial and emergency, Jesus went to his Heavenly Father for help, and, in those secret interviews, received strength for the work that lay before him. Christians should follow the example of their Saviour, and seek in prayer the strength that will enable them to endure the trials and duties of life. Prayer is the Christian's defense, the safeguard of his integrity and virtue. {3Red 59.2}

Walking on the Water.

Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble. A storm had arisen, and the sea was lashed into fury. Hour after hour they labored at the oars, being driven hither and thither by the resistless force of the waves. All night they were tossed upon the raging billows, feeling liable at any moment to be engulfed beneath them. It was but a few hours' work, in ordinary weather, to reach the opposite shore from the place they had left; but their frail bark was driven farther and farther from the port they sought, the plaything of the angry tempest. They had left Jesus with dissatisfied hearts. They had set out, murmuring among themselves because their wishes had not been gratified in the matter of exalting their

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Lord to be the King of Israel. They had blamed themselves for being so easily turned from their purpose, and yielding so readily to the commands of Jesus. They reasoned that if they had remained and persisted in their intention, they might have finally gained the point. {3Red 60.1}

When the storm arose they still more deeply regretted having left Jesus. Had they remained this peril would have been avoided. This was a severe trial of their faith. In the darkness and tempest they sought to gain the point where he had promised to meet them, but the driving wind forced them from their course and made all their efforts futile. They were strong men and accustomed to the water, but now their hearts failed them with terror; they longed for the calm commanding presence of the Master, and felt that were he with them they would be secure. But Jesus had not forgotten his disciples. From the distant shore, his eye pierced the darkness, saw their danger, and read their thoughts. He would not suffer one of them to perish. As a fond mother watches the child she has in kindness corrected, so the compassionate Master watched his disciples; and when their hearts were subdued, their unholy ambition quelled, and they humbly prayed for help, it was given them. At the very moment they believed themselves lost, a flash of lightning revealed the figure of a man walking toward them upon the water. An unspeakable terror seized them. The hands that had grasped the oars with muscle like iron, relaxed their hold, and fell powerless by their sides. The boat rocked at the will of the waves, while their eyes were riveted upon this vision of

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a man stepping firmly upon the white-capped billows. {3Red 61.1}

They thought it must be a spirit, which omened their immediate destruction. Jesus calmly advanced as though he would pass them, but they recognize his form, and feel that he will not leave them in their distress. They cry out, supplicating his help! The figure turns! It is their beloved Master, whose well-known voice speaks, silencing their fear, "Be of good cheer. It is I, be not afraid." Were ever words so welcome, so reassuring as these! The disciples are speechless with joy. Their apprehensions are gone. The storm is forgotten. They hail Jesus as their Deliverer! {3Red 62.1}

Ardent Peter is nearly beside himself with delight. He sees his Master boldly treading the foam-wreathed waves, coming to save his followers, and he loves his Lord as never before. He yearns to embrace and worship him. He longs to meet him and walk by his

side upon the stormy water. He cries, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." Jesus granted his request; but Peter had taken only a step upon the surface of the boiling deep, when he looked back proudly toward his companions to see if they were watching his movements, and admiring the ease with which he trod upon the yielding water. {3Red 62.2}

In taking his eyes from Jesus, they fell upon the boisterous waves that seemed greedily threatening to swallow him; their roaring filled his ears, his head swam, his heart failed him with fear. As he is sinking, he recovers presence of mind sufficient to remember that there is One near who can rescue him. He stretches out his arms

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toward Jesus, crying, "Lord, save me, or I perish!" The pitying Saviour grasps the trembling hands that are reached toward him, and lifts the sinking form beside his own. Never does that kindly face and that arm of strength turn from the supplicating hands that are stretched out for mercy. Peter clings to his Lord with humble trust, while Jesus mildly reproaches him: "O thou of little faith: wherefore didst thou doubt?" {3Red 62.3}

The trembling disciple now clings firmly to the hand of the Master till they are both safely seated in the boat among their joyful companions. But Peter was subdued and silent; he had no reason to boast over his fellows, for he had very nearly lost his life through exaltation and unbelief. When he took his eyes from Jesus in order to note the admiration of others, he lost guidance, and doubt and fear seized upon him. So it is in the Christian life; nothing but an eye firmly fixed upon the Saviour will enable us to tread the stormy billows of the world. Immediately upon Jesus taking his place in the boat they were at the land. The tempest had ceased, and the night of horror was succeeded by the light of dawn. The disciples, and others who were also on board, bowed at the feet of Jesus with thankful hearts, saying, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God!" {3Red 63.1}

The multitude that had been fed the preceding day had left Jesus on the barren shore, and they knew that there was no boat left by which he could depart. They therefore on the following morning returned to the spot where they had last seen him watching their departure with compassionate eyes. The news of his wonderful miracle of feeding the multitude had spread far and

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near, and at an early hour they began to arrive, by land and water, in large numbers. But they searched in vain for the great Teacher, and finally returned to Capernaum, still seeking him. {3Red 63.2}

Meanwhile, the Master, with his disciples, had found the seclusion they sought the previous day. Jesus felt that it was necessary to give his disciples some special instruction, but he was followed so closely by the crowds that it was extremely difficult to secure such seasons of retirement. He could not obtain the time for prayer in the day-time, but frequently devoted the entire night to communion with his Heavenly Father, wrestling in supplication for the erring children of men. The Saviour, oppressed by the unbelief of humanity, bearing the burden of the world's iniquity, was indeed a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. {3Red 64.1}

Jesus made use of the few hours of seclusion with his disciples in praying with them,

and teaching them more definitely concerning the nature of his kingdom. He saw that, in their human weakness, they were inclined to desire that his reign should be a temporal one. Their earthly ambition had caused them to become confused as to the real mission of Christ. He now reproved them for their misconception, and taught them that instead of worldly honor it was shame that awaited him, and instead of a throne, the pitiless cross. He taught them that for his sake, and to win salvation, they must also be willing to endure reproach and contumely. {3Red 64.2}

The time drew near when Jesus was to die, and leave his disciples to face the cold and cruel world alone. He knew how bitter hate and unbelief would persecute them, and he wished to

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encourage and strengthen them for their trials. He accordingly went away by himself and prayed for them, interceding with the Father, that in the time of that fearful test which awaited them, their faith would prove steadfast, and his sufferings and death might not utterly overwhelm them with despair. What tender love was this, that, in view of his own approaching agony, reached forward to shield his companions from danger! {3Red 64.3}

When he again joined his disciples, he asked them: "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Questioning still closer, he inquired, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter, ever ready to speak, answered for himself and his brethren: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven." {3Red 65.1}

Notwithstanding the faith of many had utterly failed, and the power of the priests and rulers was mighty against them, the brave disciple thus boldly declared his belief. Jesus saw, in this acknowledgment, the living principle that would animate the hearts of his believers in coming ages. It is the mysterious working of God's Spirit upon the human heart, that elevates the humblest mind to a knowledge above all earthly wisdom, an acquaintance with the sacred truths of God. Ah, indeed, "blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee." {3Red 65.2}

Jesus continued: "And I say also unto thee,

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That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The word Peter signifies rolling stone. Christ did not refer to Peter as being the rock upon which he would found his church. His expression, "this rock," applied to *himself* as the foundation of the Christian church. In Isaiah 28:16, the same reference is made: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." It is the same stone to which reference is made in Luke 20:17, 18: "And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Also in Mark 12:10, 11: "And have ye not read this scripture, The stone which the builders rejected is become the

head of the corner. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" {3Red 65.3}

These texts prove conclusively that Christ is the rock upon which the church is built, and, in his address to Peter, he referred to himself as the rock which is the foundation of the church. He continues:-- {3Red 66.1}

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." The Roman church makes a wrong application of these words of Christ. They claim that he addressed them specially to Peter. Hence he is represented in works of art

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as carrying a bunch of keys, which is a symbol of trust and authority given to ambassadors and others in high positions. The words of Christ: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven," were not addressed to Peter alone, but to the disciples, including those who compose the Christian church in all ages. Peter was given no preference nor power above that of the other disciples. Had Jesus delegated any special authority to one of them, we would not find them so frequently contending among themselves as to who should be greatest. They would have at once submitted to the wish of their Master, and paid honor to the one whom he had selected as their head. {3Red 66.2}

But the Roman Catholic church claims that Christ invested Peter with supreme power over the Christian church, and that his successors are divinely authorized to rule the Christian world. In still another place Jesus acknowledges the same power to exist in all the church that is claimed to have been given to Peter alone, upon the authority of the text previously quoted: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." {3Red 67.1}

The Paralytic.

Again the mission of Christ brought him to Capernaum. When the news spread abroad that Jesus was a guest at the house of Peter, men, women, and children flocked from every direction to hear the wonderful Teacher. There was a man in the vicinity who was reduced to utter helplessness

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by the incurable disease of palsy. He had given up all hope of recovery. But his friends and relatives had heard the gracious instruction of Jesus; they had witnessed his wonderful miracles; they saw that he turned none away, that even the loathsome lepers found access to his presence, and were healed, and they began to hope that the paralytic might be relieved if he could be brought under the notice of Jesus. {3Red 67.2}

They tried to encourage the sufferer, telling him of the miraculous power of Jesus to cure every malady, of the words of mercy he had spoken to the despairing, and of those who are set free from the power of Satan by a word of his sublime authority. As the palsied man listened to the good tidings, hope revived in his heart that he might be

relieved of his terrible infirmity. He longed to see Jesus and place himself in his hands. But when he reflected that dissipation had been the main cause of his affliction, hope sank; for he feared that he would not be tolerated in the presence of the pure Physician. He had loved the pleasures of sin, his life had been a transgression of the law of God, and his bodily affliction was the penalty of his crime. {3Red 68.1}

He had long before placed his case in the hands of the Pharisees and doctors, entreating their interest and sympathy, hoping that they would do something to relieve his tortured mind and physical sufferings. But they had looked coldly upon him and pronounced him incurable. They had added to his woe by telling him that he was only suffering the righteous retribution of God for his misdemeanors. It was the custom of the Pharisees to hold themselves aloof from the

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sick and needy. They held that sickness and distress were always an evidence of God's anger toward the transgressor. Yet frequently these very men, who exalted themselves as holy and enjoying the peculiar favor of God, were more corrupt in heart and life than the poor sufferers whom they condemned. {3Red 68.2}

The palsied man had sunk into despair seeing no help from any quarter, till news of the miracles of mercy performed by Jesus had aroused hope again in his breast. Yet he feared that he might not be allowed in his presence; he felt that if Jesus would only see him and give him relief of mind by pardoning his sins, he would be content to live or die according to his righteous will. His friends assured him that Jesus had healed others who were in every respect as sinful and helpless as himself, and this encouraged him to believe that his own petition would be granted. {3Red 69.1}

He felt that there was no time to lose; already his wasted flesh was beginning to decay. If anything could be done to arrest mortality, it must be done at once. The despairing cry of the dying man was, Oh that I might come into his presence! His friends were anxious to assist him in gratifying his wish, and several projects were suggested to bring about this result, but none of them seemed feasible. The sick man, although racked with bodily pain, preserved the full strength of his intellect, and he now proposed that his friends should carry him on his bed to Jesus. This they cheerfully undertook to do. {3Red 69.2}

As they approached the dense crowd that had assembled in and about the house where Jesus was teaching, it seemed doubtful that they could

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accomplish their purpose. However, they pressed on with their burden, till their passage was completely blocked up and they were obliged to stop before they arrived within hearing of the Saviour's voice. Jesus was within, and, as was customary, his disciples sat near him; for it was most important that they should hear his words, and understand the truths which they were to proclaim by word or pen over all lands and through all ages. {3Red 69.3}

The haughty Pharisees, the doctors and the scribes, were also gathered near with wicked purposes in their hearts, and a desire to confuse and confound the sacred Teacher, that they might accuse him of being an impostor, and condemn him to death. Jealous of his power and wisdom, they concealed their intense hatred, for the purpose

of closely watching his words, and calling him out upon various subjects with the hope of surprising him into some contradiction or forbidden heresy that would give them an excuse to prefer charges against him. They were present when Jesus healed the withered hand upon the Sabbath day, and these men, who claimed to enjoy the special favor of God, were filled with madness because he had presumed to do this good work upon the Lord's day. {3Red 70.1}

Outside of these magnates thronged the promiscuous multitude, drawn there from various motives. Some felt an irresistible impulse to hear the words of Jesus, yet dimly comprehended their import. They were eager to catch every syllable of the sacred utterances; and, in many cases, seeds of life lodged in their hearts, to spring up afterward and bear blessed fruit. Others came from wonder and curiosity, or a love

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of excitement,--the desire to see and hear some new thing. All grades of society were represented there, and many different nationalities. {3Red 70.2}

Through this surging crowd, the bearers of the paralytic seek to push their way; but the attempt is useless. They urge the necessity of their case, in order to prevail upon the people to fall back, but it is of no avail. The sufferings of the invalid are increased by his anxiety, and his friends fear that he will die in this scene of confusion. The sick man gazes about him with inexpressible anguish. Must he relinquish all hope when the longed-for help is so near? He feels that he cannot endure so bitter a disappointment. He suggests that they bear him to the rear of the house, and break through the roof and let him down into the immediate presence of Jesus. {3Red 71.1}

Seeing that it is his only chance of life, and fearing that he cannot live to be taken home, his friends follow his suggestion. The roof is opened, and the sick man is let down at the very feet of Christ. The discourse is interrupted; the Saviour looks upon that mournful countenance, and sees the pleading eyes fixed upon him with a silent entreaty. He understands the case, for it was he who had led the perplexed and doubting spirit to himself. He had come to the world to give hope to the guilty and wretched. John had pointed to him as "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." The divine spirit of Jesus stirred the heart of this poor sinner, and while he was yet at home, had brought conviction to his conscience. He had watched the first glimmer of faith deepen into a belief that Jesus was his only helper, and had seen it grow

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stronger with every effort to come into his presence. {3Red 71.2}

The sufferer had wealth, but it could not relieve his soul of guilt, nor remove disease from his body. But divine power attracted him to the Friend of sinners, who alone could relieve him. Jesus acknowledges the faith that is evidenced by the sick man's efforts, under such perplexing difficulties, to reach the presence of his Lord, and lifting up his voice in melodious tones, addressed him; "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." The burden of darkness and despair rolls from the sick man's soul; the peace of perfect love and forgiveness rests upon his spirit and shines out upon his countenance. His physical pain is gone, and his whole being is transformed before the eyes of the astonished multitude. The helpless paralytic is healed, the guilty sinner is pardoned! He

has now received the evidence he so much desired. Yet not here, but at home, when he had repented of his sins and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, had the life-giving mercies of the Saviour first blessed his longing heart. {3Red 72.1}

The simple faith of the paralytic accepted the words of the Master as the boon of new life. He preferred no further request, he made no noisy demonstration, but remained in blissful silence too happy for words. The light of Heaven irradiated his countenance, and the people looked with awe upon the scene before them. Christ stood with a serene majesty that lifted him above the dignitaries of the synagogue and the doctors of the law. The Pharisees, the scribes, and the doctors had waited anxiously to see what disposition Jesus would make of this case. They

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recollected that the sufferer had appealed to them for help, and that they had entrenched themselves in the sanctity of their office and refused him one ray of encouragement. They had even expressed annoyance at being troubled with so disagreeable a matter. They had looked with horror upon his shriveled form, and said, We cannot raise one from the dead; dissolution has already commenced. {3Red 72.2}

Not satisfied with the agony thus inflicted, they had declared that he was suffering the curse of God for his sins. All these things came fresh to their minds when they saw the sick man before them. They also perceived that the people, most of whom were acquainted with these facts, were watching the scene with intense interest and awe. They felt a terrible fear that their own influence would be lost, not only over the multitude present, but also over all who should hear the news of this marvelous event. {3Red 73.1}

These lofty men did not exchange words together, but looking into one another's faces, they read the same thought expressed upon every countenance: Something must be done to arrest the tide of popular sentiment. Jesus had declared that the sins of the paralytic were forgiven. The Pharisees caught at these words as an assumption of infinite power, a blasphemy against God, and conceived that they could present this before the people as a crime worthy of death. They did not express their thoughts, but these worshippers of forms and symbols were saying in their minds, He is a blasphemer! Who can forgive sins but God alone? They were laying hold of the Saviour's words of divine pardon, to use as a means by which to accuse him. But

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Jesus read their thoughts, and fixing his reproving glance upon them, beneath which they cowered and drew back, addressed them thus: "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." {3Red 73.2}

Then he who had been borne to Jesus on a litter, and whose limbs were then useless, rises to his feet with the elasticity and strength of youth. The life-giving blood bounds through his veins, seeking its natural channels with unerring precision. The lagging human machinery springs into sudden activity, the animating glow of health succeeds the pallor of approaching death. "And immediately he arose, took up the bed,

and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion." {3Red 74.1}

Oh! wondrous love of Christ, stooping to heal the guilty and the afflicted! Divinity sorrowing over and soothing the ills of suffering humanity! Oh! marvelous power thus displayed to the children of men! Who can doubt the message of salvation! Who can slight the mercies of a compassionate Redeemer! {3Red 74.2}

The effect of this wonderful miracle upon the people was as if Heaven had opened and revealed the glories of the better world. As the man who had been cured of palsy passed through the crowd, blessing God at every bounding step, and bearing his burden as if it were a feather's weight, the

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people fell back to give him room, and with awestruck faces, gazed upon him, and whispered softly among themselves, saying, "We have seen strange things today." The Pharisees were dumb with amazement, and overwhelmed with defeat. They saw that here was no opportunity for their prejudice and jealousy to inflame the multitude. The wonderful work wrought upon the man whom they, in their arrogance, had given over to death and the wrath of God, had so impressed the minds of the people that the influence of these leading Jews was, for the time, forgotten. They saw that Christ possessed a power, and claimed it as his own prerogative, which they thought belonged to God alone. The gentle dignity of his manner, united with his miraculous works, was in such marked contrast with their own proud and self-righteous bearing that they were disconcerted and abashed, recognizing but not confessing the presence of a superior being. {3Red 74.3}

Had the scribes and Pharisees been honest before God, they would have yielded to the conclusive evidence they had witnessed that Jesus was the Promised One of Israel. But they were determined that nothing should convince them of this fact. They were in haughty and determined opposition to this meek and humble Teacher, who came from the workshops of Nazareth, yet by his wonderful works threatened to annihilate their dignity and station. So they yielded in no degree their hatred and malice, but went away to invent new schemes for condemning and silencing the Son of God. {3Red 75.1}

These men had received many and repeated proofs that Jesus was the promised Saviour, but none had been so convincing and unquestioned

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as this miracle of mercy. Yet the stronger the evidence that was presented to their minds that Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins, as well as to heal the sick, the more they armed themselves with hatred and unbelief, till God left them to the forging of chains that would bind them in hopeless darkness. There was no reserve power to reach hearts so hardened with malice and skepticism. {3Red 75.2}

Many in these days are taking the same course as the unbelieving Jews. God has given them light which they refuse to accept. His Spirit has rebuked them; but they have made his reproofs a stumbling-block in their way, over which they trip and fall. They have rejected his offered mercies, they have scorned to believe his truth, till they are left unrestrained to pursue their downward course. {3Red 76.1}

There was great rejoicing in the home of the healed paralytic, when he came into the

midst of his family, carrying with ease the couch upon which he had been slowly borne from their presence but a short time before. They gathered round with tears of joy, scarcely daring to believe their eyes. He stood before them in the full vigor of manhood. Those arms that they had seen lifeless were quick to obey his will; the flesh that had been shrunken and leaden-hued was now fresh and ruddy with health; he walked with a firm, free step; hope was written in every lineament of his countenance; all gloom had disappeared, and an expression of peace and purity had taken the place of the marks of sin and suffering. Glad thanksgivings went up from that house, and God was glorified through his Son, who had restored hope to the hopeless, and

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strength to the stricken one. This man and his family were ready to lay down their lives for Jesus. No doubt could dim their faith, no unbelief could mar their perfect fealty to Christ, who had brought light into their darkened home. {3Red 76.2}

Woman of Canaan.

Jesus now left the vicinity of Jerusalem and went to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. Here a woman who was a Canaanite met and besought him to heal her daughter, who was grievously vexed with a devil. The woman well knew that the Jews had no dealings with the Canaanites and that they refused even to speak to them; but having heard of the miracles of mercy which Jesus had performed, she resolved to appeal to him to relieve her daughter from the terrible affliction that was upon her. The poor woman realized that her only hope was in Jesus, and she had perfect faith in his power to do that which she asked of him. {3Red 77.1}

But Jesus received the importunities of this representative of a despised race in the same manner as the Jews would have done; this was not only to prove the faith and sincerity of the woman, but also to teach his disciples a lesson of mercy, that they might not be at a loss how to act in similar cases after Jesus should leave them and they could no longer go to him for personal counsel. Jesus designed that they should be impressed with the contrast between the cold and heartless manner in which the Jews would treat such a case, as evinced by his reception of the woman, and the compassionate manner in which he would have them deal with such distress, as

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manifested by his subsequent granting of her petition in the healing of her daughter. {3Red 77.2}

Although Jesus was apparently indifferent to her cries, yet she did not become offended and leave him, but still had faith that he would relieve her distress. As he passed on, as if not hearing her, she followed him, continuing her supplications. The disciples were annoyed at her importunity and asked Jesus to send her away. Their sympathies were not aroused by her distress. They saw that their Master treated her with indifference, and they therefore supposed that the prejudice of the Jews against the Canaanites was pleasing to him. But it was a pitying Saviour to whom the woman made her plea, and, in answer to the request of the disciples to send her away, Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Although this answer

was in accordance with the prejudice of the Jews, it was an implied rebuke to the disciples, which they afterward understood as reminding them of what he had often told them: That he came to the world to save all who would accept him. Whoever sought the Saviour, ready to believe on him when he should be manifested to them, were of the lost sheep whom he had come to gather in his fold. {3Red 78.1}

The woman was encouraged that Jesus had noticed her case sufficiently to remark upon it, although his words conveyed no definite hope to her mind, and she now urged her case with increased earnestness, bowing at his feet and crying; "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Jesus, still apparently rejecting her entreaties, according to the unfeeling prejudice of

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the Jews, answered, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." This was virtually asserting that it was not just to lavish the blessings brought to the favored people of God upon strangers and aliens from Israel. This answer would have utterly discouraged a less earnest seeker. Many would have given up all further effort upon receiving such a repulse, and would have gone away feeling humiliated and abused, beyond all patience; but the woman meekly answered, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." {3Red 78.2}

From the abundance upon which the rightful family feasts, the crumbs fall to the floor and are devoured by the dogs that watch for them under the table. She acknowledged that she occupied a like position to that of the brutes that accept thankfully whatever falls from their master's hand. While favoring God's people with rich and bountiful gifts, would not Jesus bestow upon her one of the many blessings he gave so freely to others? While confessing that she had no claim upon his favor, she still plead for a crumb from his bounty. Such faith and perseverance were unexampled. Few of the favored people of God had so high an appreciation of the Redeemer's benevolence and power. {3Red 79.1}

Jesus had just departed from Jerusalem because the scribes and Pharisees were seeking to take his life; but here he meets one of an unfortunate and despised race, that had not been favored with the light of God's word; yet she yields at once to the divine influence of Christ, and has implicit faith in his ability to grant her the favor she asks. She has no national nor

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religious prejudice or pride to influence her course of action, and she unconditionally acknowledges Jesus as the Redeemer, and able to do all that she asks of him. The Saviour is satisfied, he has tested her confidence in him, and he now grants her request and finishes the lesson to his disciples. Turning to her with a countenance of pity and love, he says, "O woman, great is thy faith. Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." From that hour the daughter became whole, and the demon troubled her no more. The woman departed acknowledging her Saviour, and happy in the granting of her prayer. {3Red 79.2}

This was the only miracle that Jesus wrought while on this journey. It was for the performance of this very act that he went into the coast of Tyre and Sidon. He wished to relieve the afflicted woman, and at the same time to leave an example, in this work of

mercy toward one of a despised people, for the benefit of his disciples when he should be no longer with them. He wished to lead them from their Jewish exclusiveness to be interested in working for others besides their own people. This act of Christ opened their minds more fully to the labor that lay before them among the Gentiles. Afterward, when the Jews turned still more persistently from the disciples because they declared Jesus to be the Saviour of the world, and when the partition wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down by the death of Christ, this lesson, and similar ones which pointed to a gospel work unrestricted by custom or nationality, brought a powerful influence to bear upon the representatives of Christ in directing their labors.

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{3Red 80.1}

Christ Stills the Tempest.

Jesus had been teaching and healing uninterruptedly all day, and he greatly desired retirement and rest for himself and his disciples. He therefore instructed them to accompany him to the other side of the sea. But before he embarked he was accosted by a scribe who had listened to his words, representing the jewels of truth as being of far greater value than hidden treasure. In the grossness of his darkened mind, the scribe conceived that Jesus designed to enrich his followers with worldly treasure. He therefore eagerly addressed him, as had Judas, saying, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." The Saviour read the unworthy thought that actuated his heart, and answered him as he had answered Judas, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." This Jewish teacher had only his own selfish interest in view when he proposed to follow Jesus. He hoped that the Saviour would soon establish his kingdom on earth, and that the wealth and station which would then accrue to his disciples, were the riches of which Jesus had spoken. But only a mind blinded by avarice and the lust of the world could so have misinterpreted the words of the Saviour. {3Red 81.1}

If it were not for the poverty of Christ, and the fact that the poor and humble are ranked beneath his banner, many would connect themselves with him and glorify his name. If he had bestowed honors and riches upon those who became his disciples, how gladly would the proud

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Pharisees, the chief priests and scribes, have paid him homage. Many in these days would accept the truth if there was no self-denial connected with it. If they could have the world with Christ, they would enlist in his army. But to follow him in his humiliation, with no prospect of an earthly reward thereby, is more than their feeble faith can endure. They turn back crest-fallen, as did the scribe from the rebuke of Jesus. {3Red 81.2}

After dismissing the multitude, Jesus and his disciples took ship for the other side of the sea, which was a desert in comparison with the shore that they were leaving; but for this very reason they hoped to find rest from the fatigue of their labors, being removed from the dwellings of men. However, as they were moving off, a number of boats

loaded with people followed Jesus, desirous of learning more concerning the doctrine that he taught. {3Red 82.1}

The Saviour was wearied from his long and arduous labors, and being now for a time relieved from the claims of the multitude, he stretched himself upon the hard plank of the fishermen's boat and fell asleep. Soon after, the weather, which had been calm and pleasant, changed. The clouds gathered darkly over the sky, and a furious storm, such as frequently visited those parts, burst upon the sea. The sun had set, and the blackness of night settled down upon the water. The angry waves dashed against the ship, threatening every moment to engulf it. First tossed upon the crest of a mountain billow, and then as suddenly plunged into the trough of the sea, the ship was the plaything of the storm. Finally, it was discovered

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that it had sprung a leak and was fast filling with water. All was now hurry and confusion in the darkness and amid the roaring of the angry waves. The strong and courageous fishermen were skilled in managing their craft; but, experienced as they were to the changing moods of the sea, they knew not what to do in so terrible a gale, and their hearts filled with despair as they perceived that the boat was sinking. {3Red 82.2}

They had been so engaged in their efforts to save themselves and keep the ship afloat, that they had forgotten that Jesus was on board. But now, as their courage fails them, and they think themselves lost, they remember that it was he who commanded them to cross the sea. In their agony of fear they turn to him, remembering how he had once saved them in a like peril. They call, "Master! Master!" but the roaring of the tempest drowns their voices, and there is no reply. The waves break over them, and each one threatens them with destruction. {3Red 83.1}

Despair seizes them, and they call again; but there is no answer save the shrieking of the angry blast. Has the Master deserted them? Has he walked away upon the foam-capped billows and left them to their fate? They remembered that he had once walked upon the water to come and rescue them from death. Has he now given them up to the fury of the tempest? They search for him distractedly, for they can do no more to save themselves. The storm has so increased that all their efforts to manage the ship are vain; in Jesus is their only hope. Presently a flash of lightning reveals him fast asleep, undisturbed amid the noise and confusion. {3Red 83.2}

They rush to him, and bending over his prostrate

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form, cry out reproachfully, "Master, Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Their hearts are grieved that he should rest so peacefully, while danger and death threaten them, and they have been laboring so hard against the fury of the storm. This despairing cry arouses Jesus from his refreshing sleep. As the disciples rush back to their oars, to make a last effort, Jesus rises to his feet. In his divine majesty he stands in the humble vessel of the fishermen, amid the raging of the tempest, the waves breaking over the bows, and the vivid lightning playing about his calm and fearless countenance. He lifts his hand, so often employed in deeds of mercy, and says to the angry sea, "Peace, be still." The storm ceases, the heaving billows sink to rest. The clouds roll away, and the stars shine forth; the boat sits motionless upon a quiet sea.

Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus rebukes them, saying, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" {3Red 83.3}

A sudden hush crept over the disciples. Not a word was spoken; even impulsive Peter did not attempt to express the reverential awe that filled his heart. The boats that had set out to accompany Jesus had been in the same peril with that of the disciples. Fear and finally despair had seized their occupants; but the command of Jesus brought quiet where but a moment before all was tumult. All fear was allayed, for the danger was over. The fury of the storm had driven the boats into close proximity, and all on board beheld the miracle of Jesus. In the hush that followed the stilling of the tempest, they whispered among themselves, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the

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sea obey him?" Never was this impressive scene forgotten by those who witnessed it. Never will its wonderful majesty fail to inspire the children of God with reverence and awe. {3Red 84.1}

When he was rudely aroused by the terrified fishermen, the Saviour had no fears for himself; his anxiety was for his disciples, who had distrusted him in the time of danger. He reproved their fears, which manifested their unbelief. They should have called upon him at the first appearance of danger, and he would have relieved their anxiety. But in their effort to save themselves they forgot that Jesus was on board. How many, in the trying scenes of life, amid perplexities and danger, fight against the storms of adversity alone, forgetting that there is One who can help them. They trust in their own strength and skill, till, baffled and discouraged, they remember Jesus, and humbly call upon him to save them. Though he sorrowfully reproves their unbelief and self-confidence, he never fails to hear their earnest cry, and give them the help they need. {3Red 85.1}

Tossed on the raging billows of the deep, the weary voyager should remember that Jesus was on the sea in a time of like peril; that his voice commanded the terrible storm to cease; that the angry elements obeyed the mandate, and his faithful followers were saved. When the waves break over our sinking bark, and the lightning reveals the foam-capped breakers that threaten us with instant destruction, we may remember in our peril that Jesus is on board. He hears our agonizing cry, and he will never forsake those who put their trust in him. {3Red 85.2}

Whether on the land or on the sea, sleeping or

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waking, if we have the Saviour in our hearts there is no need of fear. The call of faith will always meet with a response. We may be rebuked because we have not sought him at the very beginning of trial, but nevertheless, he will accept our humble petitions, wearied as we are in our efforts to save ourselves. Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life, and will deliver us from danger in the way that he knows to be the best. {3Red 85.3}

Men from the Tombs.

The night upon the water was over, and in the early morning Jesus and the disciples

landed, together with those who had followed them across the sea. But no sooner had they stepped upon the beach than two men possessed with devils rushed fiercely toward them as though they desired to tear them in pieces. Still clinging to them were parts of chains which they had broken, in escaping from confinement. They were cutting and bruising themselves with sharp stones and other missiles that they could lay their hands upon. They had been dwelling among the graves, and no traveler had been safe to pass that way; for they would rush upon him with the fury of demons and kill him if they could. Their faces glared out from their long and matted hair, and they looked more like wild beasts than men. {3Red 86.1}

When the disciples and the others saw these fearful creatures rushing toward them, they fled in terror. But presently they discovered that Jesus was not with them, and they turned to see what had been his fate. They beheld him standing

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calmly where they had left him. He who stilled the tempest, he who had met Satan before and conquered him, did not flee before these demons. When the men, gnashing their teeth, and foaming at the mouth, approached him within a few feet Jesus raised that hand which had beckoned the waves to rest, and the men could come no nearer. They stood raging but helpless before him. {3Red 86.2}

In accents of authority he bade the unclean spirits come out of them. The words of Jesus penetrated the darkened minds of the men enough for them to dimly realize that One was near who could save them from the demons that tormented them. They fell at the feet of Jesus, worshiping him. But when they opened their mouths to entreat his mercy, the demon spoke through them and cried vehemently, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God, I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not!" {3Red 87.1}

Jesus asked, "What is thy name?" and the answer was, "My name is Legion; for we are many." Using the afflicted men as mediums of communication between themselves and Jesus, they besought him not to send them away out of the country, but to let them enter into a herd of swine that was feeding near. Their request was granted; but no sooner did this occur than the swine rushed headlong down a steep precipice, and were drowned in the sea. Light dawned upon the minds of the restored lunatics. Their eyes beamed with an intelligence to which they had long been strangers. The countenances, so long deformed into the image of Satan, became suddenly mild, the blood-stained hands were

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quiet, and the men praised the Lord for their deliverance from the bondage of demons. {3Red 87.2}

The design of Satan, in requesting that the demons might enter into the swine, was to hedge up the way of Jesus in that region. By causing the swine to be destroyed, considerable loss was brought upon their owners; and the enemy was not deceived in thinking that this circumstance would occasion Jesus to be held in disfavor throughout that country. The keepers of the swine had seen with amazement the whole transaction. They had seen the raving madmen suddenly become sane and calm; they had beheld the whole drove of swine instantly afterward charge recklessly into the sea

where they were immediately drowned. They were obliged to account to the owners for their loss; and they immediately hurried to publish the news to their employers, and to all the people. This destruction of property seemed, to the owners, of far greater magnitude than the joyful fact that two lunatics had been restored to reason, and no longer endangered the people who came in their way, nor needed the restrictions of bolts and chains. {3Red 88.1}

These selfish men cared not that these unfortunate beings were now liberated, and sat calmly and intelligently at the feet of Jesus, listening to his words of instruction, filled with gratitude and glorifying the name of Him who had made them whole. They only cared for the property they had lost, and they were fearful of still greater calamities following the presence of this stranger in their midst. A panic spread far and near; the citizens apprehended financial ruin. A crowd came to Jesus, deploring the recent loss of property and begging him to leave their vicinity. They

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looked with indifference upon the lunatics who had been healed, and were then conversing intelligently with Jesus. They knew them perfectly well, for they had long been the terror of the community. But the miraculous cure of these men seemed of lesser importance than their own selfish interests. They were thoroughly alarmed and displeased at their loss; and the prospect of Jesus remaining among them filled them with apprehension. They implored him to depart from their coast. The Saviour complied with their demands, and immediately took ship with his disciples and left them to their avarice and unbelief. {3Red 88.2}

The inhabitants had before them living evidences of the power and mercy of Him whom they drove from their midst. They saw that the lunatics had been restored to reason; but they were so fearful of incurring pecuniary loss that the Saviour, who had baffled the Prince of Darkness before their eyes, was treated as an unwelcome invader, and they turned the priceless Gift of Heaven from their doors, and blindly rejected his visit of mercy. We have not the opportunity of turning from the person of Christ, as did the Gadarenes; but there are many in these days who refuse to follow his teachings, because in so doing they must sacrifice some worldly interest. Many, in the various pursuits of life, turn Jesus from their hearts, fearful that his presence may cost them pecuniary loss. Like the selfish Gadarenes, they overlook his grace, and ruthlessly drive his Spirit from them. To such his words apply: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." {3Red 89.1}

Some may reason that the course pursued by Jesus in this matter prevented the people of that

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region from receiving his doctrine, that this startling exhibition of his power turned them away from his teachings, and cut them off from his influence. But such minds fail to penetrate the plans of the Saviour. At the time that the Gadarenes besought Jesus to leave their coast, there was also a petition offered by the restored lunatics. It was that they might accompany their Deliverer. In his presence they felt secure from the demons that had tormented their lives and wasted their manhood. They kept close to his side as he was about to enter the boat, knelt at his feet and implored him to take them with him

and teach them his truth. But Jesus directed them to go home to their friends, and tell them what great things the Lord had done for them. {3Red 89.2}

Here a work was given them to do,--to go to a heathen home, and impart to their friends the light that they had received from Jesus. They might have plead that it was a great trial to be separated from their Benefactor at this early stage of their experience, and that it was more congenial to their feelings to remain with him than to be exposed to the trials and difficulties that were sure to beset them in the course he directed them to pursue. They might also have plead that their long isolation from society disqualified them for the task he had given them. {3Red 90.1}

But instead of this, as soon as Jesus pointed out the path of duty, they prepared to follow it. Not only did they enlighten their own households and neighbors in regard to Jesus, but they proclaimed his power to save throughout the region of Decapolis, among the Gentiles, telling the wonderful work of Christ in casting out the demons. The people of that region had refused

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to receive the Saviour because he was the means of destroying their property, yet they were not left in utter darkness; for they had not committed the sin of rejecting his doctrine, since they had not heard it when they bade him leave their coast. His words of life had not fallen upon their ears. Therefore he commissioned those who were so recently the mediums of Satan to communicate the light they had received from him to those benighted people. Those who had so lately been the representatives of the Prince of Darkness were converted into channels of truth, servants of the Son of God. {3Red 90.2}

Men marveled as they listened to the wondrous news. They became interested and anxious to have part in this kingdom of which Jesus taught. Nothing could have awakened the people of this country so thoroughly as did this occurrence happening in their midst. They had only cared for the advantages of the world, and had thought little of their eternal interests. Jesus cared much more for their real good than they did themselves. He had permitted the devil's request to be granted, and the result was the destruction of their property. This loss raised the indignation of the people, and brought Jesus directly before the public notice. Although they entreated him to depart from them, they nevertheless saw and heard the men whom he had healed. When these persons, who had been the terror of the community, became the messengers of truth and taught the salvation of Jesus, they wielded a powerful influence to convince the people of that region that Jesus was the Son of God. {3Red 91.1}

They sent Jesus from their coast because they feared additional loss of property, notwithstanding

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those who had crossed the lake with him told them the peril of the previous night, and the miracle performed by the Saviour in stilling the tempest. Their eyes, blinded by worldliness, only saw the magnitude of their loss. They refused to consider the advantage of having One among them who could control the very elements by the lifting of his finger, cast out demons, and heal the diseased and imbecile by a word or the touch of his hand. The visible evidence of Satan's power was among them. The Prince

of Light and the Prince of Darkness met, and all present beheld the supremacy of the one over the other. Yet seeing this they begged the Son of God to depart from them. He gratified their wish; for he never urges his presence where he is unwelcome. {3Red 91.2}

Satan is the god of the world; his influence is to pervert the senses, control the human mind for evil, and drive his victims to violence and crime. He sows discord and darkens the intellect. The work of Christ is to break his power over the children of men. Yet how many in every department of life, in the home, in business transactions, and in the church, turn Jesus from their doors but let the hateful monster in. {3Red 92.1}

It is no wonder that violence and crime have spread over the earth, and moral darkness, like the pall of death, shrouds the cities and habitations of men. Satan controls many households, people, and churches. He watches the indications of moral corruption, and introduces his specious temptations, carefully leading men into worse and worse evils, till utter depravity is the result. The only safety is to watch unto prayer against his devices; for he goes about, in the last days, like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

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The presence of Jesus is a safe-guard against his advances. The Sun of Righteousness discloses the hideous blackness of the enemy of souls, and he flies from the divine presence. {3Red 92.2}

Many professed Christians of our time banish Jesus from them for the sake of worldly gain. They may not use the exact words of the Gadarenes, but their acts plainly indicate that, in their various avocations, they do not desire his presence. The world is exalted above his mercy. The love of gain crowds out the love of Christ. They heed not his injunctions, they slight his reproofs. By dishonesty and avaricious scheming, they virtually petition the blessed Saviour to depart from them. {3Red 93.1}

Jairus' Daughter.

When Jesus returned across the sea with his disciples, a great crowd were waiting to receive him, and they welcomed him with much joy. The fact of his coming being noised abroad, the people had collected in great numbers to listen to his teaching. There were the rich and poor, the high and low, Pharisees, doctors, and lawyers, all anxious to hear his words, and witness his miracles. As usual, there were many of the sick and variously afflicted entreating his mercy in their behalf. {3Red 93.2}

At length, faint and weary with the work of teaching and healing, Jesus left the multitude in order to partake of food in the house of Levi. But the people pressed about the door, bringing the sick, the deformed, and the lunatic, for him to heal. As he sat at the table, one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus, by name, came and fell

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at his feet, beseeching him: "My little daughter lieth at the point of death. I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." {3Red 93.3}

The father was in great distress, for his child had been given up to die by the most learned physicians. Jesus at once responded to the entreaty of the stricken parent, and

went with him to his home. The disciples were surprised at this ready compliance with the request of the haughty ruler. Although it was only a short distance, their progress was very slow; for the people pressed forward on every side eager to see the great Teacher who had created so much excitement, begging his attention and his aid. The anxious father urged his way through the crowd, fearful of being too late. But Jesus, pitying the people, and deploring their spiritual darkness and physical maladies, stopped now and then to minister to their wants. Occasionally he was nearly carried off his feet by the surging masses. {3Red 94.1}

There was one poor woman among that crowd who had suffered twelve long years with a disease that made her life a burden. She had spent all her substance upon physicians and remedies, seeking to cure her grievous malady. But it was all in vain; she was pronounced incurable, and given up to die. But her hopes revived when she heard of the wonderful cures effected by Jesus. She believed that if she could come into his presence, he would take pity on her and heal her. Suffering with pain and weakness, she came to the sea-side where he was teaching, and sought to press through the crowd that encompassed him. But her way was continually hedged up by the throng. She began to despair

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of approaching him, when Jesus, in urging his way through the multitude, came within her reach. {3Red 94.2}

The golden opportunity had come, she was in the presence of the great Physician! But amid the confusion, she could not be heard by him nor catch more than a passing glimpse of his figure. Fearful of losing the one chance of relief from her illness, she pressed forward, saying to herself, If I but touch his garment I shall be cured. She seized the opportunity as he was passing, and reached forward, barely touching the hem of his garment. But in that moment she felt herself healed of her disease. Instantly health and strength took the place of feebleness and pain. She had concentrated all the faith of her life in that one touch that made her whole. {3Red 95.1}

With a thankful heart she then sought unobtrusively to retire from the crowd; but suddenly Jesus stopped, and all the people, following his example, also halted. He turned, and looking about him with a penetrating eye, asked in a voice distinctly heard by all, "Who touched me?" The people answered this query with a look of amazement. Jostled upon all sides, and rudely pressed hither and thither as he was, it seemed indeed a singular inquiry. {3Red 95.2}

Peter, recovering from his surprise, and ever ready to speak, said, "Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" Jesus answered, "Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." The blessed Redeemer could distinguish the touch of faith from the casual contact of the careless crowd. He well knew all the circumstances of the case, and would not

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pass such confidence and trust without comment. He would address to the humble woman words of comfort that would be to her a well-spring of joy. {3Red 95.3}

Looking toward the woman, Jesus still insisted upon knowing who had touched him. Finding concealment vain, she came forward tremblingly and knelt at his feet. In

hearing of all the multitude, she told Jesus the simple story of her long and tedious suffering, and the instant relief that she had experienced in touching the border of his garment. Her narration was interrupted by her grateful tears as she experienced the joy of perfect health, which had been a stranger to her for twelve weary years. Instead of being angered at her presumption, Jesus commended her action, saying, "Daughter, be of good comfort. Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." In these words he instructed all present that it was no virtue in the simple act of touching his clothes that had wrought the cure, but in the strong faith that reached out and claimed his divine help. {3Red 96.1}

The true faith of the Christian is represented in this woman. It is not essential to the exercise of faith that the feelings should be wrought up to a high pitch of excitement; neither is it necessary, in order to gain the hearing of the Lord, that our petitions should be noisy, or attended with physical exercise. It is true that Satan frequently creates in the heart of the suppliant such a conflict with doubt and temptation that strong cries and tears are involuntarily forced from him; and it is also true that the penitent's sense of guilt is sometimes so great that a repentance commensurate with his sin causes him to

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experience an agony that finds vent in cries and groans, which the compassionate Saviour hears with pity. But Jesus does not fail to answer the silent prayer of faith. He who simply takes God at his word, and reaches out to connect himself with the Saviour, will receive his blessing in return. {3Red 96.2}

Faith is simple in its operation and powerful in its results. Many professed Christians, who have a knowledge of the sacred word, and believe its truth, fail in the childlike trust that is essential to the religion of Jesus. They do not reach out with that peculiar touch that brings the virtue of healing to the soul. They allow cold doubt to creep in and destroy their confidence. He who waits for entire knowledge before he can exercise faith, will never be blessed of God. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." {3Red 97.1}

The diseased woman believed that Jesus could heal her, and the more her mind was exercised in that direction, the more certain she became that even to touch his garment would relieve her malady. In answer to her firm belief, the virtue of divine power granted her prayer. This is a lesson of encouragement to the soul defiled by sin. In like manners as Jesus dealt with bodily infirmities, will he deal with the repentant soul that calls on him. The touch of faith will bring the coveted pardon that fills the soul with gratitude and joy. {3Red 97.2}

The delay of Jesus had been so intensely interesting in its results that even the anxious father felt no impatience but watched the scene with deep interest. As the healed woman was

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sent away comforted and rejoicing, it encouraged him to believe still more firmly that Jesus was able to grant his own petition and heal his daughter. Hope grew stronger in his heart, and he now urged the Saviour to hasten with him to his home. But, as they resumed their way, a messenger pressed through the crowd to Jairus, bearing the news that his daughter was dead, and it was useless to trouble the Master further. The

sympathizing ear of Jesus caught the words that smote the father's heart like the death-knell of his hopes. The pity of the Saviour was drawn out toward the suffering parent. He said to him, in his divine compassion, "Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole." {3Red 97.3}

Hearing these words of hope, Jairus pressed closer to the side of Jesus, and they hurried to the ruler's house. The Saviour suffered no one to enter the room with him where the child lay dead, except a few of his most faithful disciples, and the parents themselves. The mourners were making a great show of grief, and he rebuked them, saying, "Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth." The women, who, according to the custom of the country, were employed to make this external display of sorrow, were indignant at this remark made by a humble stranger, and they began to inquire by what authority this person came, commanding them to cease lamenting for the dead and asserting that the girl still lived. They had seen the touch of death change the living child to a pulseless and unconscious form. They laughed the words of Jesus to scorn, as they left the room at his command. Accompanied by the father and mother, with

Peter, James, and John, the Saviour approached the bedside, and, taking the child's hand in his own, he pronounced softly, in the familiar language of her home, the words, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." {3Red 98.1}

Instantly a tremor quivered through the entire body. The pulses of life beat again in the blue-veined temples, the pallid lips opened with a smile, the bosom heaved with returning breath, the waxen lids opened widely as if from sleep, and the dark eyes looked out wonderingly. The girl arose, weak from her long illness, but free from disease. She walked slowly across the room, while the parents wept for joy. Jesus bade them give her food, and charged all the household to tell no one what had been done there. But notwithstanding his injunction to secrecy, the news spread far and near that he had raised the dead to life. A large number were present when the child died, and when they again beheld her alive and well, it was impossible to prevent them from reporting the wonderful deed done by the great Physician. {3Red 99.1}

Resurrection of Lazarus.

Jesus had often found the rest that his weary human nature required at the house of Lazarus, in Bethany. His first visit there was when he and his disciples were weary from a toilsome journey on foot from Jericho to Jerusalem. They tarried as guests at the quiet home of Lazarus, and were ministered unto by his sisters, Martha and Mary. Notwithstanding the fatigue of Jesus, he continued the instruction which he had been

giving his disciples on the road, in reference to the qualifications necessary to fit men for the kingdom of Heaven. The peace of Christ rested upon the home of the brother and sisters. Martha had been all anxiety to provide for the comfort of her guests, but Mary was charmed by the words of Jesus to his disciples, and, seeing a golden opportunity to become better acquainted with the doctrines of Christ, quietly entered the room where he was sitting, and, taking her place at the feet of Jesus, drank in eagerly

every word that fell from his lips. {3Red 99.2}

The energetic Martha was meanwhile making ample preparations for the entertainment of her guests, and missed her sister's help. Finally she discovered that Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus, and listening with rapt attention to what he was saying. Martha, wearied with many cares, was so vexed to see her sister calmly listening thus, that she forgot the courtesy due to her guests, and openly complained of Mary's idleness, and appealed to Jesus that he would not permit all the domestic duties to fall upon one. {3Red 100.1}

Jesus answered these complaints with mild and patient words: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." That which Jesus indicated that Martha needed, was a calm, devotional spirit, a deeper anxiety to learn more concerning the future immortal life, and the graces necessary to spiritual advancement. She needed less anxiety for earthly things, which pass away, and more for heavenly things, which affect the eternal welfare of the soul. It is

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necessary to faithfully perform the duties of the present life, but Jesus would teach his children that they must seize every opportunity to gain that knowledge which will make them wise unto salvation. {3Red 100.2}

One of the dangers of the present age is devoting too much time to business matters and to unnecessary cares, which we create for ourselves, while the development of Christian character is neglected. Careful, energetic Marthas are needed for this time, who will blend with their prompt, decisive qualities that "better part" of which Christ spoke. A character of such combined strength and godliness is an unconquerable power for good. {3Red 101.1}

A dark cloud now hung over this quiet home where Jesus had rested. Lazarus was stricken with sudden illness. The afflicted sisters sent a message to Jesus: "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." They made no urgent requirement for the immediate presence of Jesus, for they believed that he would understand the case and relieve their brother. Lazarus was a firm believer in the divine mission of Jesus; he loved him ardently and was in turn beloved by the blessed Master, whose peace had rested on his quiet home. The faith and love which the brother and sisters felt toward Jesus encouraged them to believe that he would not disregard their distress. Therefore they sent the simple, confiding message: "He whom thou lovest is sick." {3Red 101.2}

When Jesus received the message, he said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." He accordingly remained where he was

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for two days. After the messenger was sent, Lazarus grew rapidly worse. The sisters counted the days and hours that must intervene between the sending of the message and the arrival of Jesus to their aid. As the time approached when they should expect him, they anxiously watched the travelers who appeared in the distance, hoping to discover the form of Jesus. All their efforts for the recovery of their brother were in vain, and they felt that he must die unless divine help interposed to save him. Their constant

prayer was, Oh! that Jesus would come! He could save our beloved brother! {3Red 101.3}

Presently their messenger returns, but unaccompanied by Jesus. He bears to the sorrowing sisters the words of the Saviour, "This sickness is not unto death." But the hearts of the sisters fail them, for lo, their brother is already wrestling with the fierce destroyer, and soon closes his eyes in death. {3Red 102.1}

Jesus, at the end of the two days, proposed to go to Judea, but his disciples endeavored to prevent him from doing so. They reminded him of the hatred manifested toward him when he was last there. Said they, "The Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?" Jesus then explained to them that he must go, for Lazarus was dead, adding, "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." Jesus did not delay going to the relief of Lazarus through want of interest in the stricken family; but he designed to make the sorrowful event of the death of Lazarus an occasion to give undoubted proof of his divine power, and unite his disciples to him in a faith that

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could not be broken. Already some among them were questioning in their minds if they had not been deceived in the evidences of his divine power; if he was really the Christ would he not have saved Lazarus whom he loved? Jesus designed to work a crowning miracle that would convince all who would by any means be convinced that he was the Saviour of the world. {3Red 102.2}

The danger attaching to this expedition into Judea was great, since the Jews were determined to kill Jesus. Finding it was impossible to dissuade him from going, Thomas proposed to the disciples that they should all accompany their Master, saying, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." Therefore the twelve accompanied the Saviour. On the way, Jesus labored for the needy, relieving the suffering and healing the sick as was his custom. When he reached Bethany he heard from several persons that Lazarus was dead, and had been buried four days. While still at a distance from the house, he heard the wailing of the mourners. When a Hebrew died it was customary for the relatives to give up all business for several days, and live on the coarsest food while they mourned for the dead. Professional mourners were also hired, and it was they whom Jesus heard wailing and shrieking in that house which had once been his quiet, pleasant resting-place. {3Red 103.1}

Jesus did not desire to meet the afflicted sisters in such a scene of confusion as their home then presented, so he stopped at a quiet place by the road-side, and sent a messenger to inform them where they could find him. Martha hastened to meet him; she told him of her brother's

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death, saying, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." In her disappointment and grief she had not lost confidence in Jesus, and added, "But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it unto thee." {3Red 103.2}

Jesus encouraged her faith by declaring to her, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha, not comprehending the full meaning of Jesus, answered that she knew he would arise in the resurrection, at the last day. But Jesus, seeking to give a true

direction to her faith, said, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?" Jesus would direct the thoughts of Martha to himself, and strengthen her faith in regard to his power. His words had a double meaning; not only did they refer to the immediate act of raising Lazarus, but they also referred to the general resurrection of all the righteous, of which the resurrection of Lazarus which he was then about to perform, was but a representation. Jesus declared himself the Author of the resurrection. He who himself was soon to die upon the cross, stood with the keys of death, a conqueror of the grave, and asserted his right and power to give eternal life. {3Red 104.1}

When Jesus asked Martha: "Believest thou?" she answered by a confession of her faith: "Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Thus Martha declared her belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, and that he was able to perform any work

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which it pleased him to do. Jesus bade Martha call her sister, and the friends that had come to comfort the afflicted women. When Mary came she fell at the feet of Jesus, also crying, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." At the sight of all this distress, Jesus "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see." Together they all proceeded to the grave of Lazarus, which was a cave with a stone upon it. {3Red 104.2}

It was a mournful scene. Lazarus had been much beloved, and his sisters wept for him with breaking hearts, while those who had been his friends mingled their tears with those of the bereaved sisters. Jesus had also loved Lazarus, whose faith had ever been strong in him, never wavering nor failing for a moment. In view of this human distress, and of the fact that these afflicted friends could mourn over the dead, when the Saviour of the world stood by, who had power to raise from the dead,--"Jesus wept." His grief was not alone because of the scene before him. The weight of the grief of ages was upon his soul, and, looking down the years that were to come, he saw the suffering and sorrow, tears and death, that were to be the lot of men. His heart was pierced with the pain of the human family of all ages and in all lands. The woes of the sinful race were heavy on his soul, and the fountain of his tears was broken up, as he longed to relieve all their distress. {3Red 105.1}

Seeing the tears and hearing the groans of Jesus, those who stood about said, "Behold, how he loved him!" Then they whispered among

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themselves, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" Jesus groaned within himself at the unbelief of those who had professed faith in him. They thought his tears were because of his love for Lazarus, and that he who had done such mighty works had been unable to save Lazarus from death. Burdened by the blind infidelity of those who should have had faith in him, Jesus approached the grave, and in tones of authority commanded that the stone should be rolled away. Human hands were, on their part, required to do all that it was possible for them to do, and *then* divine power would finish the work. {3Red 105.2}

But Martha objected to the stone being removed, and reminded Jesus that the body had been buried four days, and that corruption had already commenced its work. Jesus answered her reproachfully: "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" The stone was then taken away, and the dead was revealed to sight. It was evident to all that putrefaction had really commenced. All is now done that lies in the power of man to do. The friends gather round with mingled curiosity and awe to see what Jesus is about to do. Lifting up his eyes, the Saviour prayed:-- {3Red 106.1}

"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." The hush that followed this prayer was broken by Jesus crying out with a loud voice, "Lazarus,

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come forth." Instantly life animates that form which had been so changed by decay that the friends of the deceased recoiled from looking upon it. Lazarus, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and with a napkin about his face, rises, obedient to the command of his Saviour, and attempts to walk, but is impeded by the winding-sheet. Jesus commands his friends to "loose him, and let him go." {3Red 106.2}

Human hands are again brought into requisition to do the work which it is possible for them to do. The burial clothes which bear evidence of the corruption of the body are removed, and Lazarus stands before them, not as one emaciated from disease, and with feeble, tottering limbs, but as a man in the prime of life, and in the vigor of a noble manhood, his eyes beaming with intelligence and love for his Saviour. He bows at the feet of Jesus and glorifies him. A dumb surprise at first seizes all present; but now succeeds an inexpressible scene of rejoicing and thanksgiving. The sisters receive their brother back to life as the gift of God, and with joyful tears, brokenly express their thanks and praise to the Saviour. But while brother, sisters, and friends are rejoicing in this reunion, Jesus retires from the exciting scene, and when they look for the Lifegiver, he is nowhere to be found. {3Red 107.1}

This crowning miracle of Christ caused many to believe on him. But some who were in the crowd about the grave, and heard and saw the wonderful works performed by Jesus, were not converted, but steeled their hearts against the evidence of their own eyes and ears. This

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demonstration of the power of Christ was the crowning manifestation offered by God to man as a proof that he had sent his Son into the world for the salvation of the human race. If the Pharisees rejected this mighty evidence, no power in Heaven nor upon earth could wrest from them their Satanic unbelief. {3Red 107.2}

The spies hurry away to report to the rulers this work of Jesus, and that the "world is gone after him." In performing this miracle, the Saviour took a decisive step toward the completion of his earthly mission. The grandest evidence of his life was now given that he was the Son of God, and had control of death and the grave. Hearts that had long been under the power of sin, in rejecting this proof of the divinity of Jesus, locked themselves in impenetrable darkness and came wholly under the sway of Satan, to be

hurried by him over the brink of eternal ruin. {3Red 108.1}

The mighty miracle wrought at the grave of Lazarus intensified the hatred of the Pharisees against Jesus. This demonstration of divine power, which presented such unquestionable proof that Jesus was the Son of God, was sufficient to convince any mind under the control of reason and enlightened conscience. But the Pharisees, who had rejected all lesser evidence, were only enraged at this new miracle of raising the dead in the full light of day, and before a crowd of witnesses. No artifice of theirs could explain away such evidence. For this very reason their hate grew deadlier, and they watched every opportunity of accomplishing their secret purpose to destroy him. In heart they were already murderers.

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{3Red 108.2}

The Jewish authorities counseled together as to what course they should pursue to counteract the effect of this miracle upon the people; for the news spread far and wide that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, and the reality of the event was established by many eye-witnesses. Still the enemies of Jesus sought to circulate lying reports, perverting the facts in the case as far as they were able, and endeavoring to turn the people away from one who had dared to rob the grave of its dead. {3Red 109.1}

In this council of the Jews were some influential men who believed on Jesus; but their wishes were overruled by the malignant Pharisees, who hated Jesus because he had exposed their hypocritical pretensions, and had torn aside the cloak of precision and rigorous rites under which their moral deformity was hidden. The pure religion that Jesus taught, and his simple, godly life, condemned their hollow professions of piety. They thirsted for revenge, and nothing short of taking his life would satisfy them. They had tried to provoke him to say or do something that would give them occasion to condemn him, and several times they had attempted to stone him, but he had quietly withdrawn and they had lost sight of him. {3Red 109.2}

The miracles performed by Jesus on the Sabbath were all for the relief of the afflicted, but the Pharisees had sought to use these works of mercy as a cause by which they might condemn him as a Sabbath-breaker. They endeavored to arouse the Herodians against him; they represented that Jesus was seeking to set up a rival kingdom among them, and consulted with them how

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they should destroy him. They had sought to excite the Romans against him, and had represented him to them as one who was trying to subvert their authority. They had tried every pretext to cut him off from influencing the people, but they had so far been foiled in their attempts; for the multitudes who witnessed the works of mercy and benevolence done by Jesus, and heard his pure and holy teachings, knew that these were not the words and deeds of a Sabbath-breaker and a blasphemer. Even the officers sent by the Pharisees had been so influenced by the divine presence of the great Teacher that they could not lay hands upon him. In desperation the Jews had finally passed an edict that if any man confessed that he believed on Jesus he should be cast out of the synagogue. {3Red 109.3}

So, as the priests, the rulers, and the elders gathered together for consultation, it

was their fixed determination to silence this man who did such marvelous works that all men wondered. Nicodemus and Joseph had, in former councils, prevented the condemnation of Jesus, and for this reason they were not summoned on this occasion. Caiaphas, who acted as high priest that year, was a proud and cruel man; he was by nature overbearing and intolerant; he had studied the prophecies, and, although his mind was shrouded in darkness as to their true meaning, he spoke with great authority and apparent knowledge. {3Red 110.1}

As the priests and Pharisees were consulting together, some of them said, "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation." Then Caiaphas spoke out loftily:

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"Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." The voice of the high priest decided the matter; even if Jesus was innocent, let him die; he was troublesome, drawing the people to himself, and lessening the authority of the rulers. He was only one, it was better that he should die, even though he was guiltless, than that the power of the rulers should diminish. Caiaphas, in declaring that one man should die for the nation, indicated that he had some knowledge of the prophecies, although it was very limited; but John in his account of this scene takes up the prophecy, and shows its broad and deep significance in these words: "And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." How blindly did the haughty Caiaphas acknowledge the mission of Jesus as a Redeemer! {3Red 110.2}

Nearly all the council agreed with the high priest that it was the wisest policy to put Jesus to death. This decision having been made, the question was still to be determined how it should be carried out. They feared to take rash measures lest the people should become incensed and the violence meditated toward Jesus should be visited upon themselves. The Saviour was continually benefiting and teaching the people, they knew him to be one without blame, and his influence over them was very strong; it was on this account that the Pharisees delayed to execute the sentence which they had pronounced against him.

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{3Red 111.1}

The Saviour understood the plottings of the priests against him; he knew that they longed to remove him from their midst, and that their wishes would soon be accomplished; but it was not his place to hasten the culminating event, and he withdrew from that region, taking his disciples with him. Jesus had now given three years of public labor to the world. His example of self-denial and disinterested benevolence was before them. His life of purity, of suffering, and devotion, was known to all. Yet this short period of three years was as long as the world could endure the presence of its Redeemer. {3Red 112.1}

His life had been one of persecution and insult. Driven from Bethlehem by a jealous king, rejected by his own people at Nazareth, condemned to death without a cause at Jerusalem, Jesus, with his few faithful followers, finds a temporary asylum in a strange

city. He who was ever touched by human woe, who healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and speech to the dumb, who fed the hungry and comforted the sorrowful, was driven from the people whom he had labored to save. He who walked upon the heaving billows and by a word silenced their angry roaring, who cast out devils that in departing acknowledged him to be the Son of God, who broke the slumbers of the dead, who held thousands entranced by the words of wisdom which fell from his lips, was unable to reach the hearts of those who were blinded by prejudice and insane hatred, and who resolutely rejected the light. {3Red 112.2}

It is not the plan of God to compel men to yield their wicked unbelief. Before them are

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light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which to accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture. Had the Jews laid by their prejudice, and compared written prophecy with the facts characterizing the life of Jesus, they would have perceived a beautiful harmony between the prophecies and their fulfillment in the life and ministry of the lowly Galilean. {3Red 112.3}

It was nearing the time of the passover, and many came to Jerusalem from various parts of the country to purify themselves according to the ceremonial custom of the Jews. There was much talk and speculation among these people concerning Jesus, and they wondered if he would not be present at the feast. "Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where he were, he should show it, that they might take him." {3Red 113.1}

The Transfiguration.

As the time drew near when Jesus was to suffer and die, he was more frequently alone with his disciples. After teaching the people all day, he would repair with his disciples to a retired place and pray and commune with them. He was weary, yet he had no time to rest, for his work on earth was hastening to a close, and he had much to do before the final hour arrived. He had declared to his disciples that he would establish his kingdom so firmly on earth that the

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gates of hell should not prevail against it. Jesus, in view of his approaching trial, gathered his disciples about him and opened their minds regarding his future humiliation and shameful death at the hands of his persecutors. The impulsive Peter could not for a moment endure the thought, and insisted that it could not be. Jesus solemnly rebuked Peter's unbelief in suggesting that prophecy would not be fulfilled in the sacrifice of the Son of God. {3Red 113.2}

Jesus then proceeded to explain to his disciples that they also must suffer for his name, bear the cross in following him, and endure a corresponding humiliation, reproach, and shame with that of their Master, or they could never share his glory. His sufferings must be followed by theirs, and his crucifixion must teach them that they

should be crucified to the world, resigning all hope of its pomp and pleasure. Previous to this declaration, Jesus had frequently spoken to his disciples of his future humiliation, and he had resolutely discouraged all their hopes of his temporal aggrandizement; but they had so long been accustomed to look upon Messiah as one who would reign as a mighty king, that it had been impossible for them to relinquish entirely their glowing expectations. {3Red 114.1}

But now the words of Jesus were unmistakable. He was to live, a humble, homeless wanderer, and to die the death of a malefactor. Sadness oppressed their hearts, for they loved their Master; but doubt also harassed their minds, for it seemed incomprehensible that the Son of God should be subjected to such cruel humiliation. They could not understand why he should

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voluntarily go to Jerusalem to meet the treatment which he told them he should there receive. They were deeply grieved that he should resign himself to such an ignominious fate, and leave them in greater darkness than that in which they were groping before he revealed himself to them. The thought suggested itself to their minds that they might take him by force to a place of security, but they dared not attempt this as he had repeatedly denounced all such projects as the suggestions of Satan. In the midst of their gloom they could not refrain from comforting themselves occasionally with the thought that some unforeseen circumstance might avert the fearful doom that awaited their Lord. Thus they sorrowed and doubted, hoped and feared, for six long, gloomy days. {3Red 114.2}

Jesus was acquainted with the grief and perplexity of his disciples, and he designed to give them additional proof of his Messiahship, in order that their faith might not utterly fail them in the severe ordeal to which they were soon to be subjected. As the sun was setting he called his three most devoted disciples to his side, and led them out of the noisy town, across the fields, and up the steep side of a mountain. Jesus was weary from toil and travel. He had taught the people and healed the sick throughout the entire day; but he sought this high elevation because he could there find retirement from the crowds that continually sought him, and time for meditation and prayer. He was very weary, and was much fatigued in toiling up the steep ascent. {3Red 115.1}

The disciples were also tired, and, although they were accustomed to this practice of retiring into

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the solitudes for prayer, they could not help wondering that Jesus should attempt to climb this rugged mountain, after such a day of fatigue. But they asked no questions as to his purpose, and patiently accompanied him. As they are ascending the mountain, the setting sun leaves the valleys in shadow, while the light still lingers on the mountain tops, and gilds with its fading glory the rugged path they are treading. But soon the golden light dies out from hill as well as valley, the sun disappears behind the western horizon, and the solitary travelers are wrapt in the darkness of night. And the gloom of their surroundings seems in harmony with their sorrowful lives, around which the clouds are gathering and thickening. {3Red 115.2}

Having gained the place he sought, Jesus engaged in earnest prayer to his Father.

Hour after hour, with tears and importunity, he supplicated for strength to bear his afflictions and for grace to be bestowed upon his disciples that they might bear the terrible trials that awaited them in the future. The dew was heavy upon his bowed form, but he heeded it not; the shadows of night gathered thickly about him, but he regarded not their gloom. So the hours passed slowly by. At first the disciples united their prayers with his in sincere devotion; but as the hours dragged slowly on, they were overcome with weariness and loss of sleep, and even while endeavoring to retain their interest in the scene, they fell asleep. Jesus had told them of his future sufferings, he had taken them with him that they might watch and pray with him while he was pleading with his Father; even

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then he was praying that his disciples might have strength to endure the coming test of his humiliation and death. He especially plead that they might witness such a manifestation of his divinity as would forever remove from their minds all unbelief and lingering doubts; a manifestation that would comfort them in the hour of his supreme agony with the knowledge that he was of a surety the Son of God, and that his shameful death was a part of the divine plan of redemption. {3Red 116.1}

God hears the petition of his Son, and angels prepare to minister unto him. But God selects Moses and Elijah to visit Christ and converse with him in regard to his coming sufferings at Jerusalem. While Jesus bows in lowliness upon the damp and stony ground, suddenly the heavens open, the golden gates of the City of God are thrown wide, and holy radiance descends upon the mount, enshrouding the kneeling form of Christ. He arises from his prostrate position, and stands in God-like majesty; the soul-agony is gone from his countenance, which now shines with a serene light, and his garments are no longer coarse and soiled, but white and glittering like the noon-day sun. {3Red 117.1}

The sleeping disciples are awakened by the flood of glory that illuminates the whole mount. They gaze with fear and amazement upon the shining garments and radiant countenance of their Master. At first their eyes are dazzled by the unearthly brilliancy of the scene, but as they become able to endure the wondrous light, they perceive that Jesus is not alone. Two glorious figures stand engaged in conversation with him.

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They are Moses, who talked with God face to face amid the thunder and lightnings of Sinai, and Elijah, that prophet of God who did not see death, but was conducted to Heaven in a chariot of fire. These two, whom God had seen fit to favor above all others who ever lived upon earth, were delegated by the Father to bring the glory of Heaven to his Son, and comfort him, talking with him concerning the completion of his mission, and especially of his sufferings to be endured at Jerusalem. {3Red 117.2}

The Father chose Moses and Elijah to be his messengers to Christ, and glorify him with the light of Heaven, and commune with him concerning his coming agony, because they had lived upon earth as men; they had experienced human sorrow and suffering, and could sympathize with the trial of Jesus, in his earthly life. Elijah, in his position as a prophet to Israel, had represented Christ, and his work had been, in a degree, similar to that of the Saviour. And Moses, as the leader of Israel, had stood in the place of Christ,

communing with him and following his directions; therefore, these two, of all the hosts that gathered around the throne of God, were fittest to minister to the Son of God. {3Red 118.1}

When Moses, enraged at the unbelief of the children of Israel, smote the rock in wrath and furnished them the water for which they called, he took the glory to himself; for his mind was so engrossed with the ingratitude and waywardness of Israel that he failed to honor God and magnify his name, in performing the act which He had commanded him to do. It was the plan of the Almighty to frequently bring the children of

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Israel into straight places, and then, in their great necessity, to deliver them by his power, that they might recognize his special regard for them, and glorify his name. But Moses, in yielding to the natural impulses of his heart, appropriated to himself the honor due to God, fell under the power of Satan, and was forbidden to enter the promised land. Had Moses remained steadfast, the Lord would have brought him to the promised land, and would then have translated him to Heaven without his seeing death. {3Red 118.2}

As it was, Moses passed through death, but the Son of God came down from Heaven and resurrected him before his body had seen corruption. Though Satan contended with Michael for the body of Moses, and claimed it as his rightful prey, he could not prevail against the Son of God, and Moses, with a resurrected and glorified body, was borne to the courts of Heaven, and was now one of the honored two, commissioned by the Father to wait upon his Son. {3Red 119.1}

By permitting themselves to be so overcome by sleep, the disciples had lost the conversation between the Heavenly messengers and the glorified Redeemer. But as they suddenly awake from profound slumber, and behold the sublime vision before them, they are filled with rapture and awe. As they look upon the radiant form of their beloved Master, they are obliged to shield their eyes with their hands, not being able otherwise to endure the inexpressible glory that clothes his person, and which emits beams of light like those of the sun. For a brief space the disciples behold their Lord glorified and exalted before their eyes, and honored by the radiant

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beings whom they recognize as the favored ones of God. {3Red 119.2}

They believe that Elias has now come, according to prophecy, and that the kingdom of Christ is to be set up on earth. Even in the first glow of his amazement, Peter plans for accommodating Christ and the ancient worthies. As soon as he can command his voice he addresses Jesus thus: "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." In the joy of the moment, Peter flatters himself that the two messengers from Heaven have been sent to preserve the life of Jesus from the fate that threatens him at Jerusalem. He is overjoyed at the thought that these glorious attendants, clothed in light and power, are to protect the Son of God, and establish his kingly authority upon earth. He forgets for the time the frequent explanations given by Jesus himself of the plan of salvation, which could only be perfected through his own suffering and death. {3Red 120.1}

While the disciples were overwhelmed with rapture and amazement, "a bright cloud

overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." When the disciples beheld the awful cloud of glory, brighter than that which went before the tribes of Israel in the wilderness, and when they heard the voice of God peal from the cloud, in accents of majesty that caused the mount to tremble as if shaken from its foundation, they could not endure the grandeur that oppressed their senses, and fell smitten to the ground.

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{3Red 120.2}

Thus they remained upon their faces, not daring to look up, till Jesus approached and raised them from the ground, dispelling their fears with his well-known, cheering voice, saying, "Arise, and be not afraid." Venturing to lift up their eyes, they see that the heavenly glory has passed away, the radiant forms of Moses and Elijah have disappeared, the Son of God is no longer clothed with a divine radiance so bright that the eyes of man cannot endure it,--they are upon the mount alone with Jesus. {3Red 121.1}

The entire night had been passed in the mountain, and as the sun rose and chased away the shadows with its cheering rays, Jesus and his disciples descended the mountain. Gladly would they have lingered in that holy place which had been touched with the glory of Heaven, and where the Son of God had been transfigured before the eyes of his disciples; but there was work to be done for the people who were already searching far and near for Jesus. {3Red 121.2}

At the foot of the mountain a large crowd had gathered, led there by the disciples who had remained behind, and who knew of the favorite resorts of Jesus for meditation and prayer. As they approached the waiting multitude, Jesus charged his disciples to keep secret what they had witnessed, saying, "Tell the vision to no man until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead." Jesus knew that neither the people nor the disciples who had led them to the place, were prepared to appreciate or understand the wonderful event of the transfiguration upon the mount. After his resurrection, the testimony of those who had witnessed it, was to be given to

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substantiate the fact that he was indeed the Son of God. {3Red 121.3}

Now the three chosen disciples have evidence which they cannot doubt that Jesus is the promised Messiah. A voice from the excellent glory has declared his divinity. Now they are strengthened to endure the humiliation and crucifixion of their Lord. The patient Teacher, the meek and lowly One, who, for nearly three years, has wandered to and fro, from city to city, a Man of sorrows, homeless, having no place to rest, no bed upon which to stretch his weary form at night, has been acknowledged by the voice of God as his Son, and Moses and Elijah, glorious ones in the courts of Heaven, have paid him homage. The favored disciples can doubt no longer. They have seen with their eyes, and heard with their ears, things that are beyond the comprehension of man. {3Red 122.1}

Jesus now returned to his work of ministering to the people. As the throng caught sight of the Saviour, they ran to meet him, greeting him with much reverence. But he perceived that they were in great perplexity. This was because of a circumstance that

had just transpired: A man had brought his son to the disciples to be delivered of a dumb spirit that tormented him exceedingly. But the disciples had been unable to relieve him, and therefore the scribes had seized upon this opportunity to dispute with them as to their power of working miracles. These men were now triumphantly declaring that a devil was here found whom neither the disciples nor their Master could conquer. {3Red 122.2}

As Jesus approached the scene he inquired the

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cause of the trouble; the afflicted father replied: "Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away; and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not." Jesus listened attentively to this narration, and then met the failure of his disciples, the doubts of the people, and the boasting of the scribes, with these words: "O faithless generation! how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me." {3Red 122.3}

The father obeyed the command of Jesus; but no sooner was his son brought into the divine presence than the evil spirit attacked him with violence, and he fell upon the ground in agony, and writhed, and foamed at the mouth. Jesus permitted Satan to exercise his power thus over his victim, in order that the people might better understand the nature of the miracle he was about to perform, and be more deeply impressed with a sense of his divine power. Jesus proceeded to inquire of the father how long his son had thus been afflicted by the demon. The father answered:-- {3Red 123.1}

"Of a child. And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the water, to destroy him; but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." The failure of the disciples to heal this deplorable case had sadly discouraged the father, and the sufferings of his son now wrung his soul with anguish. The question of Jesus brought to his mind the long years of suffering endured by his son, and his heart sank

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within him. He feared that what the scribes asserted was true, and that Jesus himself could not overcome so powerful a devil. Jesus perceived his dispirited condition and sought to inspire him with faith. He addressed him thus: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Hope was immediately kindled in the father's heart, and he cried, " Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." {3Red 123.2}

The distressed father realized his immediate need of help, and that no one could furnish that help but the merciful Saviour, and he relied alone upon him. His faith was not in vain; for Jesus, before the whole multitude, that flocked about to witness the scene, "rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him." And immediately the demon left him, and the boy lay as one dead. The action of the evil spirit upon him had been so violent that it had overcome all his natural strength; and when it left him he was powerless and unconscious. The people, who had witnessed with awe the sudden change that came over the lad, now whispered among themselves, "He is dead." But Jesus stooped and with tender pity "took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose." {3Red 124.1}

Great was the father's joy over his son, and great was the joy of the son in his freedom from the cruel demon that had so long tormented him. Both father and son praised and magnified the name of their Deliverer, while the people looked on with unbounded astonishment, and the scribes, crest-fallen and defeated, turned sullenly away.

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{3Red 124.2}

Jesus had conferred upon his disciples the power to work miracles of healing; but their failure in this case, before so many witnesses, had deeply mortified them. When they were alone with Jesus they asked him why it was that they were unable to cast out the devil. Jesus answered that it was because of their unbelief, and the carelessness with which they regarded the sacred work that had been committed to them. They had not fitted themselves for their holy office by fasting and prayer. It was impossible for them to vanquish Satan except as they received power from God; they should go to him in humiliation and self-sacrifice and plead for strength to conquer the enemy of souls. Nothing but entire dependence upon God, and perfect consecration to the work, would insure their success. Jesus encouraged his disappointed followers in these words: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." {3Red 125.1}

In a brief space of time the favored disciples had beheld the extremes of glory and of grief. Jesus, descending the mount where he had been transfigured by the glory of God, where he had talked with the messengers of Heaven, and been proclaimed the Son of God by the Father's voice issuing from the radiant glory, meets a revolting spectacle, a lunatic child, with countenance distorted, gnashing its teeth in spasms of agony which no mortal could relieve. And this mighty Redeemer, who but a few short hours before stood glorified before his wondering disciples, stoops to lift this victim of Satan from the ground

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where he is wallowing, and restores him to his father, freed forever from the demon's power. {3Red 125.2}

Previous to his transfiguration, Jesus had told his disciples that there were some then with him who should not see death until they should see the kingdom of God come with power. In the transfiguration on the mount, this promise was fulfilled, for they there saw the kingdom of Christ in miniature. Jesus was clothed with the glory of Heaven, and proclaimed by the Father's voice to be the Son of God. Moses was present, representing those who will be raised from the dead at the second coming of Christ; and Elijah, who was translated to Heaven without seeing death, represented those who will be living on earth at the time of Christ's second appearing, and who will be changed from mortal to immortal, and be translated to Heaven without seeing death. {3Red 126.1}

NOTE TO THE READER

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC AS AN ASSISTANCE IN STUDYING THE DIVINE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST AS CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE. THE WRITER, HAVING SPENT MANY YEARS IN THE STUDY OF THOSE SACRED LESSONS, AIDED BY THE SPECIAL ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD, IS PECULIARLY QUALIFIED TO SET FORTH THEIR GREAT TRUTHS, AND THEIR PRACTICAL APPLICATION TO THE SIMPLE DUTIES OF LIFE.

THE PUBLISHERS.

The Teachings of Christ

Jesus at Nazareth.

Soon after the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, and the victories he there gained over Satan, he presented himself in his true character at Nazareth, where he was known as an unpretending mechanic. He entered the synagogue upon the Sabbath. As was customary, the elder read from the prophets, and exhorted the people to continue to hope for the Coming One, who would bring in a glorious reign, and subdue all oppression. He sought to animate the faith and courage of the Jews, by rehearsing the evidences of Messiah's soon coming, dwelling especially upon the kingly power and glorious majesty that would attend his advent. He kept before his hearers the idea that the reign of Christ would be upon an earthly throne in Jerusalem, and his kingdom would be a temporal one. He taught them that Messiah would appear at the head of armies, to conquer the heathen and deliver Israel from the oppression of their enemies. {4Red 3.1}

At the close of the service, Jesus rose with calm dignity, and requested them to bring him the book of the prophet Esaias. "And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it

was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this

scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." {4Red 3.2}

The scripture which Jesus read was understood by all to refer to the coming Messiah and his work. And when the Saviour explained the words he had read, and pointed out the sacred office of the Messiah,--a reliever of the oppressed, a liberator of the captives, a healer of the afflicted, restoring sight to the blind, and revealing to the world the light of truth,--the people were thrilled with the wisdom and power of his words and responded to them with fervent amens and praises to the Lord. Jesus had not been educated in the school of the prophets, yet the most learned Rabbis could not speak with more confidence and authority than did this young Galilean. {4Red 4.1}

His impressive manner, the mighty import of his words, and the divine light that emanated from his countenance, thrilled the people with a power they had never experienced before, as Jesus stood before them, a living expositor of the prophet's words concerning himself. But when he announced: "This day is this scripture

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fulfilled in your ears," the minds of his hearers were brought back to consider what were this man's claims to the Messiahship--the highest position that man could occupy. {4Red 4.2}

The interest of the congregation had been thoroughly awakened, and their hearts had been stirred with joy; but Satan was at hand to suggest doubts and unbelief, and they remembered who it was that addressed them as the blind, and the captives in bondage who needed special aid. Many of those present were acquainted with the humble life of Jesus, as the son of a carpenter, working at his trade with his father Joseph. He had made no claims to distinction or greatness, and his home was among the poor and lowly. {4Red 5.1}

In marked contrast with this humble man was the expected Messiah of the Jews. They believed that he would come with honor and glory, and set up, by power of arms, the throne of David. And they murmured: This cannot be the One who is to redeem Israel. Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? And they refused to believe him unless he gave them some marked sign. They opened their hearts to unbelief, and prejudice took possession of them, and blinded their judgment, so that they made no account of the evidence already given when their hearts had thrilled with the knowledge that it was their Redeemer who addressed them. {4Red 5.2}

But Jesus now showed them a sign of his divine character by revealing the secrets of their minds. "And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in

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Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." {4Red 5.3}

Jesus read the inmost thoughts of those who were before him, and met their questioning with this relation of events in the lives of the prophets. Those men whom God had chosen for a special and important work were not allowed to labor for a hard-hearted and unbelieving people. But those who had hearts to feel, and faith to believe, were specially favored with evidences of God's power displayed through his prophets. {4Red 6.1}

By the apostasy of Israel in Elijah's day, Jesus illustrated the true state of the people whom he was addressing. The unbelief and self-exaltation of the ancient Jewish nation caused God to pass over the many widows in Israel, and the poor and afflicted there, to find an asylum for his servant among a heathen people, and to place him in the care of a heathen woman; but she who was thus especially favored had lived in strict accordance with the light she possessed. God also passed over the many lepers of Israel, because their unbelief and abuse of precious privileges placed them in a position where he could not manifest his power in their behalf. On the other hand, a heathen nobleman, who had lived faithful to his

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convictions of right, and fully up to his highest privileges, but who felt his great need of help, and whose heart opened to receive the lessons of Christ, was, in the sight of God, more worthy of his special favors, and was cleansed from his leprosy, as well as enlightened in regard to divine truth. {4Red 6.2}

Here Jesus taught an important lesson that should be received by all who profess his name to the end of time. It was this: That even the heathen, who live according to the best light they have, doing right so far as they are able to distinguish right from wrong, are regarded with greater favor by God than those who, having great light, make high pretensions to godliness, but whose daily lives contradict their profession. Thus Jesus stood before the Jews, calmly revealing their secret thoughts, and pressing home upon them the bitter truth of their unrighteousness. Every word cut like a knife as their corrupt lives and wicked unbelief were laid before them. They now scorned the faith and reverence with which Jesus had at first inspired them, and they refused to acknowledge that this man, who had sprung from poverty and lowliness, was other than a common man. They would own no king who came unattended by riches and honor, and who stood not at the head of imposing legions. {4Red 7.1}

Their unbelief bred malice. Satan controlled their minds, and they cried out against the Saviour with wrath and hatred. The assembly broke up, and the wicked people laid hands upon Jesus, thrusting him from the synagogue, and out of their city, and would have killed him if they had been able to do so. All seemed eager for his destruction. They hurried him to

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the brow of a steep precipice, intending to cast him headlong from it. Shouts and maledictions filled the air. Some were casting stones and dirt at him; but suddenly he disappeared out of their midst, they knew not how, or when. Angels of God attended Jesus in the midst of that infuriated mob, and preserved his life. The heavenly messengers were by his side in the synagogue, while he was speaking; and they accompanied him when pressed and urged on by the unbelieving, infuriated Jews.

These angels blinded the eyes of that maddened throng, and conducted Jesus to a place of safety. {4Red 7.2}

Nicodemus Comes to Christ.

The great authority Jesus had assumed in the temple, in condemning the practices of the Jewish dignitaries, was freely commented upon by Pharisees, priests, and elders. His appearance, and the tones of his voice, together with the irresistible power he had exercised over the multitude, were such as to lead many of them to believe that he was indeed the Messiah whom they had so long expected and desired to see. {4Red 8.1}

A portion of the Jews had ever been fearful of opposing one who seemed to possess any remarkable power or seemed to be influenced by God's Spirit. Many messages had been given to Israel by the mouths of prophets. Yet some of these holy men had been slain through the instigation of the leaders in Israel, because they had denounced the sins of those in authority. The captivity of the Jews to a heathen nation, was their punishment for refusing to be reproved of their iniquities, slighting the warnings of God,

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and folding their sins still closer to their hearts. {4Red 8.2}

The Jews, in the days of Christ, lamented their humiliation to the Romans, and condemned the acts of their fathers in stoning the prophets who were sent to correct them. Yet their priests and elders cherished the spirit in their hearts which would lead them to commit the same crimes. {4Red 9.1}

The dignitaries of the temple consulted together in regard to the conduct of Jesus, and what course was best for them to pursue. One of their number, Nicodemus, advised moderation both in their feelings and acts. He argued that, if Jesus was really invested with authority from God, it would be perilous to reject his warnings, and the manifestations of his power. He could not look upon him as an impostor, nor join the rest of the Pharisees in their derision of him. He himself had seen and heard Jesus, and his mind was much disturbed in consequence. He anxiously perused the scrolls containing the prophecies relating to the coming of the Messiah. He sought earnestly for clear light upon the subject, and the more he searched the stronger was his conviction that this man was the one described by the prophets. If he was indeed the Christ, then this was an eventful epoch in the history of the world and especially of the Jewish nation. {4Red 9.2}

During the entire day after Christ had cleansed the desecrated courts of the temple, he was healing the sick and relieving the afflicted. Nicodemus had seen with what pitying compassion he had received and ministered unto the poor and the oppressed. With the demeanor of a loving father toward his suffering children, he had

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wrought cures and removed sorrow. No suppliant was sent unrelieved from his presence. Mothers were made glad by the restoration of their babes to health, and voices of thanksgiving had taken the place of weeping and moans of pain. All day, Jesus had instructed the restless, curious people, reasoning with the scribes and

silencing the caviling of the haughty rulers by the wisdom of his words. Nicodemus, after seeing and hearing these wonderful things, and after searching the prophecies that pointed to Jesus as the looked-for Messiah, dared not disbelieve that he was sent of God. {4Red 9.3}

When night came on, Jesus, pale with the weariness of his long-continued labors, sought for retirement and repose in the Mount of Olives. Here Nicodemus found him and desired a conference. This man was rich and honored of the Jews. He was famous throughout Jerusalem for his wealth, his learning and benevolence, and especially for his liberal offerings to the temple to carry out its sacred services. He was also one of the prominent members of the national council. Yet when he came into the presence of Jesus, a strange agitation and timidity assailed him, which he essayed to conceal beneath an air of composure and dignity. {4Red 10.1}

He endeavored to appear as if it were an act of condescension on the part of a learned ruler, to seek, uninvited, an audience with a young stranger at that unseasonable hour of night. He began with a conciliating address, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." But instead of acknowledging this complimentary salutation, Jesus bent his

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calm and searching eye upon the speaker, as if reading his very soul; then, with a sweet and solemn voice, he spoke and revealed the true condition of Nicodemus. "Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." {4Red 10.2}

The Pharisee was surprised out of his self-possession by these words, the meaning of which he partially comprehended; for he had heard John the Baptist preach repentance and baptism, and also the coming of One who should baptize with the Holy Ghost. Nicodemus had long felt that there was a want of spirituality among the Jews; that bigotry, pride, and worldly ambition guided their actions in a great measure. He had hoped for a better state of things when the Messiah should come. But he was looking for a Saviour who would set up a temporal throne in Jerusalem, and who would gather the Jewish nation under his standard, bringing the Roman power into subjection by force of arms. {4Red 11.1}

This learned dignitary was a strict Pharisee. He had prided himself upon his own good works and exalted piety. He considered his daily life perfect in the sight of God, and was startled to hear Jesus speak of a kingdom too pure for him to see in his present state. His mind misgave him, yet he felt irritated by the close application of the words to his own case, and he answered as if he had understood them in the most literal sense, "How can a man be born when he is old?" {4Red 11.2}

Jesus, with solemn emphasis, repeated, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The words of Jesus could

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no longer be misunderstood. His listener well knew that he referred to water baptism and the grace of God. The power of the Holy Spirit transforms the entire man. This

change constitutes the new birth. {4Red 11.3}

Many of the Jews had acknowledged John as a prophet sent of God, and had received baptism at his hands unto repentance; meanwhile he had plainly taught them that his work and mission was to prepare the way for Christ, who was the greater light, and would complete the work which he had begun. Nicodemus had meditated upon these things, and he now felt convinced that he was in the presence of that One foretold by John. {4Red 12.1}

Said Jesus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Jesus here seeks to impress upon Nicodemus the positive necessity of the influence of the Spirit of God upon the human heart to purify it preparatory to the development of a righteous and symmetrical character. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." This fountain of the heart being purified, the stream thereof becomes pure. {4Red 12.2}

This new birth looks mysterious to Nicodemus. He asks, "How can these things be?" Jesus, bidding him marvel not, uses the wind as an illustration of his meaning. It is heard among the branches of the trees, and rustling the leaves and flowers, yet it is invisible to the eye, and

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from whence it comes and whither it goeth, no man knoweth. So is the experience of every one who is born of the Spirit. The mind is an invisible agent of God to produce tangible results. Its influence is powerful, and governs the actions of men. If purified from all evil, it is the motive power of good. The regenerating Spirit of God, taking possession of the mind, transforms the life; wicked thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced, love, peace, and humility take the place of anger, envy, and strife. That power which no human eye can see, has created a new being in the image of God. {4Red 12.3}

The necessity of the new birth was not so strongly impressed upon Nicodemus as the manner of its accomplishment. Jesus reproves him, asking if he, a master and teacher in Israel, an expounder of the prophecies, can be ignorant of these things. Has he read those sacred writings in vain, that he has failed to understand from them that the heart must be cleansed from its natural defilement by the Spirit of God before it can be fit for the kingdom of Heaven? Christ made no reference here to the resurrection of the body from the grave, when a nation shall be born in a day, but he was speaking in regard to the inward work of grace upon the unregenerate heart. {4Red 13.1}

He had just been engaged in cleansing the temple, by driving from its sacred courts those who had degraded it to a place of traffic and extortion. Not one who had fled that day from the presence of Jesus was fitted by the grace of God to be connected with the sacred services of the temple. True, there were some honorable men among the Pharisees, who deeply regretted the evils that were corrupting the Jewish nation

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and desecrating its religious rites. They also saw that traditions and useless forms had

taken the place of true holiness, but they were powerless to prevent these growing evils. {4Red 13.2}

Jesus had commenced his work by striking directly at the selfish, avaricious spirit of the Jews, showing that while professing to be the children of Abraham they refused to follow his example. They were zealous for an external appearance of righteousness while they neglected internal holiness. They were sticklers for the letter of the law, while they grossly transgressed its spirit every day. The law forbade hatred and theft, yet Christ declared that the Jews had made his Father's house a den of thieves. The great necessity of the people was a new moral birth, a removal of the sins that polluted them, a renewal of true knowledge and genuine holiness. {4Red 14.1}

This purifying of the temple illustrates the work that must be accomplished in every one who would secure eternal life. Patiently Jesus unfolded the plan of salvation to Nicodemus, showing him how the Holy Spirit brings light and transforming power to every soul that is born of the Spirit. Like the wind, which is invisible-- yet the effects of which are plainly seen and felt--is the baptism of the Spirit of God upon the heart, revealing itself in every action of him who experiences its saving power. {4Red 14.2}

He explained how Christ, the burden-bearer, lifts the burden from the oppressed soul, and bids it rejoice in deliverance from bondage. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of Heaven. Yet no one sees the hand that lifts the burden, nor beholds the light

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descend from the courts of God. The blessing comes when the soul, by faith, surrenders itself to the Lord. This mystery exceeds human knowledge, yet he who thus passes from death to life realizes that it is a divine truth. {4Red 14.3}

The conversion of the soul through faith in Christ was but dimly comprehended by Nicodemus, who had been accustomed to consider cold formality and rigid services as true religion. The great Teacher explained that his mission upon earth was not to set up a temporal kingdom, emulating the pomp and display of the world, but to establish the reign of peace and love, to bring men to the Father through the mediatorial agency of his Son. {4Red 15.1}

Nicodemus was bewildered. Said Jesus, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" If Nicodemus could not receive his teachings illustrating the work of grace upon the human heart, as represented by the figure of the wind, how could he comprehend the character of his glorious heavenly kingdom should he explain it to him? Not discerning the nature of Christ's work on earth, he could not understand his work in Heaven. Jesus referred Nicodemus to the prophecies of David and Ezekiel:-- {4Red 15.2}

"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." "And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence."

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"Therefore, I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith

the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit." "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. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." {4Red 15.3}

The learned Nicodemus had read these pointed prophecies with a clouded mind, but now he began to comprehend their true meaning, and to understand that even a man as just and honorable as himself must experience a new birth through Jesus Christ, as the only condition upon which he could be saved, and secure an entrance into the kingdom of God. Jesus spoke positively that unless a man is born again he cannot discern the kingdom which Christ came upon earth to set up. Rigid precision in obeying the law would entitle no man to enter the kingdom of Heaven. {4Red 16.1}

There must be a new birth, a new mind through the operation of the Spirit of God, which purifies the life and ennobles the character. This connection with God fits man for the glorious kingdom of Heaven. No human invention

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can ever find a remedy for the sinning soul. Only by repentance and humiliation, a submission to the divine requirements, can the work of grace be performed. Iniquity is so offensive in the sight of God, whom the sinner has so long insulted and wronged, that a repentance commensurate with the character of the sins committed often produces an agony of spirit hard to bear. {4Red 16.2}

Nothing less than a practical acceptance and application of divine truth opens the kingdom of God to man. Only a pure and lowly heart, obedient and loving, firm in the faith and service of the Most High, can enter there. Jesus also declares that as "Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The serpent in the wilderness was lifted upon a pole before the people, that all who had been stung unto death by the fiery serpent might look upon this brazen serpent, a symbol of Christ, and be instantly healed. But they must look in faith, or it would be of no avail. Just so must men look upon the Son of Man as their Saviour unto eternal life. Man had separated himself from God by sin. Christ brought his divinity to earth, veiled by humanity, in order to rescue man from his lost condition. Human nature is vile, and man's character must be changed before it can harmonize with the pure and holy in God's immortal kingdom. This transformation is the new birth. {4Red 17.1}

If man by faith takes hold of the divine love of God, he becomes a new creature through Christ Jesus. The world is overcome, human nature is

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subdued, and Satan is vanquished. In this important sermon to Nicodemus, Jesus unfolded before this noble Pharisee the whole plan of salvation, and his mission to the world. In none of his subsequent discourses did the Saviour explain so thoroughly, step

by step, the work necessary to be done in the human heart, if it would inherit the kingdom of Heaven. He traced man's salvation directly to the love of the Father, which led him to give his Son unto death that man might be saved. {4Red 17.2}

Jesus was acquainted with the soil into which he cast the seeds of truth. For three years there was little apparent fruit. Nicodemus was never an enemy to Jesus, but he did not publicly acknowledge him. He was weighing matters with an exactitude that accorded with his nature. He watched the life-work of Jesus with intense interest. He pondered over his teachings and beheld his mighty works. The raising of Lazarus from the dead was an evidence of his Messiahship that could not be disputed in the mind of the learned Jew. {4Red 18.1}

Once, when the Sanhedrim council was planning the most effectual way of bringing about the condemnation and death of Jesus, his authoritative voice was heard in protest, " Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" This brought a sharp rebuff from the chief priest, "Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Yet the council dispersed, for they could not obtain a unanimous assent to the condemnation of Jesus. {4Red 18.2}

The Jews suspected both Joseph and Nicodemus of being in sympathy with the Teacher of

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Galilee, and these men were not summoned when the council met that decided the fate of Jesus. The words spoken at night to a single man in the lonely mountain were not lost. When Nicodemus saw Jesus upon the cross, hanging like a malefactor between heaven and earth, yet praying for his murderers; when he witnessed the commotion of nature, in that awful hour when the sun was hidden and the earth reeled in space, when the rocks were split in sunder and the vail of the temple rent in twain; then he remembered the solemn teaching in the mountain: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." {4Red 18.3}

The scales fell from his eyes, and faith took the place of doubt and uncertainty. Beams of light streamed from the secret interview in the mountain and illuminated the cross of the Saviour. In that time of discouragement and danger, when the hearts of the disciples were failing them through doubt and fear, Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple of Jesus, came forward and obtained the Lord's body from Pilate, and Nicodemus, who at the first came to Jesus by night, brought a hundred pounds' weight of myrrh and aloes. These two men with their own hands performed the last sacred rites, and laid the body of the Saviour in a new sepulcher where never man lay before. These lofty rulers of the Jews mingled their tears together over the sacred form of the dead. {4Red 19.1}

Now, when the disciples were scattered and discouraged, Nicodemus came boldly to the front. He was rich, and he employed his wealth to sustain the infant church of Christ, that the Jews thought would be blotted out with the death of

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Jesus. He who had been so cautious and questioning, now, in the time of peril, was firm as the granite rock, encouraging the flagging faith of the followers of Christ, and furnishing means to carry on the cause. He was defrauded, persecuted, and

stigmatized by those who had paid him reverence in other days. He became poor in this world's goods, yet he faltered not in the faith that had its beginning in that secret night conference with the young Galilean. {4Red 19.2}

Nicodemus related to John the story of that interview, and his inspired pen recorded it for the instruction of millions. The vital truths there taught are as important today as they were that solemn night in the shadowy mountain, when the mighty Jewish ruler came to learn the way of life from the lowly carpenter of Nazareth. {4Red 20.1}

"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples), he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee." {4Red 20.2}

The prejudice of the Jews was aroused because the disciples of Jesus did not use the exact words of John in the rite of baptism. John baptized unto repentance, but the disciples of Jesus, on profession of the faith, baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The teachings of John were in perfect harmony with those of Jesus, yet his disciples became jealous for fear his influence was diminishing. A dispute arose between them and the disciples of Jesus in regard to the form of words proper to use at baptism, and finally as to the right of the latter to baptize at all. {4Red 20.3}

John's disciples came to him with their

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grievances, saying, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." John possessed the common infirmities of human nature. In this matter he was subjected to a severe trial. His influence as the prophet of God had been greater than any other man's, until the ministry of Christ commenced; but the fame of this new teacher was drawing the attention of all people, and in consequence, the popularity of John was waning. His disciples brought to him the true statement of the case, Jesus baptizeth, and all men come to him. {4Red 20.4}

John stood in a dangerous position; had he justified the jealousy of his disciples by a word of sympathy or encouragement in their murmurings, a serious division would have been created. But the noble and unselfish spirit of the prophet shone forth in the answer he gave to his followers:-- {4Red 21.1}

"A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." {4Red 21.2}

Had John manifested disappointment or grief at being superseded by Jesus; had he allowed his sympathies to be aroused in his own favor, when he perceived that his power over the people was waning; had he for a moment lost sight of his mission in this hour of temptation, the result would have been disastrous to the establishment

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of the Christian church. The seeds of dissension would have been sown, anarchy would have sprung up, and the cause of God would have languished for want of proper workers. {4Red 21.3}

But John, irrespective of personal interest, stood up in defense of Jesus, testifying to his superiority as the Promised One of Israel, whose way he had come to prepare. He identified himself fully with the cause of Christ, and declared that his greatest joy was in its success. Then, rising above all worldly considerations, he gave this remarkable testimony--almost the counterpart of that which Jesus had given to Nicodemus in their secret interview:-- {4Red 22.1}

"He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from Heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." {4Red 22.2}

What a sermon was this to the Pharisees, clearing the way for the ministry of Christ. The same spirit that actuated Jesus, controlled the mind of John the Baptist. Their testimony corresponded; their lives were given to the same reformatory work. The prophet points to the Saviour as the Sun of Righteousness rising with splendor, and soon to eclipse his own light, then

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growing pale and dim in the glory of a greater light. John, by his unselfish joy in the successful ministry of Jesus, presents to the world the truest type of nobility ever exhibited by mortal man. It carries a lesson of submission and self-sacrifice to those whom God has placed in responsible positions. It teaches them never to appropriate to themselves undue honor, nor let the spirit of rivalry disgrace the cause of God. The true Christian should vindicate the right at the expense of all personal considerations. {4Red 22.3}

The news that had been carried to John concerning the success of Jesus, was also borne to Jerusalem, and there created against him jealousy, envy, and hatred. Jesus knew the hard hearts and darkened minds of the Pharisees, and that they would spare no pains to create a division between his own disciples and those of John that would greatly injure the work, so he quietly ceased to baptize and withdrew to Galilee. He knew that the storm was gathering which was soon to sweep away the noblest prophet God had ever given to the world. He wished to avoid all division of feeling in the great work before him, and, for the time, removed from that region for the purpose of allaying all excitement detrimental to the cause of God. {4Red 23.1}

Here is a lesson to the followers of Christ, that they should take every proper precaution to avoid disagreement; for in every division of interest, resulting in disputation and unhappy differences in the church, souls are lost that might have been saved in the kingdom of Heaven. In the occurrence of a religious crisis, leading men who profess to be God's instruments should follow the example of the great Master and that of

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the noble prophet John. They should stand firm and united in defense of the truth, while

they carefully labor to avoid all injurious dissensions. {4Red 23.2}

The Woman of Samaria.

As Jesus pursued his way to Galilee, his course lay through Samaria. He embraced every opportunity to teach as he traveled on foot from place to place. The Saviour was weary, and he sat on Jacob's well to rest, while his disciples went in search of food with which to refresh themselves and their Master. As he sat there alone, a woman of Samaria drew near as if unconscious of his presence; but his eye was upon her, and after she had drawn the water he asked her to give him a drink. {4Red 24.1}

The Samaritan woman was surprised at this request from a Jew, and answered, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus answered, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." He here referred to the divine grace which he alone could bestow, and which is as living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul. {4Red 24.2}

But the woman's understanding did not comprehend the meaning of Christ; she supposed that he was speaking of the well before them, and answered, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than

our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself?" She saw before her only a weary, thirsty traveler, wayworn and dusty; and her mind instinctively compared this humble stranger with the great and worthy Jacob. {4Red 24.3}

Jesus did not immediately satisfy the woman in regard to himself, but with solemn earnestness said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." {4Red 25.1}

The woman looked upon him with wondering attention; he had succeeded in arousing her interest and inspiring respect for himself. She now perceived that it was not the water of Jacob's well to which Jesus alluded, for of this she used continually, drinking, and thirsting again. With remarkable faith she asked him to give her the water of which he spoke, that she might not thirst nor come to draw from the well. {4Red 25.2}

Jesus did not intend to convey the idea that simply one draught of the water of life would satisfy the receiver, but that whoever is united with Christ, has within his soul a living fountain from which to draw strength and grace sufficient for all emergencies. Words and deeds of righteousness flow from it and refresh the hearts of others, as well as the soul from which it springs. Jesus Christ, the never-failing source of this fountain, cheers the life and brightens the path of all who come to him for aid. Love to God, the satisfying hope of Heaven, springs up in good works unto eternal life. {4Red 25.3}

Jesus now abruptly changed the subject of

conversation, and bade her call her husband. The woman answered frankly that she

had no husband. Jesus had now approached the desired point where he could convince her that he had the power to read her life history, although previously unacquainted with her. He addressed her thus: "Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband; in that saidst thou truly." {4Red 25.4}

Jesus had a double object in view; he wished to arouse her conscience as to the sin of her manner of life, as well as to prove to her that a sight wiser than human eyes had read the secrets of her life. But the woman, although not fully realizing the guilt of her manner of living, was greatly astonished that this stranger should possess such knowledge. With profound reverence she said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." Her personal feelings were now lost in anxiety concerning religious matters. She proceeded, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." {4Red 26.1}

Just in sight was Mount Gerizim, its temple demolished, and only the altar remaining. The place of worship had been a subject of contention between the Jews and Samaritans. The latter people had once belonged to Israel, but had become divided from them because of their transgressions in neglecting to obey the statutes of God. The Lord suffered them to be overcome by an idolatrous nation, whose religion had gradually contaminated their own. Still preserving their reverence for the true God, they

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represented him by images of wood and stone, before which they bowed in worship. {4Red 26.2}

When the temple was rebuilt at Jerusalem, the Samaritans wished to join the Jews in its erection. This privilege was refused them, and, in consequence, a bitter animosity sprang up between the two people, which resulted in the Samaritans building a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, where they worshiped according to the ceremonies that God gave unto Moses, but mingled with their worship the taint of idolatry. But disasters attended the Samaritans, their temple was destroyed by the enemy, and they seemed to be under a curse. {4Red 27.1}

They were forced to believe that God was punishing them for their apostasy. They determined to reform, and solicited teachers from the Jews to instruct them in the true religion. Through this teaching, their views of God and his requirements became clearer, and their religious service resembled more nearly that of the Jews. But to a certain degree they still clung to their idolatry, and there was a lack of harmony between them and the Jews. The Samaritans would not respect the temple of worship at Jerusalem, and refused to admit that it was the true place of worship. {4Red 27.2}

Jesus answered the woman by saying that the time was at hand when they should neither worship the Father in that mountain nor in Jerusalem. Said he, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit;

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and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." {4Red 27.3}

This was a plain statement that the Jews were more nearly correct in the principles of their religion than any other nation. Jesus also alluded to the faith of the Samaritans being amalgamated with the worship of graven images. True, they held that these idols were only to remind them of the living God, the Ruler of the universe; but, nevertheless, the people were led to reverence these inanimate figures. {4Red 28.1}

Jesus, who was the foundation of the old dispensation, identified himself with the Jews, sanctioning their views of God and his government. He opened great and important truths before this woman. He declared to her that the time had arrived when the true worshipers need not seek a holy mountain nor sacred temple, but were to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Religion was not to be confined to external forms and ceremonies, but was to be throned in the heart, purifying the life and actuating to good works. {4Red 28.2}

The words of truth that fell from the lips of the divine Teacher stirred the heart of his listener. Never had she heard such sentiments, either from the priests of her own people or the Jews. The impressive teachings of this stranger carried her mind back to the prophecies concerning the promised Christ; for the Samaritans as well as the Jews looked for his coming. "I know that Messias cometh," said she; "when he is come, he will tell us all things." Jesus answered, "I that speak unto thee am he." {4Red 28.3}

Blessed woman of Samaria! She had felt during the conference as if in the presence of

divinity; now she gladly acknowledged her Lord. She required of him no miracle, as did the Jews, to prove his divine character. She accepted his assertion, feeling perfect confidence in his words, and not questioning the holy influence that emanated from him. {4Red 28.4}

The disciples, returning from their errand, were surprised to find their Master conversing with a Samaritan woman; yet they did not inquire her errand, nor ask Jesus why he talked with her. The woman left her water-pot, forgetting her errand to the well, and went her way into the city, saying to all whom she met, and the men of the city, "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" {4Red 29.1}

This woman, though so sinful, was still in a more favorable condition to become an heir of Christ's kingdom than those of the Jews who made exalted professions of piety, yet trusted their salvation to the observance of outward forms and ceremonies. They felt that they needed no Saviour and no teacher. But this poor woman hungered and thirsted after righteousness. She was eager for instruction, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and ready to accept the Saviour when he was revealed. Jesus, who explained not his character to the proud and skeptical Pharisees and rulers, declared himself to this humble person who was ready to believe on him. {4Red 29.2}

As yet he had not taken the refreshing draught that he desired, nor tasted the food that his disciples had brought him. The salvation of perishing souls so absorbed his attention that his physical wants were forgotten. But his followers anxiously entreated him to eat. Still

contemplating the great object of his mission, he answered them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." His disciples were surprised, and began to wonder among themselves who could have brought him food in their absence. But Jesus explained, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish his work." {4Red 29.3}

It was not temporal food alone that sustained him in his arduous life; but the accomplishment of the work which he left the royal courts of Heaven to perform, strengthened him for his labors, and lifted him above the necessities of humanity. To minister to a soul hungering and thirsting for the truth was more satisfying to the Son of Man than eating or drinking. He pitied sinners; his heart went out in sympathy for the poor Samaritans, who felt their ignorance and wretchedness, and were eagerly looking for the advent of Messiah, who would enlighten them and teach them the true religion. {4Red 30.1}

The Jews felt secure in their self-righteousness, they desired no enlightenment; but they looked for a Saviour who would release them from the bondage of the Roman yoke, and exalt them above their oppressors. They could not receive one who reproved their sins and condemned their selfish, hypocritical lives. They looked for a Messiah who would reign with worldly power and glory, confound and defeat the Romans, and exalt the Jews to a nation of princes. {4Red 30.2}

Jesus saw a field of labor among the Samaritans. Before him lay the fields of grain, their tender green lit by the golden sunlight. Viewing the beautiful scene, he employed it as a symbol, "Say not ye there are yet four months, and then

cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." He here referred to the gospel field, to the work of Christianity among the poor, despised Samaritans. His hand reached out to gather them into the garner; they were ready for the harvest. {4Red 30.3}

The Saviour was above all prejudice of nation or people; he was willing to extend the blessings and privileges of the Jews to all who would accept the light which he came to the world to bring. It caused him great joy to behold even one soul reaching out to him from the night of spiritual blindness. That which Jesus had withheld from the Jews and enjoined upon his disciples to keep secret, was distinctly opened before the inquiring woman of Samaria; for He who knew all things perceived that she would make a right use of her knowledge and be the means of leading others to the true faith. {4Red 31.1}

It was not merely the fact that Jesus told her concerning the secrets of her life which inspired the confidence of this woman in him, but it was also his look and his solemn words that reached her soul and convinced her that he was a superior being. At the same time she felt that he was her friend, pitying and loving her. This is the character of the world's Redeemer; while he condemned her life of sin, he directed her to his divine grace as the sure and perfect remedy. The pitying love of the Saviour is not confined to sect or party. {4Red 31.2}

As the woman of Samaria hastened back to her friends, publishing as she went the wonderful news, many left the highway and the town to go and ascertain if she indeed spoke the truth. Numbers of the citizens left their employments

and hastened to Jacob's well to see and hear this remarkable man. They surrounded Jesus and listened attentively to his instruction. They plied him with questions, and eagerly received his explanation of matters that had perplexed their understandings. They were like a people in great darkness tracing up a sudden ray that had pierced their gloom and which they were eager to follow to its source, that they might bask in the light and warmth of day. {4Red 31.3}

The Samaritans were attracted and interested by the teachings of Jesus. But they were not satisfied with this short conference; they were anxious to hear more and to have their fellow-citizens also listen to this wonderful teacher. They begged him to tarry with them and instruct them. For two days he remained in Samaria teaching the people. Many believed on him and accepted his words. Jesus was a Jew, yet he mingled freely with these Samaritans, setting at naught the custom and bigotry of his nation. He had already commenced to break down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and preach salvation to the world. {4Red 32.1}

These Samaritan listeners were in darkness and superstition; but they were not contented with their condition, and the words of Jesus relieved them of many doubts and uncertainties that had harassed their minds. Many who had come from curiosity to see and hear this remarkable person were convicted of the truth of his teachings, and acknowledged him as their Saviour. Eagerly they listened to the words he spoke in reference to the kingdom of God. In their new joy they said unto the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we

have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." {4Red 32.2}

Christ, at the very beginning of his ministry, openly rebuked the superficial morality and ostentatious piety of the Jews. He did not conform his life and his work to their customs and regulations. He was not influenced by their unreasonable prejudices against the Gentiles. He, on the contrary, sternly rebuked their conceit and selfish seclusion. The Pharisees rejected Christ. They ignored his miracles and the truthful simplicity of his character. They refused to recognize his pure and elevated spirituality and all evidences of his divinity. They scornfully demanded of him a sign that they might know that he was indeed the Son of God. {4Red 33.1}

But the Samaritans asked no sign, and Jesus performed no miracles among them; yet they received his teachings, were convicted of their great need of a Saviour, and accepted him as their Redeemer. They were therefore in a much more favorable position before God than the Jewish nation, with its pride and vanity, blind bigotry, narrow prejudice, and bitter hatred of every other people on the earth. Jesus, in face of all these prejudices, accepted the hospitality of this despised people, slept under their roofs, ate with them at their tables--partaking of the food prepared and served by their hands--taught in their streets, and treated them with the greatest kindness and courtesy. {4Red 33.2}

In the temple at Jerusalem there was a partition wall separating the outer court from the inner one. Gentiles were permitted to enter the outer court, but it was only lawful for

the Jews to penetrate to the inner inclosure. Had a

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Samaritan passed this sacred boundary, the temple would have been desecrated, and his life would have paid the penalty of its pollution. But Jesus, who was virtually the foundation and originator of the temple--the services and ceremonies of which were but a type of his great sacrifice, pointing to him as the Son of God--encircled the Gentiles with his human arm of sympathy and association, while, with his divine arm of grace and power, he brought to them the salvation which the Jews refused to accept. {4Red 33.3}

Jesus had spent several months in Judea, giving the rulers of Israel a fair opportunity of proving his character as the Saviour of the world. He had performed many mighty works in their midst; but he was still treated by them with suspicion and jealousy. In passing through Samaria on his way to Galilee, his reception among the Samaritans, and the eagerness with which they listened to his teachings, were in marked contrast with the incredulity of the Jews, who had misinterpreted the prophecies of Daniel, Zechariah, and Ezekiel, confusing the first advent of Christ with his second majestic and glorious appearing. {4Red 34.1}

Their blindness was in consequence of their lofty pride and arrogance, looking only for worldly station and emolument. They urged their interpretation of the prophecies upon the Samaritans, who believed that Messiah was to come not only as a Redeemer of the Jews, but of the world. This caused great bitterness toward them from the Jews, who contended that Christ would come to exalt Israel and to bring into subjection all other nations. This perversion of the prophecies led the Samaritans to discard all the sacred

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writings but those of Moses. But their minds were open to enlightenment, and they received the Saviour's instruction joyfully and accepted him as the promised Messiah. {4Red 34.2}

Choosing the Disciples.

The disciples had not yet fully joined themselves to Jesus to be co-laborers with him. They had witnessed many of his miracles, and their minds had been enlightened by the discourses they had heard from his lips; but they had not entirely left their employment as fishermen. Their hearts were filled with grief by the death of John, and they were troubled with conflicting thoughts. If the life of John had been permitted to end so ingloriously, what would be the fate of their Master, when the scribes and Pharisees were so bitter against him? Amid their doubt and fear, it was a relief for them to return once more to their fishing, and, for a brief space, find in their old employment a diversion from their anxiety. {4Red 35.1}

Jesus frequently dismissed them to visit their homes and rest; but he gently though firmly resisted all their entreaties that he should himself rest. At night he found the seasons of prayer for which he could not claim time during the day. While the world he had come to save was wrapped in slumber, the Redeemer, in the sanctuary of the

mountains, would intercede for man with the Father. Often he spent entire nights in prayer and meditation, going back in the morning to his active work. {4Red 35.2}

It was morning on the Sea of Galilee, and the fishermen were in their boats, weary with

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a long night of fruitless toil. But, with the dawn, Simon discovered the form of Jesus walking upon the beach. He directed the attention of his disciples to their beloved Teacher, and they all pulled for the shore. It seemed impossible for the Saviour to obtain any retirement. Already the crowd had gathered thickly about him as he walked on the shore. The sick and afflicted were brought for him to relieve. At length the people had pressed so closely about him that they scarcely left him comfortable standing-room. It was just at this time that the fishermen were nearing the shore. Jesus requested Peter to take him in his boat, and, immediately, upon entering it, directed the disciple to pull out a little from the land. Then, being removed a short distance from the people, he was in a better position to be seen and heard by them, and from the boat upon the lake he preached in regard to the mysteries of the kingdom of God. His language was simple and earnest, appealing to the minds of the people with convincing power. {4Red 35.3}

The discourse ended, Jesus turned to Peter and bade him launch out into the deep, and let down his net for a draught. But Peter was thoroughly disheartened; not only was he sorrowful because of the death of John the Baptist, and his mind tortured with unbelief in consequence of that event, but he was discouraged in regard to his temporal prospects. He had been unsuccessful in his fishing, and the past night had been spent in unavailing labor. It was therefore in a desponding tone that he replied to the command of Jesus: "Master, we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net."

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{4Red 36.1}

He called his brother to his aid, and together they let down the net into the deep water, as Jesus had directed. When they came to draw in the net they were unable to do so because of the great quantity of fish it contained, and they were obliged to summon James and John to their aid before they could draw in the net and unload it. When this was done the boat was so heavily laden that there was danger of its sinking. {4Red 37.1}

Peter had seen Jesus perform wonderful miracles, but none made so strong an impression upon his mind as this miraculous draught of fish, after a night of disappointment. The unbelief and discouragement that had been oppressing the disciples through the long, weary night, now gave way to awe and amazement. Peter was thrilled with a sense of the divine power of his Master. He felt ashamed of his sinful unbelief. He knew that he was in the presence of the Son of God, and felt unworthy to be in such companionship. He impulsively flung himself at the feet of Jesus, crying, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" But even as he spoke, he was clinging to the feet of Jesus, and would not have been willing for the Saviour to take him at his word, even if he had attempted to do so. {4Red 37.2}

But Jesus understood the conflicting emotions of the impetuous disciple, and said to him, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Similar words were afterward addressed to the three other fishermen, when they were all upon the shore. As they were busily employed in mending their nets, which had been broken by the great weight of the fish they had taken, Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make

you fishers of men." Immediately after this they left their nets and boats and followed the Saviour. These humble fishermen recognized the divine authority of Jesus, and forthwith gave up their regular occupation and left their worldly possessions in obedience to the command of their Lord. {4Red 37.3}

These four disciples were more closely associated with Jesus in his earthly life than any of the others. Christ, the light of the world, was abundantly able to qualify these unlearned fishermen of Galilee for the high commission he had chosen for them. The words spoken to these lowly men were of mighty signification; they were to influence the world through all time. It seemed a simple thing for Jesus to call those poor, discouraged men to follow him; but it was an event productive of tremendous results; it was to shake the world. The quickening power of God, enlightening the minds of those illiterate fishermen, was to enable them to spread the doctrines of Christ far and wide, and others were to take up the task, until it would reach all lands, and be taught in all ages, winning many to salvation. Thus would the poor fishermen of Galilee be, indeed, "fishers of men." {4Red 38.1}

Jesus did not oppose education. The highest culture, if sanctified by the love and fear of God, receives his approbation. An objection is sometimes brought against education because Jesus chose ignorant fishermen for his disciples. But these men were subject to his refining influence for three years, and the Saviour was the most perfect educator the world has ever known. The Prince of Life did not choose the learned lawyers, the scribes and elders, for his disciples, because

they would not follow him. Therefore he chose the humble peasants for his helpers. The rich and educated among the Jews were exalted by their own worldly wisdom and self-righteousness, and felt all-sufficient in themselves, realizing no special need of a Redeemer. Their characters were fixed, and they would not receive the teachings of Christ. But the humble fishermen were rejoiced to be connected with the Saviour, and become co-laborers with him. {4Red 38.2}

As Jesus passed on his way to Jerusalem, he saw Matthew engaged in his business of tax-gathering. He was a Jew, but when he became a publican his brethren despised him. The Jewish people were continually irritated on account of the Roman yoke. That a despised and heathen nation should collect tribute of them was a constant reminder that their power and glory as an independent nation had departed. Their indignation knew no bounds when one of their own people so far forgot the honor of his exalted race as to accept the office of tax-gatherer. {4Red 39.1}

Those who thus assisted to sustain the Roman authority were considered apostate. The Jews regarded it as degrading to associate in any way with a publican. They considered the office identical with oppression and extortion. But the mind of Jesus was

not molded after the prejudices of the Pharisees. He looked below the surface and read the heart. His divine eye saw in Matthew one whom he could use for the establishment of his church. This man had listened to the teachings of Christ, and had been attracted to him. His heart was full of reverence for the Saviour, but the thought had never entered the mind of Matthew that this great Teacher would

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condescend to notice him, much less choose him as a disciple. Therefore his astonishment was great when Jesus addressed him with the words, "Follow me." {4Red 39.2}

Without a doubtful murmur, or question as to his consequent pecuniary loss, Matthew rose up and followed his Master, and united his interest with the few disciples of Jesus. The despised publican felt that the Saviour had bestowed upon him an honor which he did not deserve. He gave no thought to the lucrative business he had exchanged for poverty and fatigue. It was enough that he would be in the presence of Christ, that he could learn wisdom and goodness from his lips, behold his marvelous works, and be a co-laborer with him in his arduous toil. {4Red 40.1}

Matthew was wealthy, but he was willing to sacrifice all for his Master. He had many friends and acquaintances whom he was anxious should become followers of Jesus, and he was desirous that they should have an opportunity to meet him. He felt certain that they would be charmed with his pure and simple doctrine, taught without ostentation or display. {4Red 40.2}

He accordingly made a feast at his own house and called together his friends and relatives, among whom were a number of publicans. Jesus was invited as a guest, in whose honor the feast was prepared. He, with his disciples, accepted the courteous invitation, and graced the banquet with his presence. The envious scribes and Pharisees, who were ever watching and following the movements of Jesus, did not lose this opportunity of seeking to condemn the cause of Christ. {4Red 40.3}

They were highly indignant that one who

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called himself a Jew should mingle with publicans. Though they refused to acknowledge him the Messiah, and would accept none of his teachings, yet they could not shut their eyes to the fact that he had great influence over the people; this being the case they were chagrined that he should, by his example, ignore their prejudices and traditions. When Jesus called Matthew to follow him their anger knew no bounds that he should thus honor a hated publican. They openly attacked the disciples on the subject, and accused them of eating with publicans and sinners. {4Red 40.4}

"And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" It was with bitter contempt that they asked this question. Jesus did not wait for his disciples to answer this scornful charge, but himself replied, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He here explained his course by taking the case of a physician, whose

work is not among the well, but among those who are diseased. He who came to save the sin-sick soul must go among those who most need his forgiving mercy and pitying love. {4Red 41.1}

Those poor publicans and sinners, although stained with guilt, felt their need of repentance and pardon. It was the mission of Heaven to relieve just such want as theirs. Although these persons apparently disregarded religious rites and

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observances, yet in heart and life they were better fitted to become sincere Christians than the Pharisees and priests who scorned them. Many of them were possessed of noble integrity, and would not wrong their conscience by rejecting a doctrine which their reason declared to be true. {4Red 41.2}

Jesus had come to heal the wounds of sin among his own nation, but they refused his proffered aid; they trampled upon his teachings and made light of his mighty works. The Lord turned, therefore, to those who would hear his words. Matthew and his associates obeyed the summons of the Master and followed him. The despised publican became one of the most devoted evangelists. His unselfish heart was drawn out for souls that needed the light. He did not repulse sinners by magnifying his own piety, and contrasting it with their sinfulness; but linked them to himself through kindly sympathy, as he presented to them the precious gospel of Christ. His labors were attended with marked success. Many of those who sat at that feast, and listened to the divine instruction of Jesus, became instruments of enlightenment to the people. {4Red 42.1}

The pointed words addressed by Jesus to the Pharisees on the occasion of this feast silenced them, but did not remove their prejudice nor soften their hearts. They went away and complained to the disciples of John concerning the practices of Jesus and his followers. They dilated upon the dangerous influence that he exerted over the people, setting at naught their ancient traditions, and preaching a doctrine of mercy and love to the world. They sought to arouse dissatisfaction in the minds of John's disciples by contrasting their austere piety and rigorous fasting

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with the example of Jesus in feasting with publicans and sinners. {4Red 42.2}

The feelings of John's disciples were stirred, and they complained to the disciples of Jesus concerning the course of their Master, which was so contrary to the teachings of John. If John was sent of God, and taught according to his Spirit, how could the practices of Jesus be right? The followers of the Saviour, being unable to answer these questions, brought the matter to their Master. "And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." {4Red 43.1}

Jesus had come to the world, bringing the light of Heaven. He came as the Redeemer of mankind, to limit the power of Satan and set the captive free. At his birth the heavenly messengers had borne the glad tidings of great joy to the humble

shepherds upon the plains of Bethlehem, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" {4Red 43.2}

The greatest gift of Heaven had been given to the world. Joy to the poor, for Christ has come to make them heirs of his kingdom! Joy to the rich, for he will teach them how to apply their earthly treasure that it may secure for them eternal riches in Heaven! Joy to the ignorant, for he has come to give them wisdom unto salvation! Joy to the learned, for he will open to their

understanding deeper mysteries than they have ever before fathomed! {4Red 43.3}

Said the Saviour, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see these things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear these things which ye hear, and have not heard them." The mission of Christ opened to the minds of men truths that had been hidden from the foundation of the world. {4Red 44.1}

Every human enterprise sinks into insignificance when compared with the advent of Christ upon the earth. What occasion for joy had the disciples who were permitted to walk and talk with the Majesty of Heaven! Happy were they who had the Prince of Peace in their very midst, bestowing upon them daily new mercies and blessings. Why should they mourn and fast? It was more fitting for them to mourn who rejected the Saviour and closed their eyes and ears to his divine teachings, who turned from the peace and joy of infinite love and truth. The treasure of Heaven was entrusted to them for a time, and they, heedless of the gift, chose bondage and darkness rather than freedom and light through Christ. {4Red 44.2}

In the synagogue at Nazareth Jesus had announced himself the Redeemer of mankind. Said he, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

{4Red 44.3}

How could the children of the bridechamber fast when the bridegroom was yet with them? But when he should go back to Heaven, leaving his disciples to meet alone the unbelief and darkness of the world, then it would be fitting for the church to fast and mourn, until her absent Lord should return the second time. {4Red 45.1}

The jealous Pharisees misinterpreted all the actions of our Lord. The very deeds that should have melted their hearts and won their admiration, only served as an excuse to charge him with immorality. These self-righteous men had so often been rebuked by Jesus for their iniquity, and exposed in their evil purposes and wicked natures, that they did not dare to bring their complaints to him, but carry them where they will be most likely to create prejudice and unbelief. Had the disciples of Jesus listened to these insinuations, they would have ceased from following their Master. But they heeded not the base charges of impiety and evil associations against him by those who were themselves filled with malice and hatred. {4Red 45.2}

The Saviour ate with sinners, he spoke to them the words of life, and many accepted

him as their Redeemer. The feast of Christ was holy; but the fasting Pharisees will have their portion with the hypocrites and unbelievers, when Christ shall come in his glory, and those whom they scorned will be gathered into his kingdom. {4Red 45.3}

The Sabbath.

Nothing so distinguished the Jews from surrounding nations, and designated them as true worshipers of the Creator, as the institution of

the Sabbath. Its observance was a continual visible token of their connection with God, and separation from other people. All ordinary labor for a livelihood or for worldly profit was forbidden upon the seventh day. According to the fourth commandment the Sabbath was dedicated to rest and religious worship. All secular employment was to be suspended; but works of mercy and benevolence were in accordance with the purpose of the Lord. They were not to be limited by time nor place. To relieve the afflicted, to comfort the sorrowing is a labor of love that does honor to God's holy day. {4Red 45.4}

The work of the priests in connection with the sacrificial offerings was increased upon the Sabbath, yet in their holy work in the service of God they did not violate the fourth commandment of the decalogue. As Israel separated from God, the true object of the Sabbath institution became less distinct in their minds. They grew careless of its observance, and unmindful of its ordinances. The prophets testified to them of God's displeasure in the violation of his Sabbath. Nehemiah says: "In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day, and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals." {4Red 46.1}

And Jeremiah commands them: "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath day, neither do ye any

work, but hallow ye the Sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers." {4Red 46.2}

But they heeded not the admonitions of the inspired prophets, and departed more and more from the religion of their fathers. At length calamities, persecution, and bondage came upon them in consequence of their disregard of God's requirements. {4Red 47.1}

Alarmed at these visitations of divine punishment, they returned to the strict observance of all the outward forms enjoined by the sacred law. Not satisfied with this, they made burdensome additions to those ceremonies. Their pride and bigotry led them to the narrowest interpretation of the requirements of God. As time passed they gradually hedged themselves in with the traditions and customs of their ancestors, till they regarded them with all the sanctity of the original law. This confidence in themselves and their own regulations, with its attendant prejudice against all other nations, caused them to resist the Spirit of God, and separated them still farther from his favor. {4Red 47.2}

Their exactions and restrictions were so wearisome that Jesus declared: "They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders." Their false standard of duty, their superficial tests of piety and godliness, obscured the real and positive requirements of God. Heart service was neglected in the rigid performance of outward ceremonies. The Jews had so perverted the divine commandments, by heaping tradition upon tradition, that, in the days of Christ, they were ready to accuse him of breaking the Sabbath, because of his acts of mercy upon that day.

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{4Red 47.3}

The grain was ready for the sickle when Jesus and his disciples passed through the corn fields on the Sabbath. The disciples were hungry, for their Master had extended his work of teaching and healing to a late hour, and they had been without food for a long time. They accordingly began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat, rubbing them in their hands, in accordance with the law of Moses, which provides that: "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn." {4Red 48.1}

But spies were continually upon the track of Jesus, watching for some occasion to accuse and condemn him. When they saw this act of the disciples, they immediately complained to him, saying, "Behold thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day." In this they expressed their own narrow views of the law. But Jesus defended his followers thus: "Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was a hungered, he, and they that were with him? how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." {4Red 48.2}

If excessive hunger excused David for violating even the holiness of the sanctuary, and made his act guiltless, how much more excusable was the simple act of the disciples in plucking the grain and eating it upon the Sabbath day.

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Jesus would teach his disciples and his enemies that the service of God was first of all; and, if fatigue and hunger attended the work, it was right to satisfy the wants of humanity, even upon the Sabbath day. That holy institution was not given to interfere with the needs of our being, bringing pain, and discomfort, instead of blessings. "The Sabbath was made for man," to give him rest and peace, and remind him of the work of his Creator, not to be a grievous burden. {4Red 48.3}

The work done in the temple upon the Sabbath was in harmony with the law; yet the same labor, if employed in ordinary business, would be a violation of it. The act of plucking and eating the grain to sustain the bodily strength, to be used in the service of God, was right and lawful. Jesus then crowned his argument by declaring himself the "Lord of the Sabbath,"--One above all question and above all law. This Infinite Judge acquits the disciples from blame, appealing to the very statutes they are accused of violating. {4Red 49.1}

But Jesus did not let the matter drop without administering a rebuke to his enemies. He declared that in their blindness they had mistaken the object of the Sabbath. Said he: "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." He then contrasted their many heartless rites with the truthful integrity, and tender love that should characterize the true worshipers of God: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant; there have they dealt treacherously against me."

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{4Red 49.2}

Jesus was reared among this people, so marked with bigotry and prejudice; and he therefore knew that in healing upon the Sabbath day, he would be regarded as a transgressor of the law. He was aware that the Pharisees would seize upon such acts with great indignation, and thereby seek to influence the people against him. He knew that they would use these works of mercy as strong arguments to affect the minds of the masses, who had all their lives been bound by the Jewish restrictions and exactions. Nevertheless he was not prevented by this knowledge from breaking down the senseless wall of superstition that barricaded the Sabbath, and teaching men that charity and benevolence were lawful upon all days. {4Red 50.1}

He entered the synagogue, and saw there a man who had a withered hand. The Pharisees watched him, eager to see what he would do with regard to this case--whether or not he would heal the man upon the Sabbath day. Their sole object was to find cause for accusation against him. Jesus looked upon the man with the withered hand, and commanded him to stand forth. He then asked, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out; and his hand was restored whole as the other." {4Red 50.2}

He justified this work of healing the paralytic, as in perfect keeping with the principles of the fourth commandment. But they questioned him: "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?"

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Jesus made them the clear and forcible answer, "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." {4Red 50.3}

The spies upon our Saviour's words dared not, in the presence of the multitude answer this question for fear of involving themselves in difficulties. They knew that while they would leave men to suffer and die rather than to violate their traditions by relieving them upon the Lord's day, a brute which had fallen into danger would be at once relieved, because of the loss that would accrue to the owner if he was neglected. Thus the dumb animal was exalted above man, made in the image of God. {4Red 51.1}

Jesus wished to correct the false teachings of the Jews in regard to the Sabbath and also to impress his disciples with the fact that deeds of mercy were lawful on that day.

In the matter of healing the withered hand he broke down the custom of the Jews, and left the fourth commandment standing as God had given it to the world. By this act he exalted the Sabbath, sweeping away the senseless restrictions that encumbered it. His act of mercy did honor to the day, while those who complained of him, were, by their many useless rites and ceremonies, themselves dishonoring the Sabbath. {4Red 51.2}

There are ministers today who teach that the Son of God broke the Sabbath and justified his disciples in doing the same. They take the same ground as did the caviling Jews, although ostensibly

for another purpose, since they hold that Christ abolished the Sabbath. {4Red 51.3}

Jesus in turning upon the Pharisees with the question whether it was lawful to do good upon the Sabbath day or evil, to save life or to kill, confronted them with their own wicked purposes. They were following upon his track to find occasion for falsely accusing him; they were hunting his life with bitter hatred and malice, while he was saving life and bringing happiness to many hearts. Was it better to slay upon the Sabbath, as they were planning to do, than to heal the afflicted as he had done? Was it more righteous to have murder in the heart upon God's holy day, than love to all men which finds expression in deeds of charity and mercy? {4Red 52.1}

Sermon on the Mount.

The Redeemer of the world sought to make his lessons so simple that all could understand who heard them. It was not his choice to teach within walls or temples. True, he often did so in order to reach a class whom he would not be likely to meet while speaking in the open air, but Jesus preferred the fields, the groves, and the lake-sides for his temples. There were also his favorite resorts for meditation and prayer. {4Red 52.2}

He had special reasons for choosing these natural sanctuaries in which to give instruction to the people. The landscape lay before him, rich in scenes and objects familiar alike to the lofty and the humble. From these he drew illustrations that simplified his teachings, and impressed them firmly upon the minds of his hearers. The birds caroling in the leafy branches, the glowing

flowers of the valley, the spotless lily resting on the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the fruitful lands, the waving grain, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the mighty hills, the bubbling brooks, the setting sun that tinted and gilded the heavens, all served as means of instruction, or as emblems by which he taught the beauties of divine truth. He connected the visible works of the Creator with the words of life which he spoke, and thus led the mind from the contemplation of Nature unto Nature's God. {4Red 52.3}

The malice of the Jews was so great in consequence of the miracle of Jesus in healing the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day, that he with his disciples withdrew to a more favorable field of labor. They went to the seaside of Galilee, and great multitudes followed him, for this new miracle wrought upon the Sabbath day was noised abroad through all that region. As Jesus taught, many of the sick, and those

possessed with demons, were brought to him, and he made them whole. His great heart of love was filled with divine pity for the poor sufferers, many of whom sought only to draw near enough to touch him, believing that in so doing they would be healed, and in this they were not disappointed, for the touch of faith brought healing power from the great Physician, and their distress and gloom were changed to joy and thanksgiving. He also cast out many demons, who, in leaving their victims, acknowledged Christ, saying, "Thou art the Son of God." {4Red 53.1}

The people of Galilee were greatly aroused, and flocked to the presence of the Saviour. At length the crowd so increased that he scarcely had room to stand, and therefore entered a small ship

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which was near the shore, and there preached to the crowd that thronged upon the beach. So he labored uninterruptedly in teaching the people and in healing the sick. But when the day was far spent he stole away and hid himself in the solitude of the mountain, to commune with his Father in secret. Jesus spent the entire night in prayer, while his disciples slept at the foot of the mountain. About dawn he came and wakened them. The disciples were now about to receive an office of sacred responsibility, second only to that of Christ himself. They were to be set apart for the gospel work. They were to be linked with Jesus, to be with him, to share his joys and trials, to receive his teachings, and be faithful witnesses of his mighty works, that they might be able to impart the instruction thus gained to the world. They were to be qualified so that Jesus could at times send them forth alone to teach and work even as he taught and worked. Jesus wished his disciples to gain an experience in the gospel labor while he was on earth to comfort and direct them, so that they would be able to successfully continue the work after his death, and lay the foundation of the Christian church. {4Red 53.2}

While Jesus was preparing his disciples for their ordination, and instructing them as to the duties of the great work that lay before them, Judas urged his presence among them. This man made great professions of devotion to Jesus, and proposed to become one of his disciples. Said he, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Jesus did not warmly receive him, neither did he repulse him, but addressed him with these words of mournful pathos, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have

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nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Judas was selfish, and his main object in seeking a connection with Christ was to obtain temporal advantages through him; but Christ's reference to his own poverty, contrasting his condition with that of the foxes and the birds, was designed to cut off any hope Judas might cherish of securing earthly gain by becoming a follower of Christ. Judas was a man of acknowledged executive ability, and possessed of no small influence. For these reasons the disciples were anxious that he should form one of their number. They commended him in the highest terms to Jesus, as one who would greatly assist him in his work. They were therefore surprised that he received him so coolly; but the Saviour read the heart of Judas, and knew, even then, the part he was to act in his future betrayal and execution. Still, Jesus wished to connect this man with himself, that he might learn his divine mission, and gain moral strength to overcome the defects in his

character, and experience an entire change of heart that would ensure his salvation. This it was possible for him to do, through the help of Christ. {4Red 54.1}

Had Jesus repulsed Judas, the disciples, who regarded him with such favor, would have questioned, in their own minds, the wisdom of their Master. In receiving him, Jesus avoided this, and also placed the selfish and avaricious Judas in the most favorable position to develop qualities of mind and heart that would eventually gain for him a place in the kingdom of Heaven. But notwithstanding these precious opportunities Judas chose a course that covered him with everlasting infamy.

{4Red 55.1}

Gathering his disciples about him, Jesus bowed in their midst, and, laying his hands upon their heads, offered a prayer, dedicating them to his sacred work. Thus were the Lord's disciples ordained to the gospel ministry. This being accomplished, Jesus with his companions returned to the sea-side, where the multitudes were already gathering to hear him. Many of them were there for the purpose of being relieved of various maladies. Here he healed the sick and comforted the sorrowing, until the crowd increased so that there was not room for them upon the narrow beach. Jesus therefore moved up the mountain to a level space where the people could be accommodated. Here Jesus called his disciples near him, that the great truths he uttered might not fail to be indelibly impressed upon their minds, and that nothing might divert their attention from his words. {4Red 56.1}

Though the disciples were close about him, and his words seemed specially addressed to them, yet they were also designed to reach the hearts and consciences of the mixed crowd there assembled. At every large gathering of this kind, the people still expected that Jesus would make some great display of power in regard to the new kingdom of which he had spoken. The believing Jews looked for him to free them from the yoke of bondage and reinstate them in their ancient glory. But in his sermon on the mount Christ disappointed their hopes of earthly glory. He opened his discourse by stating the principles that should govern his kingdom of divine grace, as contained in the several beatitudes. {4Red 56.2}

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." The poor in spirit are

those who claim no personal merit, and boast of no virtue in themselves. Realizing their utter helplessness, and deeply convicted of sin, they put no faith in mere outward ceremonies, but cast themselves upon Jesus who is all-righteous and all-compassionate. The Christian can only rise through humility. The proud heart strives in vain to earn salvation by good works; for though one cannot be saved without good works, yet these alone will not suffice to win eternal life. After he has done all he can, Christ must impute to him his own righteousness. {4Red 56.3}

In Christ, God has bestowed Heaven's best gift to redeem man, and, as the gift is full and infinite, so is saving grace boundless and all-sufficient. This saying of Christ struck at the very root of the self-righteousness of the Pharisees, who felt themselves already rich in spiritual knowledge, and did not realize their need to learn more. Such

characters could have no part in the kingdom of Christ. {4Red 57.1}

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." In pronouncing a blessing upon those who mourn, Jesus did not design to teach that there is any virtue in living under a perpetual cloud, nor that selfish sorrow and repining has any merit of itself to remove a single stain of sin. The mourning spoken of by Christ is a godly sorrow for sin, that works repentance unto eternal life. Many grieve when their guilt is discovered, because the result of their evil course has brought them into disagreeable circumstances. It was thus that Esau mourned the sin of despising and selling his birth-right; but it was the unexpected consequences of that sin which caused his grief. So Pharaoh regretted his stubborn

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defiance of God, when he cried for the plagues to be removed from him; but his heart was unchanged, and he was ready to repeat his crime when tempted. Such mourning is not unto repentance. {4Red 57.2}

He who is truly convicted of sin feels his whole life to have been one continued scene of ingratitude. He feels that he has robbed his best friend of the time and strength which was bought for him at an infinite price. His whole soul is filled with unutterable sorrow that he has slighted and grieved his compassionate Saviour. Such mourning is precious, for it will yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The worldling, from his stand-point, may pronounce this sorrow a weakness; but it is the strength which binds the penitent to the Infinite One with links that cannot be broken. It reveals that the angels of God are bringing back to his soul the graces which were lost through hardness of heart and transgression. To confess and deplore one's errors evinces an excellence of character capable of discerning and correcting them. The tears of the penitent are only the clouds and the raindrops that precede the sunshine of holiness, the sorrow that heralds a joy that will be a living fountain in the soul. Men are sowing in God's great field with toil and tears, yet with patient expectation; and they will be blessed, for the heavens will open and the rain will fall, insuring a bountiful harvest. Then when the Reaper comes, he will return with joy bringing home his sheaves. {4Red 58.1}

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." The difficulties that the Christian encounters may be very much lessened by that

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meekness of character which hides itself in Christ. Jesus invites all the weary and heavy laden to come unto him who is meek and lowly in heart, that they may find rest. If the Christian possesses the humility of his Master, he will rise above the slights, the rebuffs, and annoyances to which he is daily exposed, and they will cease to cast a gloom over his spirit. That meekness which Jesus blessed, operates amid the scenes of domestic life; it makes the home happy, it provokes no quarrels, gives back no angry answers, but soothes the irritated temper, and diffuses a gentleness which is felt by all within its charmed circle. It calms the inflammable spirit of retaliation, and mirrors forth the character of Christ. {4Red 58.2}

Far better would it be for Christians to suffer under false accusations than to inflict upon themselves the torture of retaliation against their enemies. Hatred and revenge

are instigated by Satan, and bring only remorse to him who cherishes them. Lowliness of heart is the strength that gives victory to the Christian. His reward is an inheritance of glory. {4Red 59.1}

"Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." As the body feels the necessity for temporal food to supply the waste of the system, and preserve the physical strength, so the soul should long for that spiritual nourishment that increases the moral strength, and satisfies the cravings of the mind and heart. As the body is continually receiving the nutriment that sustains life and vigor, so should the soul constantly receive the heavenly food which gives nerve and muscle to spirituality. As the weary traveler eagerly seeks the spring in the desert, and, finding it, quenches his

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burning thirst with its cool and sparkling water, so should the Christian thirst for and seek the pure water of life, of which Christ is the fountain. There the soul may be satisfied, there the fever born of worldly strife is allayed, and the spirit is forever refreshed. But a majority of those who listened to Jesus hungered only for worldly advantages and honor. Especially did the self-exaltation of the Pharisees prevent them from longing for any higher attainments than they had already reached, for in their own estimation they were at the very pinnacle of perfect righteousness. However, there were many who heard thankfully the lessons of Jesus, and from that time, shaped their lives according to his teachings. {4Red 59.2}

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." Here Jesus struck a blow at the arrogance and cruel intolerance of the Jews. Both priests and people were, as a rule, overbearing, quarreling with all who opposed them, severely critical and resentful of any reflection cast upon their own acts. Jesus said of the Pharisees, "Ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God." The Saviour desired to teach his followers a lesson of mercy that they should not be wanting in that tender compassion which pities and aids the suffering and erring, and avoids magnifying the faults of others. {4Red 60.1}

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." The Jews were so exacting in regard to ceremonial purity that their regulations were extremely burdensome. Their minds were so occupied with rules and restrictions, and the fear of outward defilement, that they lost sight.

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of the necessity for purity of motive and nobility of action. They did not perceive the stain that selfishness, injustice, and malice, leave upon the soul. {4Red 60.2}

Jesus declared that the pure in heart should see God. They would recognize him in the person of his Son, who was sent to the world for the salvation of the human race. Their minds, being cleansed and occupied with pure thoughts, would more clearly discover the Creator in the works of his mighty hand, in the things of beauty and magnificence which comprise the universe. They would live as in the visible presence of the Almighty, in a world of his creation, during the time that he apportions them here. They would also see God in the future immortal state, as did Adam when he walked and talked with God in Eden. Even now the pure in heart see God "through a glass

darkly, but then face to face." {4Red 61.1}

"Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God." Our Heavenly Father is a God of peace. When he created man he placed him in an abode of peace and security. All was unity and happiness in the garden of Eden. Those who are partakers of the divine nature will love peace and contentment; they will cultivate the virtues that insure those results. They will seek to allay wrath, to quiet resentment and fault finding, and all the evil passions that foster quarrels and dissensions. The more men unite with the world, and fall into its ways, the less they have of the true elements of peace in their hearts, and the more they are leavened with the bitterness of worldly strife, jealousy, and evil thoughts toward each other, which only needs certain circumstances to

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develop them into active agents for evil. Those whose anger kindles at slight provocations, and those who watch the words and acts of others to secretly report them where they will stir up enmity, are the direct opposite of the peace-makers who are called the children of God. {4Red 61.2}

The true Christian will in his intercourse with men suppress words that would tend to produce unnecessary anger and strife. All Heaven is at peace, and those who are closely connected with Christ will be in harmony with Heaven. Jesus declared: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace." Those who are in sympathy with the Saviour will not be restless and dissatisfied. They will partake of the nature of Christ, and their lives will emulate his example. {4Red 62.1}

The multitudes were amazed at this doctrine, so at variance with the precepts and example of the scribes and Pharisees. The people had imbibed the idea from them that happiness consisted in the possession of the things of this world, and that fame and the honor of men were much to be coveted. It was very pleasing to be called "Rabbi," and to be extolled as very wise and religious, having their virtues paraded before the public. This was considered the crown of happiness. But Jesus, in the presence of that vast throng, declared that earthly gain and honor was all the reward such persons would ever receive. Jesus spoke with certainty, and a convincing power attended his words. The people were silenced, and a feeling of fear crept over them. They looked at each other doubtfully. Who of them would be saved if this man's teachings were true? Many were deeply convicted that this

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remarkable teacher was actuated by the Spirit of God, and that the sentiments he uttered were divine. {4Red 62.2}

These lessons of instruction were particularly calculated to benefit the disciples, whose lives would be governed by the principles therein taught. It was to be their work to impart the divine knowledge they derived from Jesus, to the world. It was their task to spread the gospel far and wide among the people of all lands, and it was very important that all the lessons of Jesus should be plain to their minds, stamped upon their memories, and incorporated in their lives. Every truth was to be stored away in their minds and hearts for future use. {4Red 63.1}

After Jesus had explained to the people what constituted true happiness, and how it

could be obtained, he more definitely pointed out the duty of his disciples, as teachers chosen of God to lead others into the path of righteousness and eternal life. He knew that they would often suffer from disappointment and discouragement, that they would meet with decided opposition, that they would be insulted, and their testimony rejected. His penetrating eye looked down the coming years of their ministry, and saw the sorrow and abuse that would attend their efforts to lead men to salvation. Well he knew that the humble men who listened so attentively to his words were to bear, in the fulfillment of their mission, calumny, torture, imprisonment and death, and he continues:-- {4Red 63.2}

"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

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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." Jesus here shows them that at the very time when they are experiencing great suffering in his cause, they have reason to be glad, and recognize that their afflictions are profitable to them, having an influence to wean their affections from the world and concentrate them upon Heaven. He taught them that their losses and disappointments would result in actual gain, that the severe trials of their faith and patience should be cheerfully accepted, rather than dreaded and avoided. These afflictions were God's agents to refine and fit them for their peculiar work, and would add to the precious reward that awaited them in Heaven. He charged them, when persecuted by men, not to lose confidence, nor become depressed and mourn over their hard lot, but to remember that righteous men of the past had likewise suffered for their obedience. Anxious to fulfill their duty to the world, fixing their desire upon the approbation of God, they were calmly and faithfully to discharge every duty, irrespective of the fear or favor of man. {4Red 63.3}

Those things which seem to the Christian most grievous to be borne often prove his greatest blessing. Reproach and falsehood have ever followed those who were faithful in the discharge of duty. A righteous character, though blackened in reputation by slander and falsehood, will preserve the purity of its virtue and excellence. Trampled in the mire, or exalted to heaven, the Christian's life should be the same, and the proud consciousness of innocence is its own reward.

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The persecution of enemies tests the foundation upon which the reputation really rests. Sooner or later it is revealed to the world whether or not the evil reports were true, or were the poisoned shafts of malice and revenge. Constancy in serving God is the only safe manner of settling such questions. Jesus would have his people use great care to give the enemies of his cause no ground to condemn their holy faith. No wrong action should cast a stigma upon its purity. When all arguments fail, the slanderers frequently open their galling fire upon the besieged servants of God; but their lying tongues eventually bring curses upon themselves. God will finally vindicate the right, honor the guiltless, and hide them in the secret of his pavilion from the strife of tongues. {4Red

64.1}

God's servants have always suffered reproach; but the great work moves on, amid persecution, imprisonments, stripes, and death. The character of the persecution changes with the times, but the principle--the spirit that underlies it--is the same that stoned and beat and slew the chosen of the Lord centuries ago. {4Red 65.1}

There was never one who walked a man among men more cruelly slandered than the Son of God. He was met at every point with bitter reproaches. They hated him without a cause. The Pharisees even hired men to repeat from city to city the falsehoods which they themselves fabricated to destroy the influence of Jesus. Yet he stood calmly before them declaring that reproach was a part of the Christian's legacy, counseling his followers how to meet the arrows of malice, bidding them not to faint under persecutions, but, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad;" "for so persecuted

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they the prophets which were before you." Jesus continued to impress upon the minds of his disciples the responsibility of their relation to the world. Said he:-- {4Red 65.2}

"Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." The people could see the white salt, glistening in the pathway, where it had been cast out because it had lost its savor and was therefore useless. Jesus used salt as an illustration of the Christian's life and teachings upon the world. Were it not for the few righteous who inhabit the earth, the wrath of God would not be delayed a moment from punishing the wicked. But the prayers and good works of the people of God preserve the world; they are the savor of life. But if Christians are only so in name, if they have not virtuous characters and godly lives, they are like the salt that has lost its savor. Their influence upon the world is bad; they are worse than unbelievers. {4Red 66.1}

Jesus took objects in the view of his listeners as emblems by which to teach his truth. The people had come together to hear him while it was yet early morning. The glorious sun, climbing higher and higher in the blue sky, was chasing away the shadows that lurked in the valleys and among the narrow defiles of the mountains. The glory of the eastern heavens had not yet faded out. The sunlight flooded the land with its splendor; the placid surface of the lake reflected the golden light, and mirrored the rosy clouds of morning. Every bud and flower and leafy spray glistened with dew-drops. Nature smiled under the

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benediction of a new day, and the birds sang sweetly among the spreading trees. The Saviour looked upon the company before him, and then upon the rising sun, and said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." The figure was peculiarly striking. As the sun lit up the landscape with his genial rays and scattered the shades of night, so the disciples were to diffuse the light of truth, and scatter the moral darkness that brooded over the world. In the brilliant light of morning the towns and villages situated upon the surrounding hills stood forth clearly and made an attractive feature of the scene. Jesus, pointing to them said, "A city that is set on a hill can not be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that

are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." In these words Jesus taught his disciples that if they wished to direct others in the path of righteousness, their own example should be correct, and their acts reflect the light of truth. {4Red 66.2}

Moral disease abounds, and darkness covers the earth; but the disciples of Christ are represented as lights shining amid the gloom of night. Those rays reveal the dangers that lie in the sinner's path, and point the true way to righteousness and safety. If those who profess to be Christ's followers, and to have the light of truth, are not careful to present that truth to others in a proper manner, those who are in the darkness of error will see no beauty in it. In carrying a lantern on a dark night, to light the way for one who is following, the bearer sometimes becomes careless,

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and permits his person to interpose between the light and the one whom he is guiding, and the darkness of the way is rendered more intense to him from the temporary light that has been shed upon it. So with many who essay to present the truth of God to others; they hide the precious light with their own defective characters, which stand out darkly conspicuous in their deformity, and turn many from the truth. The characters of the professed followers of Christ should be so admirable, and their deeds so exemplary, that the world will be attracted toward a religion that bears such fruits of righteousness. They will thus be led to investigate and embrace its principles from the fact that the lives of its representatives shine forth with such holiness that they are the beacon lights of the world. {4Red 67.1}

The Pharisees shut themselves away from the world, and thereby made it impossible for them to exert an influence over the people of the world; but Jesus names his disciples the "light the world." Their teachings and example are to scatter the clouds of error, and all nations and people are to feel their influence. The religion of the Bible is not to be confined between two covers nor within the walls of a church. It is not to be brought out only occasionally simply for our own benefit, and then carefully laid aside again, but it is to sanctify the daily life, to manifest itself in every business transaction and in all the social relations of life. Such a religion was in marked contrast with that of the Pharisees, which consisted only in the hollow observance of rules and ceremonies, and shed no ennobling influence over their lives. {4Red 68.1}

Jesus was closely watched by spies, who were

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ready to seize any unguarded word that might drop from his lips. The Saviour was well aware of the prejudice existing in the minds of many of his hearers. He said nothing to unsettle the faith of the Jews in the religion and institutions of Moses. The same voice that declared the moral and ceremonial law, which was the foundation of the whole Jewish system, also uttered the words of instruction on the mount. It was because of his great reverence for the law and the prophets that Jesus sought to break through the wall of superstitious exactions that hemmed in the Jews. He wished them not only to observe the law, but to develop the principles of that law and the teachings of the prophets. {4Red 68.2}

Jesus severely criticised the false interpretations which the Jews had given to the

law, yet he sufficiently guarded his disciples against the danger of yielding up the vital truths given to the Hebrews. Jesus came not to destroy their confidence in the instruction which he himself had given them through Moses in the wilderness. But, while he taught them due reverence for that law, he desired to lead them on to higher truths and a greater knowledge, that they might advance into clearer light. {4Red 69.1}

As Jesus explained the duty of his disciples in the works of righteousness, the Pharisees saw that the doctrines taught condemned their course, and, in order to prejudice the people against the great Teacher, whispered to one another that the lessons of Jesus were in opposition to the law of Moses, in that he made no mention of that law. In this way they designed to arouse the indignation of the people against Christ. But Jesus, perceiving their intent, in the presence of the

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vast multitude, and in a clear and distinct voice, declared, to the utter discomfiture of his enemies these words:-- {4Red 69.2}

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Here Jesus refutes the charge of the Pharisees. His mission to the world is to vindicate the claims of that sacred law which they charge him with breaking. If the law of God could have been changed or abolished, then Christ need not have come to a fallen world to suffer the consequence of man's transgression. Jesus came to explain the relation of the law of God to man, and to illustrate its precepts by his own example of obedience. He further declares that, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven." Thus did the Saviour declare the validity of the moral law. Those who disobey the commandments of God, and teach others to do the same by their example and doctrine, are condemned by Christ. They are the children of the wicked one, who was the first rebel against the law of God. Having explicitly declared his reverence for his Father's law, Jesus in these words condemns the practices of the Pharisees, who were strict in their outward observance of that law while their hearts and lives were corrupt:-- {4Red 70.1}

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven." The righteousness

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here taught was conformity of the heart and life to the revealed will of God. Jesus taught that the law of God should regulate the thoughts and purposes of the mind. True godliness elevates the thoughts and actions; *then* the external forms of religion accord with the Christian's internal purity; then those ceremonies required in the service of God are not meaningless rites, like those of the hypocritical Pharisees. {4Red 70.2}

Many religious teachers of today are themselves breaking the commandments of God, and teaching others to do so. In place of those holy commandments, they boldly teach the customs and traditions of men, regardless of the direct testimony of Christ that such ones should be "least in the kingdom of Heaven." Jesus declared to the

multitude assembled to hear him, to the Pharisees, who sought to accuse him of lightly regarding the law, and to the people of all time, that the precepts of Jehovah were immutable and eternal. {4Red 71.1}

The report had been brought of murder and robbery in the wild region near Capernaum, and there was a general expression of indignation and horror in consequence among those who were assembled to hear Jesus. The divine Teacher took advantage of this circumstances to point an important lesson. Said he:-- {4Red 71.2}

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the Judgment. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be

in danger of hell fire." Here Jesus describes murder as first existing in the mind. That malice and revenge which would delight in deeds of violence is of itself murder. Jesus goes further still, and says, "Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment." There is an anger that is not of this criminal nature. A certain kind of indignation is justifiable, under some circumstances, even in the followers of Christ. When they see God dishonored, his name reviled, and the precious cause of truth brought into disrepute by those who profess to revere it, when they see the innocent oppressed and persecuted, a righteous indignation stirs their soul; such anger, born of sensitive morals, is not a sin. Among the listeners are those who congratulate themselves upon their righteousness because they have committed no outward crime, while they are cherishing in their hearts feelings of the same nature as that which prompts the assassin to do his fearful deed. Yet these men make professions of piety, and conform to the outward requirements of religion. To such Jesus addresses these words:-- {4Red 71.3}

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." He thus shows that crimes originate in the mind, and those who permit hatred and revenge to find a place in their hearts have already set their feet in the path of the murderer, and their offerings are not acceptable to God. The only remedy is to root out all bitterness and animosity from the heart. But the Saviour even goes

further than this, and declares that if another has aught against us, we should endeavor to relieve his mind, and, if possible, remove those feelings from it, before our offering can be acceptable with God. This lesson is of special importance to the church at this time. Many are zealous in religious services while unhappy differences exist between them and their brethren which it is in their power to remove, and which God requires them to remove before he will accept their services. Christ has so clearly pointed out the Christian's course in this matter that there should be no question in his mind as to his duty. {4Red 72.1}

While Jesus is teaching, there are pleasure-boats upon the water, and it is evident to

all that the idlers who occupy them are disreputable characters. The listening people expect Jesus to severely denounce this class, but are surprised when he declares: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Those who have looked upon the guilty characters who lead lives of sensual dissipation as sinners above all others, are astonished to hear Jesus assert that those who cherish lascivious thoughts are as guilty at heart as the shameless violators of the seventh commandment. Jesus condemned the custom then existing of a man putting away his wife for trivial offenses. This practice led to great wretchedness and crime. Jesus strikes at the primary cause of the laxness with which the marriage relation was held, when he condemns the unholy passions which find the marriage institution a barrier to the gratification of their

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lust. Christ would have the marriage relation hedged about with judicial restrictions, so that there could be no legal separation between husband and wife, save for the cause of adultery. {4Red 73.1}

Many who had regarded the commandments as prohibiting actual crime but reaching no farther, now perceive that the law of God should be obeyed in spirit as well as in letter. In this manner Jesus takes up the commandments separately and explains the depth and breadth of their requirements, exposing the fatal mistake of the Jews in their merely outward obedience. Jesus gives a lesson upon oath-taking, saying, "Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." The third commandment condemns the profane swearer, but the spirit of the precept reaches farther still, and forbids that the name of God be introduced into the conversation in a careless or irreverent manner. Many, even of the professed followers of Christ, are in the habit of using lightly the name of God, and, even in their prayers and exhortations, do not use the Supreme name with a proper solemnity. {4Red 74.1}

A detachment of the Roman troops was encamped near by, on the sea-shore, and Jesus is now interrupted by the loud blast of the trumpet which is the signal for the soldiers to assemble on the plain below. They form in the regular order, bowing in homage to the Roman standard which is uplifted before them. With bitterness the Jews look upon this scene which reminds them of their own degradation as a nation. Presently messengers are dispatched from the army, with orders to various distant posts. As they toil up the abrupt bank that borders the shore,

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they are brought near to the listening crowd that surrounds Jesus, and they force some of the Jewish peasants to carry their burdens for them up the steep ascent. The peasants resist this act of oppression, and address their persecutors with violent language; but they are finally compelled to obey the soldiers, and perform the menial task required of them. This exhibition of Roman authority stirs the people with indignation, and they turn eagerly to hear what the great Teacher will say of this cruel act of oppression. With sadness, because of the sins which had brought the Jews into such bondage, Jesus looks upon the shameful scene. He also notes the hatred and revenge stamped upon the faces of the Jews, and knows how bitterly they long for

power to crush their oppressors. Mournfully he says:-- {4Red 74.2}

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." {4Red 75.1}

The example of Jesus was a practical illustration of the lesson here taught; contumely and persecution never caused him to retaliate upon his enemies. But this was a hard saying for the revengeful Jews, and they murmured against it among themselves. Jesus now makes a still stronger declaration:-- {4Red 75.2}

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

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But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" {4Red 75.3}

The manifestation of hatred never breaks down the malice of our enemies. But love and kindness beget love and kindness in return. Although God faithfully rewards virtue and punishes guilt, yet he does not withhold his blessings from the wicked, although they daily dishonor his name. He allows the sunshine and the showers to fall upon the just and the unjust, bringing alike worldly prosperity to both. If a holy God exercises such forbearance and benevolence toward the rebellious and the idolatrous, how necessary it is that erring man should manifest a like spirit toward his fellow-men. Instead of cursing those who injure him, it is his duty to seek to win them from their evil ways by a kindness similar to that with which Christ treated them who persecuted him. Jesus taught his followers that they should exercise a Christian courtesy toward all who came within their influence, that they should not be forgetful in deeds of mercy, and that when solicited for favors, they should show a benevolence superior to that of the worldling. The children of God should represent the spirit that rules in Heaven. Their

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principles of action should not be of the same character with the narrow, selfish spirit of the world. Perfection alone can meet the standard of Heaven. As God himself is perfect in his exalted sphere, so should his children be perfect in the humble sphere they occupy. Thus only can they be fit for the companionship of sinless beings in the kingdom of Heaven. Christ addresses to his followers these words that establish the standard of Christian character: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." {4Red 76.1}

Parable of the Sower.

Jesus had spent the entire night in prayer, and he came down to the beach in the early morning to look for his disciples who were fishing near the shore. He could not long remain undisturbed by the people. As soon as it was known that Christ was by the sea-side, the multitude flocked to him. Their numbers increased so that he was pressed upon all sides. As he stood teaching them, the crowd became so dense that he stepped into a boat, and pulling out a little from the shore, gave the people a better opportunity to see and hear him, as he continued his discourse. {4Red 77.1}

He frequently adopted this plan to escape from the eager throng that crowded upon each other to get into his presence. In this way he could speak the things that he desired them to hear without interruption. The Saviour, seated in the rude boat of a fisherman, taught the words of life to the listening people upon the beach. He was patient with those who were laboring under

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temptation, tender and kind to the sorrowing and disheartened. His words found a response in many hearts, and light from his divine instruction poured in upon many darkened minds. {4Red 77.2}

What a scene was this for angels to contemplate! Their glorious Commander, sitting in a fisherman's boat, swayed to and fro by the restless water, and preaching salvation to the listening crowd that are pressing down to the water's edge! He who was the honored of Heaven teaches his grand doctrine of deliverance in the open air to the common crowd. Yet he could have no more magnificent scene for his labors. The lake, the mountains, the spreading fields, the sunlight flooding the earth, all furnish subjects by which his lessons can be impressed upon the human mind. {4Red 78.1}

In plain sight are the sowers and the reapers, side by side, the one casting the seed, and the other harvesting the early grain. The fruitful valleys, and the hill-sides are clothed in beauty. The barren rocks are seen upon the beach, and the birds make the air vocal with their music. The sea-fowls skim upon the surface of the water. Jesus takes this opportunity to draw lessons from nature that will sink into the minds of his listeners. He employs the scenery about him to illustrate his doctrine, so that in the future, whenever these objects are presented to their eyes, their thoughts will revert to the lessons of truth drawn from them by Jesus. They will be daily reminders of the precious instruction which they had received from him. {4Red 78.2}

Sitting thus, and looking upon the animated scene before him, Jesus uttered the parable that has been handed down to us through the ages, as

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pure and beautiful today in its unadorned simplicity as when it was given that morning on the Sea of Galilee more than eighteen hundred years ago:-- {4Red 78.3}

"Hearken; behold, there went out a sower to sow. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth; but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did

yield fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." {4Red 79.1}

This striking illustration of the spreading abroad of the gospel of the Son of God engaged the earnest attention of the people. The speaker carried with him the minds of his hearers. Their souls were stirred, and many a heart throbbed with the animation of a new purpose. They were charmed with a doctrine so ennobling in its principles, yet so easily understood. The high spiritual attainments which Jesus taught seemed then very desirable. But how soon the impressions there received were to pass away from many minds, when they again mingled with the world. The sins that had seemed so heinous under the holy light of the Master's presence, would be clasped again to their erring hearts. Unfavorable surroundings, and worldly cares and temptations

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would cause them to relapse again into indifference. {4Red 79.2}

But others who listened commenced from that moment a holier life, carrying out daily the principles of Christ's teachings. The subject matter of his discourse, illustrated by the scene before them, would never be effaced from their minds. The varied ground, some producing only thistles and noxious weeds, the ledges of rock covered with a surface of earth, the sowers with their seed, all being before their eyes, fastened his words in their minds as nothing else could have done. {4Red 80.1}

The existing state of things led Jesus to give the parable of the sower. The people who followed Christ had been disappointed that he did not set up a new kingdom. Long had they looked for a Messiah who would exalt and glorify them as a nation, and now that their expectations were not realized, they refused to receive him as their Redeemer. Even his chosen disciples were becoming impatient that he did not assume temporal authority, and his relatives were disappointed in him and rejected him. They had addressed him in these words: "Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world." {4Red 80.2}

His followers were mortified that the learned and wealthy were not the most willing to accept Jesus as their Saviour. They felt the stigma that attached to their Master, because it was the poor, the afflicted, and the humbler class generally who became his disciples. Why, they asked

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themselves, did not the scribes and Pharisees, the teachers in the schools of the prophets, acknowledge that he was the long-looked-for Messiah? It was to meet this doubt and discontent that Jesus spoke this parable. When the multitude had departed, the twelve with the other believers gathered about him, and asked him to explain it to them. "And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables; that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them. And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all

parables?" In these words he explained that his illustrations were to awaken thought in the minds of his hearers. If they desired a fuller explanation of his words they could ask it of him, as the disciples had done, and receive it. {4Red 80.3}

The Pharisees understood the parable, but affected not to perceive its meaning. They closed their eyes lest they should see and their ears lest they should hear; therefore their hearts could not be reached. They were to suffer retribution for their willful ignorance and self-imposed blindness. One reason why he taught so much in parables was that the spies of the Jews were ever watching to find cause for complaint against him. Jesus designed to expose their hypocrisy and evil deeds without laying himself liable to the danger of being arrested and imprisoned by them, and thus cut off from the work which he came to do among the people. {4Red 81.1}

He could speak cutting truths in parables,

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reveal the iniquity that it was necessary to expose, without any fear of their laws. They could make the application, for they could not fail to recognize his meaning, yet they were powerless to condemn him for using a simple illustration in his discourse. {4Red 81.2}

The words of Jesus implied a reproof to his disciples, because of their dullness to comprehend his meaning; for in the parable of the sower, he had illustrated the doctrine he had come to the world to teach. If they could not discern things so easily to be understood, how could they fathom greater truths that he would declare to them in parables? He also said that he would reveal greater mysteries concerning the kingdom of God unto them who followed him so closely and obeyed him than unto those who were outside of his companionship. They must open their minds to instruction and be ready to believe. {4Red 82.1}

Those who had hardened their hearts to love pomp and ceremony did not wish to understand his teachings nor desire the work of God's grace within their hearts. This class would remain in ignorance of their own choosing. Those who connected with Heaven, and received Christ, who is the source of light and truth, would understand his words and gain practical knowledge concerning the kingdom of God. But those who, for any reason, neglected their present opportunities of acquaintance with the truth, and did not rightly use their powers of comprehension, but refused to be convinced by what their eyes saw and their ears heard, would be left in darkness; seeing, they would not perceive, and hearing, they would not understand. The truths

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of God involved too much self-denial and personal purity to attract their carnal minds, and they closed their hearts with bigotry and unbelief. {4Red 82.2}

The great Teacher blessed his disciples because they both saw and heard with eyes and ears that believed. Said he, "Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see these things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them." Jesus then explained to his disciples the different classes represented in the parable he had given them. {4Red 83.1}

Christ, the Sower, scatters the seed. There are the worldly ones, whose hearts are like the hard-beaten highway, insensible to the teachings of divine wisdom. They love

not the requirements of God, and follow their natural impulses. Many are convinced as they listen to the important lessons of Christ. They believe his words, and resolve to lead holy lives, but when Satan comes with his evil suggestions, they are overcome before the good seed has fairly sprung into life. {4Red 83.2}

Had the soil of the heart been broken up by deep repentance for sin, they would have seen how wicked was their selfish love of the world, their pride and avarice, and would have put them away. The seeds of truth would have struck deep into the fallow ground prepared for them in the heart, and would have sprung up and borne fruit. But evil habits had so long held sway over their lives that their good resolutions had vanished before the voice of the tempter. "And these are they by the wayside, where the word is sown; but when they have heard,

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Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts." {4Red 83.3}

There are those who receive the precious truth with joy; they are exceedingly zealous, and express amazement that all cannot see the things that are so plain to them. They urge others to embrace the doctrine that they find so satisfying. They hastily condemn the hesitating and those who carefully weigh the evidences of the truth and consider it in all its bearings. They call such ones cold and unbelieving. But in the time of trial these enthusiastic persons falter and fail. They did not accept the cross as a part of their religious life, and they turn from it with dampened ardor, and refuse to take it up. {4Red 84.1}

If life moves smoothly with this class, if their way is never crossed, if all things are in harmony with their inclinations, they appear to be consistent Christians. But they faint beneath the fiery test of temptation; they cannot endure reproach for the truth's sake. The good seed that had sprung into so flourishing a plant, withers and dies because it has no root to sustain it in the time of drought. The very thing which should have caused the fibers to strike down deeper and send up more vigorous growth, parches and kills the whole plant. Just so the hot summer sun, that strengthens and ripens the hardy grain, withers and destroys that which, though fresh and green, has no depth of root, because the tender fibers cannot pierce the hard and stony ground. {4Red 84.2}

These persons could cultivate and enrich the soil of their hearts, if they would, so that the truth would take deeper hold; but this involves too much patience and self-denial. It costs them

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too much effort to make a radical change in their lives. They are easily offended by reproof, and ready to say with the disciples who left Jesus, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" "And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time; afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended." {4Red 84.3}

Jesus represents the seed as falling into neglected borders and patches covered with rank weeds which choke the precious plants that spring up among them; they grow sickly and perish. Many hearts respond to the voice of truth, but they do not properly

receive and cherish it. They give it a place in the soil of the natural heart, without preparing the ground and rooting out the poisonous weeds that flourish there, and watching every hour in order to destroy them should they again appear. The cares of life, the fascination of riches, the longing for forbidden things, crowd out the love of righteousness before the good seed can bear fruit. Pride, passion, self-love, and love of the world, with envy and malice, are no companions for the truth of God. As it is necessary thoroughly to cultivate the soil that has once been overgrown with weeds, so it is necessary for the Christian to be diligent in exterminating the faults that threaten his eternal ruin. Patient, earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus, can alone remove the evil tendencies of the natural heart. But those who have allowed their faith to be overcome by the growth of Satan's influences, fall into a worse

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state than that which they occupied before they heard the words of life. "And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." {4Red 85.1}

Few hearts are like the good soil, well-cultivated, and receive the seeds of truth and bring forth abundant fruit to the glory of God. But Jesus finds some earnest Christians, rich in good works and sincere in their endeavors. "And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred." {4Red 86.1}

Thus Christ represents the characters of those whom he came to teach, in a brief and comprehensive parable. The worldly-minded, the evil-disposed, the hard-hearted, are all exhibited to the minds of his hearers. He thus answers the question that we often hear today: Why was the work of Christ productive of such meager results, during his personal ministry upon earth? Miracles of goodness and mercy marked his life; but while he healed the afflicted, and cast out the demons that persecuted men, he left to themselves the work of correcting the evils of their natures. He instructed them how to unite their human efforts with his divine power, and triumph through his strength over the sins that beset them. {4Red 86.2}

This experience was necessary in order to give moral power to the Christian character and fit it for the courts of Heaven. Jesus employed no miraculous agency to compel men to believe in

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him. They were left to choose or reject him, of their own free will. No direct power was to force them into obedience, and destroy the free moral agency that God has given to man. The parable of the sower plainly sets forth the tendencies of the human heart, and the different classes with which Christ had to deal, and also explains the reasons that his ministry was not more successful in its immediate effects. {4Red 86.3}

The parables of Jesus were designed to arouse a spirit of inquiry which would result in a clearer exposition of the truth. As he was thus instructing his disciples in the meaning of his words, the people again gathered about to listen, and his teachings were received and cherished in the minds of many who heard them. These discourses of Jesus were not merely to a class of inferior minds; but there were intelligent and

cultivated persons present who were capable of the closest criticism. Scribes, Pharisees, doctors, rulers, lawyers, and the representatives of all nations, were there to hear; yet there were none to gainsay his words in all that vast assembly. {4Red 87.1}

Christ in the Synagogue.

This interview of Jesus with his disciples, in which they had received much precious instruction, was interrupted by those who had been searching for him. As the people began to flock about him, bringing their sick and afflicted, he repaired to the synagogue. While he was teaching there, many others of those who had left him on the other side of the lake came to the synagogue, and were surprised to see Jesus and his disciples there before them, knowing that there was

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no boat by which he could pass to the other side. They began to inquire how and when he had crossed the sea. They were astonished when the disciples related to them the events of the preceding night. The fury of the storm and the many hours of fruitless rowing against the fury of adverse winds, the appearance of Christ walking upon the water, the fears thus aroused, his reassuring words, the adventure of Peter and its result, with the sudden stilling of the tempest and landing of the boat, were all faithfully recounted to the wondering crowd, amid frequent interruptions and exclamations of amazement. {4Red 87.2}

But their attention was now directed to the lessons of Jesus, so full of solemn interest. Many were deeply affected; but the minds of some were entirely engrossed with curiosity regarding the wonderful relation they had heard. As soon as the discourse was ended, they gathered around the Saviour, questioning him, hoping to receive from his own lips a fuller account of his mighty work of the previous night. But Jesus did not gratify their idle curiosity. He was also beset by the Pharisees, to show them a sign from Heaven that he was the Son of God. They asked an evidence of his miraculous power, such as had been given on the other side of the sea. They importuned him to repeat his wonderful works before them. {4Red 88.1}

Jesus declared to them that they did not seek him from any worthy motive: that they did not desire to learn how to please God in their daily lives; but they asked him to work miracles, sometimes in a spirit of unbelief, and sometimes because they hoped to be benefited by temporal favors which he might thus bestow upon them.

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He bade them not to labor for the meat which perishes, but to seek for spiritual food, that wisdom which endures unto everlasting life. This the Son of God alone could give, for he has the seal of the Father. With solemn earnestness he sought to impress upon them that temporal favors are of little consequence compared with the heavenly grace offered by the Son of God. {4Red 88.2}

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the

desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat." It was Christ himself who conducted the Hebrews in their travels through the wilderness. It was he who had daily fed them manna from heaven; yet they blindly referred him to this miracle, wrought for their fathers, in a spirit of caviling unbelief. Jesus declared to them that as God had given them manna to preserve their lives, so he had sent to them this gift of his Son, that through him they might eat of the bread of life and become immortal. {4Red 89.1}

"Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from Heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread." Jesus used bread as a figure to illustrate the vitalizing power of his Spirit. The one sustains physical

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life, while the other satisfies the heart, and strengthens the moral powers. Said he, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not." Those who experience the spiritual union with Christ never hunger for higher enjoyment. All uncertainty is gone; the weary soul finds continual refreshment in the Saviour. The feverish thirst for wealth and honor is gone. He is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. {4Red 89.2}

Jesus assured the Jews that they had seen him and his works yet believed not. He did not refer to their seeing him with their natural eyes; but he meant that their understanding had been convinced, while their proud and stubborn hearts refused to acknowledge him as the Messiah. The Saviour had been doing in their midst works that no man had ever done. The living evidences of his divine power had been before them day after day; yet their hard and caviling hearts asked for still another sign of his divinity before they would believe. Had this been given them they would still have remained as unbelieving as before. If they were not already convinced of his Messiahship by what they had seen and heard, it was useless to show them more marvelous works. The dignity of God's holy Son was not to be compromised to gratify a questioning crowd. {4Red 90.1}

Said Jesus, "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their

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heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Unbelief will ever find cause to doubt and reason away the most positive proof. The Jews stood constantly upon guard, lest they should be forced by overwhelming evidence to yield their prejudice and unbelief. Though their understanding was convinced, they refused to surrender their pride and self-righteousness, admitting that they, who had boasted of their wisdom over all the rest of the world, themselves needed a teacher. {4Red 90.2}

The Jews had assembled to celebrate the passover. In eating the flesh of the Lamb, they were to remember that it represented the Lamb of God, and their protection when the first-born of their enemies were slain in Egypt. The blood that the Hebrews were commanded to have upon their door-posts, and which was a sign of safety to them,

also represented the blood of Christ, which was to be shed for the sins of the world. The Saviour has power to finally raise from the dead all those who, by faith, eat of his flesh and drink of his blood. This spiritual food gives to the believers as well-founded hope of the resurrection to immortal life in the kingdom of God. {4Red 91.1}

These precious truths Jesus declared to the incredulous multitude, saying, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him,

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may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." {4Red 91.2}

He spoke of his future sacrifice in these words: "And the bread which I will give you, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." He offered his salvation to all who would accept him, clothed in humanity, as their Redeemer, having access to the Father, and being invested by him with divine authority. {4Red 92.1}

But the Jews were displeased that Jesus should claim to be the bread of life come down from Heaven. "And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it, then, that he saith, I came down from Heaven?" They so clung to their bigotry and pride that it now seemed impossible for them to believe evidence that was plain as the noonday sun. Their jealousy was aroused that this man of humble birth was able to work wonders that they could not explain away, and teach truths that could not be contradicted. So they endeavored to awaken the prejudice and unbelief of the people by referring scornfully to the lowly origin of Jesus, and by reason of his mysterious birth, insinuating that he was of doubtful parentage. They contemptuously alluded to his life as a Galilean laborer, and to his family as being poor and lowly. They declared that the lofty claims of this uneducated carpenter should be at once repudiated. {4Red 92.2}

But Jesus heard their murmurings and reproved them. He again, in more forcible language, declared his connection with the Father, and the necessity for the heart to be enlightened by the Spirit of God before it can feel the need of a Saviour. "No man can come to me, except

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the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." He here refers to the prophecy of Isaiah: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." {4Red 92.3}

This was not a new doctrine which Jesus taught. It was the fulfillment of prophecy, which, as expounders of the word, the priests and elders should have thoroughly understood. In declaring that none come to him unless the Father draws them, the Saviour wished them to understand that God would never appear in person to teach them concerning the way of life. Humanity could not endure the vision of his glory for a moment; only through the Son could they come to him. In seeing and hearing the Son,

they saw and heard the Father. He is Mediator between God and his disobedient children. The Jews claimed God as their teacher, but Christ declared such profession vain, for, said he, "Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." {4Red 93.1}

Jesus did not attempt to answer the questions raised regarding his birth any more than he had answered those concerning his crossing the sea. He did not desire to magnify himself, nor the miracles that marked his life. The prejudice of the Pharisees lay deeper than their questions would indicate, and had taken root in the bitter perversity of their sinful hearts. His sayings and doings had not created such feelings, but only called them into action, because his pure and elevated doctrine was not in harmony with

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their selfish hearts. Said he, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." There were conflicting views and much uncertainty in regard to the resurrection of the dead. Aside from the dissension between the Sadducees and Pharisees, the Jews were in great darkness concerning the future life and the resurrection of the body. Jesus pitied them in their benighted condition, and bade them accept him, who was their only hope, the great Life-giver, even the "bread of life." {4Red 93.2}

They had referred him to the manna which their fathers ate in the wilderness, as if the furnishing of that food was a greater miracle than Jesus had wrought; but he now declared unto them that the temporal food then given from Heaven was but a meager gift compared with the blessing of eternal life which he now offered them. The food eaten then sustained the strength, but did not prevent the approach of death, nor insure immortal life. The bread that the Son of God offered to man was death-destroying, giving in the end immortal life to the body. Said he, "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 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." {4Red 94.1}

Our Lord here points forward to his approaching death, the only true propitiation for the sins of humanity. The Jews were about to celebrate with great display the feast of the passover.

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The Lamb to be eaten there, was a symbol of Christ's body; yet the very person that it represented stood in their midst, presenting himself as their Saviour, whose blood would preserve them from the wrath of a sin-hating God, and they refuse his offers of mercy. {4Red 94.2}

The miracle Jesus had performed in feeding the multitude, furnished him a forcible figure by which to illustrate his work upon earth. He declared that, as temporal bread imparts health and strength to the body, so will faith in Christ, and obedience to his teachings, give spiritual vigor to the soul, and life everlasting. But the Jews, determined to misinterpret his words, now engaged in angry contention, asking, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" They affected to understand his words in the same literal

sense as did Nicodemus, when he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" They comprehended the meaning of Jesus, but were not willing to acknowledge it. They thought it a favorable opportunity to prejudice the people against him, by presenting his words to them in the most unfavorable light. "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from Heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are

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dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." {4Red 95.1}

The Jews appeared to be horrified at these sayings of Christ. Their law strictly forbade them to taste blood, and they construed his language into a sacrilegious speech, and contented and disputed over his words among themselves. Jesus gave his disciples, and the people, lessons which they could not at the time fully comprehend, because of their moral darkness. Many things which his followers did not fully understand when he uttered them, were made plain by subsequent events. His words were a stay to their hearts when he walked no more with them. {4Red 96.1}

Even the disciples murmured at these last words of Jesus. They said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" The Saviour heard their complaints and answered them: "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Thus he instructed them that it was not his human flesh that would give life eternal, but faith in his words and in the efficacy of the sacrifice he was to make for the world. His teaching and example, his life and death, were the heavenly food that was to give them spiritual life and vigor. He reproved them because they had murmured when he said that he had come down from Heaven. If they were not able to receive this truth, how would it be when he ascended before their eyes to that Heaven from whence he came? {4Red 96.2}

Jesus knew that many followed him who hoped to receive temporal favors thereby. They

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looked for him to work some miracle that would benefit them; but especially did they hope that he would eventually free them from the Roman yoke. He also knew that there was one near who would betray him. He told them that there were some among them who believed not. "And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." {4Red 96.3}

He wished them to understand that their hearts must be open to the Spirit of God before they could be drawn to him by faith. They must be willing to have their errors reproved, to eschew evil, and lead holy lives. The unbelief existing among the priests and rulers influenced the people to be hesitating and doubtful. Jesus had given them sufficient proof of his divinity; but their incredulous minds were ever seeking to explain

away his wonderful works. They reasoned that the disciples might have been under a delusion when they saw him walking upon the water. {4Red 97.1}

True, they could not but admit that he had performed many miraculous cures, and plentifully fed a vast multitude from five loaves and two small fishes; but their dissatisfied hearts queried, if he could do these wonders, why might he not give health, strength, and riches to all his people, free them from their oppressors, and exalt them to power and honor? Then they would believe on him and glorify his name. Thus they allowed themselves to be bound by unbelief and discontent. Their gross minds refused to comprehend the meaning of his words, "I am the bread which came down from Heaven." His

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doctrine was too pure and exalted to attract their carnal hearts. {4Red 97.2}

This discourse of Jesus cooled the enthusiasm of the people. If, by becoming his disciples, they must live righteous lives, deny self, and suffer humiliation, they had no desire to rally under his banner. Alas for Israel! They knew not the time of their visitation! They refused their Saviour, because they longed for a conqueror who would give them temporal power. They wanted the meat which perishes, and not that which endures unto everlasting life. Their ambition was for earthly riches and glory, and they had no relish for the words of Christ that taught personal purity, and a thorough reformation of life. {4Red 98.1}

Many of the words and dealings of Jesus appear mysterious to finite minds; but all his purposes were clear to his divine understanding. His whole plan was mapped before him, perfect in all its details. Every act was calculated to produce its individual results. The history of the world from its creation to the end of time was fully known to Christ. Were the mind of man capable of understanding his dealings, every act of his earthly life would stand forth important, complete, and in harmony with his divine mission. {4Red 98.2}

The murmuring of his followers grieved the heart of the Saviour. In openly rebuking their unbelief before the multitude, he had increased their disaffection, and many of them went back and walked no more with Jesus. He looked after these erring ones with eyes of pitying tenderness. They were greatly displeased, and, wishing to wound Jesus and gratify the malice

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of the Pharisees, they turned their backs upon him and left him with disdain. In doing this they made the fatal mistake of rejecting God's counsel to them. It was such developments as these that made the Saviour a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The consciousness that his kindness and compassion were unappreciated, his love unrequited, his mercy slighted, his salvation rejected, filled his divine soul with a grief that was inexpressible. Could these ungrateful disciples have discerned how God viewed their behavior to his dear Son, they would hardly have walked away so proudly and defiantly. They were choosing darkness rather than light, because they were too vain and self-righteous to receive a merited rebuke, and too worldly to accept a life of humility in order to secure salvation. In the face of all his wonderful works they turned away from Him, who, by the beauty of his doctrine and his mercy and benevolence, had

called thousands to his side; who had relieved suffering humanity, so that entire cities and villages were freed from disease, and there was no work for a physician among them. {4Red 98.3}

When we view the generosity of Christ to the poor and suffering, his patience with the rude and ignorant, his self-denial and sacrifice, we are lost in admiration and reverence. What a gift has God lavished upon man, alienated from him by sin and disobedience! Well may the heart break and the tears flow in contemplation of such inexpressible love! Christ abased himself to humanity that he might reach man sunken into the depths of woe and degradation, and lift him into a nobler life, give him moral strength to resist the power of Satan and overcome sin in his name.

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Sad was the recompense he met for his marvelous condescension. {4Red 99.1}

The words of Jesus were scorned because he declared that outward professions and observances of forms would not avail; the work must reach the heart and bring forth fruit meet for repentance. The words that he addressed to his disciples are also spoken to the followers of Christ today. The same necessity exists for a clean heart and a pure life. Yet how many reject the warning of God, spoken by his servants, and the close, practical truths pressed home to their hearts, because their lives are not in accordance with the will of God, because they perceive that an entire reformation is necessary, and are unwilling to take up the self-denying work, and are therefore angry because their sins have been discovered. They go away offended, even as the disciples left Jesus, murmuring, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" {4Red 100.1}

Those who profess godliness, yet do not heed the admonitions of the Lord, nor regulate their lives in harmony with his holy will, fasten themselves more and more firmly by chains of darkness. Many who now profess to believe the truth of Christ, endure the test no better than those who turned away from following him. Many, while professing the faith, are so separated from Christ by hearts of unbelief, that they reject the words and works of God shown through his servants. If the divine revelation does not harmonize with their views, they feel at liberty to turn from its teachings. If it rebukes their sins they are offended. Praise and flattery would be grateful to their ears, but the truth is disagreeable, they cannot hear it. When the crowds

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follow, and the multitudes are fed, and the cries of triumph go up, their voices are loud in praise; but when the searching of God's Spirit reveals to them their sin and bids them leave it, they turn their backs upon the truth, and "walk no more with Jesus." {4Red 100.2}

God does not propose to be called to account for his ways and works. It is for his glory to conceal his purposes now; but by and by they will be revealed in their true importance. But he has not concealed his great love, which lies at the foundation of all his dealings with his children. He has revealed his love in the gift of his Son, and in the many providences by which he manifests himself. He who lives near to Jesus may understand much of the mystery of godliness, and comprehend the love that administers merited reproof. Humanity, alienated from God, can only be reconciled to him by partaking spiritually of the flesh and blood of his dear Son. {4Red 101.1}

The Saviour did not attempt to prevent the disaffected disciples from leaving him, but, turning to the twelve chosen ones, said sorrowfully, "Will ye also go away?" Peter promptly replied by asking in turn "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." How full of meaning are these words, "To whom shall we go?" The teachers of Israel were slaves to cold formality. The Pharisees and Sadducees were in constant contention concerning the doctrine of the resurrection and other points of difference. To leave Jesus was to fall among sticklers for rites and ceremonies, and ambitious men who sought their own glory. The disciples had felt more peace

and joy since they had accepted Christ than in all their previous lives. They had looked back with horror upon their former course of carelessness and iniquity. How could they, whose eyes had been opened to discern the malice and bigotry of the Jews, go back to them who had scorned and persecuted the Friend of sinners? Long had their faith sustained them in looking for the Messiah, and now that he had come, they could not turn from his presence to those who were hunting his life and had persecuted them for obeying him. {4Red 101.2}

"To whom shall we go?" Not from the doctrine of Christ, his lessons of love and charity, to the darkness of unbelief, the wickedness of the world. While many were turning from the Saviour who had witnessed his miraculous works, who had seen him heal the sick and comfort the distressed, who had been electrified by the heavenly majesty of his bearing, Peter expresses the faith of the disciples, "Thou art that Christ." Never will they deny that he is the world's Redeemer, the Son of God. The very thought of losing this anchor of their souls thrilled their hearts with anguish. To be again destitute of a Saviour, subject to fear and superstition, would be to be adrift upon a dark and stormy sea. {4Red 102.1}

Some may question the wisdom of Jesus in introducing a subject so easily misunderstood as that which had turned so many from him on this occasion. But he had a purpose in view. He saw that a most trying ordeal awaited his disciples in his betrayal, his agony in Gethsemane, and his crucifixion. He knew who among his followers were unbelieving and who were of weak faith. Had no test been given them, Jesus would have had many among his followers who were

weak in character, and undecided. When the great trial came, and their Lord was betrayed and condemned in the Judgment Hall; when he was humiliated, and the multitude, who had hailed him as their king, hissed at him and reviled him; when the cruel, jeering crowd cried, "Crucify him!"--then these faint-hearted ones would have sunk beneath their fear and disappointment. {4Red 102.2}

The apostasy of these professed followers of Christ at such a time, would have been more than the twelve could have endured in addition to their great grief and the terrible ruin of their fondest hopes. The example of those who turned from him, might, in that hour of horror, have carried all the rest with them. But Jesus brought about this crisis while he was still present to comfort and strengthen his chosen, and prepare them for what was to follow. When the hooting rabble scorned Him who was doomed to the

cross, the disciples were not overwhelmed with surprise at this insult to their Master, for they had seen the fickleness of those who had once followed him. When those who had professed to love the Master turned from him in the time of his trouble, the disciples remembered that the same thing had occurred before, for less reason. They had tested the inconstant favor of the world, and hung not their faith upon the opinions of others. Jesus wisely prepared the minds of his faithful few for the great trial of his betrayal and death. {4Red 103.1}

Peter had great faith in Jesus. From the first he had believed that he was the Messiah. He had seen and heard John, who was the forerunner of Christ, proclaim him to be the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. He had been closely connected with Jesus, had

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witnessed his miracles, listened to his teachings, and was convinced that he was the Son of God. Many who had been convicted by the preaching of John, and had accepted Christ, began to doubt as to the mission of John, when he was imprisoned and put to death. They also doubted if Jesus was really the Messiah, whom they had looked for so long. {4Red 103.2}

But the faith of Peter never flagged; he followed his Master with unwavering devotion. When those of the disciples who had ardently expected Jesus to make a great display of power, and take his place on David's throne, left him because they perceived that he had no such intention, Peter and his companions faltered not in their allegiance. The vacillating course of those who praised yesterday, and condemned today, did not affect the faith of the true follower of the Saviour. Peter declares, "Thou art the Son of the living God." He waited not for kingly honors to crown his Lord, but accepted him in his humiliation. Peter, in his confession of Christ, expressed the faith of the disciples. But notwithstanding this, Jesus knew that neither his believing followers nor any of the Jews had any idea of associating humiliation, suffering and death, with their Messiah. Compassionate Redeemer, who, in the full knowledge of the doom that awaited him, tenderly smoothed the way for his disciples, prepared them for their crowning trial, and strengthened them for the final test!

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{4Red 104.1}

Mary's Offering.

Six days before the passover, Jesus stopped at the house of Lazarus in Bethany. He was on his way from Jericho to attend the feast of the passover at Jerusalem, and chose this retreat for rest and refreshment. Crowds of people passed on to the city, bearing the tidings that Jesus was on his way to the feast, and that he would rest over the Sabbath at Bethany. This information was received with great enthusiasm by the people; for the news had spread everywhere of the wonderful works wrought by Jesus, the last and most astonishing of which was the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead. Many flocked to Bethany, some from curiosity to see one who had been raised from the dead, and others because their hearts were in sympathy with Jesus, and they longed to

look upon his face and hear his blessed words. {4Red 105.1}

They returned with reports that increased the excitement of the multitude. All were anxious to see and hear Jesus, whose fame as a prophet had spread over all the land. There was a general buzz of inquiry as to who the wonderful Teacher was, from whence he had come, if Lazarus who had been raised from the dead would accompany him to Jerusalem, and if it was likely that the great prophet would be crowned king at the feast. The attention of the people was entirely engrossed in the subject of Jesus and his wondrous works. The priests and rulers saw that they were losing their hold upon the minds of the people, and their rage against Jesus was increased; they could hardly wait for him to

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come and give them the desired opportunity of gratifying their revenge and removing him forever from their way. As the time passed, they became excited and restless, fearing that after all Jesus might not come to Jerusalem. They were fearful that he had read their purposes against him, and would therefore remain away. They remembered how often he had divined their thoughts, exposed their hidden motives, and baffled their murderous designs. They could illy conceal their anxiety, and questioned among themselves, "What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?" {4Red 105.2}

A hasty council of the priests and Pharisees was called to determine how to proceed with regard to Jesus, in view of the excitement and enthusiasm of the people on his account. They decided that it would be dangerous to seize upon him openly on any pretext, for since the raising of Lazarus the sympathies of the people were greatly in favor of Jesus. So they determined to use craft and take him secretly, avoiding all uproar or interference, carry on the mockery of a trial as quietly as possible, and trust to the fickle tide of public opinion to set in their favor when it was known that Jesus was condemned to death. {4Red 106.1}

But another consideration came up: If they should execute Jesus, and Lazarus should remain as a witness of his miraculous power to raise from the dead, the very fact that a man existed who had been four days in the grave, and whose body had begun to decay, yet had been called to life and health by a word from Jesus, would sooner or later create a reaction and bring disaster upon themselves for sacrificing the life of Him who could perform such a miracle for the benefit of

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humanity. They therefore decided that Lazarus must also die. They felt that if the people were to lose confidence in their rulers, the national power would be destroyed. {4Red 106.2}

To such lengths do envy and bitter prejudice lead their slaves. In rejecting Christ, the Pharisees placed themselves where darkness and superstition closed around them, until, continually increasing in hatred and unbelief, they were ready to imbrue their hands in blood to accomplish their unholy ends, and would even take the life of one whom Infinite power had rescued from the grave. They placed themselves where no power, human or divine, could reach them; they sinned against the Holy Spirit, and God had no reserve power to meet their case. Their rebellion against Christ was settled and determined; he was a stumbling-block and a rock of offense to them; they would not

have this man Jesus to reign over them. While all this plotting was going on at Jerusalem, Jesus was quietly resting from his labors at the house of Lazarus. Simon of Bethany, whom Jesus had healed of leprosy, wishing to show his Master special honor, made a supper and invited him and his friends as guests. The Saviour sat at the table, with Simon, whom he had cured of a loathsome disease, on one side, and Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, on the other. Martha served at the table, but Mary was earnestly listening to every word that fell from the lips of Jesus. She saw that he was sad; she knew that immediately after raising her brother from the dead, he was obliged to seclude himself in order to escape the persecution of the leading Jews. As she looked upon her brother in the strength of perfect health,

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her heart went out in gratitude to Jesus who had restored him to her from the grave. {4Red 107.1}

Jesus in his mercy had pardoned the sins of Mary, which had been many and grievous, and her heart was full of love for her Saviour. She had often heard him speak of his approaching death, and she was grieved that he should meet so cruel a fate. At great personal sacrifice she had purchased an alabaster box of precious ointment with which to anoint the body of Jesus at his death. But she now heard many express an opinion that he would be elevated to kingly authority when he went to Jerusalem, and she was only too ready to believe that it would be so. She rejoiced that her Saviour would no longer be despised and rejected, and obliged to flee for his life. In her love and gratitude she wished to be the first to do him honor, and, seeking to avoid observation, anointed his head and feet with the precious ointment, and then wiped his feet with her long, flowing hair. {4Red 108.1}

Her movements had been unobserved by the others, but the odor filled the house with its fragrance and published her act to all present. Some of the disciples manifested displeasure at this act, and Judas boldly expressed his disapprobation at such a wasteful extravagance. Simon the host, who was a Pharisee, was influenced by the words of Judas, and his heart filled with unbelief. He also thought that Jesus should hold no communication with Mary because of her past life. Judas, the prime instigator of this disaffection among those who sat at the table, was a stranger to the deep devotion and homage which actuated Mary to her deed of love. He had been appointed treasurer of the united funds

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of the disciples, and had dishonestly appropriated to himself the means which were designed for the service of God. {4Red 108.2}

He had indulged a spirit of avarice until it had overpowered every good trait in his character. This act of Mary was in such marked contrast with his selfishness that he was ashamed of his avarice, and sought to attribute his objection to her gift, to a worthier motive. Turning to the disciples he asked, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" Thus he sought to hide his covetousness under apparent sympathy for the poor, when, in reality, he cared nothing for them. {4Red 109.1}

He longed to have the avails of the expensive ointment in his own hands to apply to

his own selfish purposes. By his professed sympathy for the poor he deceived his fellow-disciples, and by his artful insinuations caused them to look distrustfully upon the devotion of Mary. Whispered hints of prodigality passed round the table: "To what purpose is this waste? for this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor." Mary was abashed as the eyes of the disciples were bent sternly and reproachfully upon her. She felt that her deed of devotion must have been wrong, and tremblingly expected Jesus to condemn it also. {4Red 109.2}

But the Saviour had observed all that had transpired, and knew the motives of all who were there assembled. He read the object of Mary in her costly offering. Though she had been very sinful, her repentance was sincere, and Jesus, while reproving her guilt, had pitied her weakness and forgiven her. Mary's heart was filled with gratitude at the compassion of Jesus. Seven

times she had heard his stern rebuke to the demons which then controlled her heart and mind, and she had listened to his strong cries to his Father in her behalf. She knew how offensive everything impure was to the unsullied mind of Christ, and she overcame her sin in the strength of her Saviour. She was transformed, a partaker of the divine nature. {4Red 109.3}

Mary had offered her gift in the grateful homage of her heart, and Jesus explained her motive and vindicated her deed. "Let her alone," he said. "Why," he asked, "trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me." He justified her work to all present as evincing her gratitude to him for lifting her from a life of shame to one of purity, and teaching her to believe in him. Said he, "Against the day of my burying hath she kept this." The ointment so sacredly kept to anoint the dead body of her Lord she had poured upon his head in the belief that he was about to be lifted to a throne in Jerusalem. {4Red 110.1}

Jesus might have pointed out Judas to the disciples as the cause of such severe judgment being passed on Mary. He might have revealed to them the hypocrisy of his character; he might have made known his utter want of feeling for the poor, and his embezzlement of money appropriated to their relief. He could have raised their indignation against him for his oppression of the widow, the orphan, and the hireling; but he refrained from exposing the true character of Judas. He reproached him not, and thus avoided giving him an excuse for his future perfidy. {4Red 110.2}

But he rebuked the disciples, saying, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have

not always. She hath done what she could. She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily, I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Jesus, looking into the future, spoke with certainty concerning his gospel: That it was to be preached throughout the whole world. Kingdoms would rise and fall; the names of monarchs and conquerors would be forgotten; but the memory of this woman's deed would be immortalized upon the pages of sacred history. {4Red 110.3}

Had the disciples rightly appreciated the exalted character of their Master, they would have considered no sacrifice too costly to offer to the Son of God. The wise men of the East understood more definitely his true position, and the honor due him, than his own followers, who had received his instruction and beheld his mighty miracles. They brought precious gifts to the Saviour, and bent in homage before him, while he was but a babe, and cradled in a manger. {4Red 111.1}

The look which Jesus cast upon the selfish Judas convinced him that the Master penetrated his hypocrisy and read his base, contemptible character. He was stirred with resentment. His heart burned with envy that Jesus should be the recipient of an offering suitable to the monarchs of earth. He went directly from that supper to the chief priests, and agreed to betray him into their hands. The priests were greatly rejoiced at this, and "they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver, and from that time he sought opportunity to betray him."

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{4Red 111.2}

In the case of Judas we see the fearful result of covetousness and unholy anger. He begrudged the offering made to Jesus, and although not personally rebuked, he was irritated to combine revenge with his avarice, and sell his Lord for a few pieces of silver. Mary showed how highly she prized the Saviour when she accounted the most precious gift none too costly for him; but Judas valued Jesus at the price for which he sold him; his niggardly soul balanced the life of the Son of God against a paltry sum of money. The same cold, calculating, spirit is manifested by many who profess Christ today. Their offerings to his cause are grudgingly bestowed or withheld altogether under various plausible excuses. A pretense of wide philanthropy, unlimited by church or creed, is not unfrequently one of them, and they plead, like Judas, It is better to give it to the poor. But the true Christian shows his faith by investing in the cause of truth; he is known by his works, for "faith without works is dead." {4Red 112.1}

Jesus read Simon's heart, and knew how he had been influenced by the insinuations of Judas, and that he had questioned in his mind, saying, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner." When Judas had left the house, Jesus turned to his host and said, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." Simon replied, "Master, say on." Then Jesus proceeded to speak a parable, which illustrated the contrast between the gratitude of his host, who had been healed of the leprosy, and that of Mary, whose sins had been pardoned. Said he, "There was a certain creditor which

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had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?" {4Red 112.2}

Simon did not discern the application which Jesus designed to make, but he answered him, "I suppose that he to whom he forgave most." Jesus replied, "Thou hast rightly judged." This answer condemned Simon. He had been a great sinner, and also a loathsome leper, avoided by all. He had come to Jesus piteously imploring his help, and He who never turned a deaf ear to human woe, had cleansed him from sin and from the

terrible disease that was upon him. Simon was humbled, but he had been a proud Pharisee, and he did not look upon himself as being so great a sinner as he really was, and he had now become self-sufficient and lifted up in his own estimation. He had exalted himself as far superior to the poor woman who anointed the feet of her Lord. In entertaining Jesus at his house, he thought he was paying him marked respect; but the Saviour was lowered in his estimation when he permitted the devotion of Mary, who had been so great a sinner. He overlooked the miracle which Jesus had wrought upon him in saving him from a living death, and coldly reasoned with himself if Jesus could be the Messiah, and yet stoop to receive the gift of this woman. He thought that if he were the Christ, he would know that a sinner had approached him and repel her. He did not realize that he himself had been a greater sinner than she, and that Christ had forgiven him as well as Mary. He was ready to doubt the divine character of his Master

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because he imagined that he detected in him a want of discernment. {4Red 113.1}

On the other hand, Mary was thoroughly penitent and humbled because of her sins. In her gratitude for his pardoning mercy she was ready to sacrifice all for Jesus, and no doubt as to his divine power troubled her mind for a moment. It was not the comparative degrees of obligation which should be felt by the two persons, which Jesus designed to illustrate by this parable, for both were unable to cancel their debt of gratitude; but he took Simon on his own ground, as feeling himself more righteous than the woman, and showed him that though the sins which had been forgiven him were great, he had not repaid his Benefactor with that respect and love which casts out all unbelief. His sense of obligation to his Saviour was small, while Mary, prizing the gift of mercy bestowed upon her, was filled with gratitude and love. {4Red 114.1}

Jesus drew the contrast sharply between the two. Said he: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment." {4Red 114.2}

The proud Pharisee had considered that he had sufficiently honored Jesus by inviting him to his house; and in his self-consequence had neglected to show him the proper regard due to so exalted a guest, and to one who had wrought upon him a miracle of mercy. Jesus encouraged

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acts of heart-felt courtesy, and the woman, whose gratitude and love was expressed in her act of attention, was highly commended by the Saviour: "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." {4Red 114.3}

Simon's eyes were opened to his neglect and unbelief. He was touched by the kindness of Jesus in not openly rebuking him before all the guests. He perceived that Jesus did not wish to exhibit his guilt and his want of gratitude to others, but desired to convince his mind by a true statement of his case, and to subdue his heart by pitying kindness. Stern denunciation would have closed the heart of Simon against

repentance; but patient admonition convinced him of his error and won his heart. He saw the magnitude of the debt which he owed his Lord, and became a humble, self-sacrificing man. {4Red 115.1}

When we realize the full debt of obligation to our Saviour, we are united to him by closer bonds, and our love will be expressed in all our acts. Jesus will remember every good work done by his children. The self-sacrificing and benevolent will live in his memory and be rewarded. No act of devotion to his cause will be forgotten by him. There is no sacrifice too costly to be offered on the altar of our faith. {4Red 115.2}

Riding Into Jerusalem.

On the first day of the week, Jesus resumed his journey to Jerusalem to join in the feast of the passover. Multitudes who had flocked to Bethany to see him, accompanied him, eager to witness his entry into Jerusalem. All nature

seemed to rejoice; the trees were clothed in verdure, and blossoms which shed their delicate fragrance upon the air. Many people were on their way to the city to keep the feast of the passover. These companies were continually joining the multitude attending Jesus. He sent two of his disciples to bring "a colt, the foal of an ass," that he might ride into Jerusalem. It was but a short distance, and as he had always chosen to travel on foot, his disciples were puzzled to know why he should prefer to ride. But hope brightened in their hearts with the joyous thought that Jesus was about to enter the capital and proclaim himself King of the Jews, and assert his royal power. While on their errand, the disciples communicated their glowing anticipations to the friends of Jesus, and the excitement spread far and near, raising the expectations of the people to the highest pitch. {4Red 115.3}

Jesus selected for his use a colt upon which never man had sat. The disciples in glad enthusiasm spread their garments upon the colt and placed their Master upon him. No sooner was he seated than a loud shout of triumph rent the air, and the multitude hailed him as Messiah, their King. Jesus now accepted the homage which he had never before permitted, and his disciples received this as a proof that their glad hopes were to be realized by seeing him acknowledged at Jerusalem as the King of Israel. All were happy and excited; the people vied with each other in paying him homage. They could not display outward pomp and splendor, but they gave him the worship of happy hearts. They were unable to present him with costly gifts, but they spread their outer garments as a carpet in his path, and

they also strewed the leafy branches of the olive and palm in the way. They could lead the triumphal procession with no royal standards, but they cut down the spreading palm boughs, Nature's emblem of victory, and waved them aloft, while their loud acclamations and hosannas rent the air. {4Red 116.1}

As they proceeded, the multitude was continually increased by those who had heard of the coming of Jesus and hastened to join the procession. Spectators were constantly mingling with the throng and asking, Who is this? What does all this commotion signify?

They had all heard of Jesus and were expecting him to go to Jerusalem, but they knew that he had heretofore refused to receive kingly honors, and they were greatly astonished to learn that this was he. They wondered what could have wrought this change in him who had declared that his kingdom was not of this world. {4Red 117.1}

While they are wondering and questioning, the eager crowd silence their queries with a shout of triumph that is repeated again and again, and is echoed from the surrounding hills and valleys. And now the joyful procession is joined by crowds from Jerusalem, that have heard of the grand demonstration, and hasten to meet the Saviour and conduct him to Jerusalem. From the great gathering of the Hebrews to attend the passover, thousands go forth to welcome Jesus to the city. They greet him with the waving of palm branches and a burst of sacred song. The priests at the temple sound the trumpet for evening service, but there are few to respond, and the rulers say to each other in alarm. "The world has gone after him."

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{4Red 117.2}

The Saviour during his earthly life had hitherto refused to receive kingly honor, and had resolutely discouraged all attempts to elevate him to an earthly throne; but this occasion was intended by Jesus to call public attention to him as the world's Redeemer. He was nearing the period when his life was to be offered a ransom for guilty man. Although he was soon to be betrayed and to be hanged upon the cross like a malefactor, yet he would enter Jerusalem, the scene of his approaching sacrifice, attended by demonstrations of joy and the honor belonging to royalty, to faintly prefigure the glory of his future coming to the world as Zion's King. {4Red 118.1}

It was the purpose of Jesus to draw attention to the crowning sacrifice that was to end his mission to a fallen world. They were assembling at Jerusalem to celebrate the passover, while he, the antitypical Lamb, by a voluntary act set himself apart as an oblation. Jesus understood that it was needful in all future ages that the church should make his death for the sins of the world a subject of deep thought and study. Every fact connected with it should be verified beyond a doubt. It was necessary, then, that the eyes of all people should be directed to him, that the demonstrations which preceded his great sacrifice should be such as to call the attention of all to the sacrifice itself. After such an exhibition as that attending his entry into Jerusalem, all eyes would follow his rapid progress to the final end. {4Red 118.2}

The startling events connected with this triumphal ride were calculated to be the talk of every tongue, and bring Jesus before every mind. After his crucifixion these events would be

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connected with his trial and death; prophecies would be searched and would reveal the fact that this was indeed the Messiah; and converts to the faith of Jesus would be multiplied in all lands. In this one triumphant scene of his earthly life, the Saviour might have appeared escorted by heavenly angels and heralded by the trumps of God; but he remained true to the life of humiliation he had accepted, bearing the burden of humanity till his life was given for the life of the world. {4Red 118.3}

This day, which seemed to the disciples the crowning day of their lives, would have

been shadowed with gloomy clouds had they known that this scene of rejoicing was but a prelude to the suffering and death of their Master. Although he had repeatedly told them of his certain sacrifice, yet in the glad triumph of the present they forgot his sorrowful words, and looked forward to his prosperous reign on the throne of David. New accessions were being made continually to the procession, and, with few exceptions, all who joined it caught the glad inspiration of the hour, and helped to swell the hosannas that echoed and re-echoed from hill to hill and from valley to valley. The shouts went up continually, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" It was as if all that vast multitude were seeking to excel one another in responding to the call from a prophetic past. {4Red 119.1}

Many Pharisees witnessed the scene, and, burning with envy and malice, sought to turn the popular current. They exercised all the authority which they could command to repress the

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enthusiasm of the people; but all their appeals and threatenings were in vain. Fearful that this multitude, in the strength of their numbers, would lift Jesus to the position of king, they, as a last resort, pressed through the crowd and accosted him with reproving and threatening words: "Master, rebuke thy disciples." They declared that such noisy and excited demonstrations were unlawful and would not be permitted by the authorities. But the reply of Jesus silenced their haughty commands: "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." {4Red 119.2}

God himself had, in his special providence, arranged the order of the events then transpiring, and if men had failed to carry out the divine plan, He would have given a voice to the inanimate stones and they would have hailed his Son with acclamations of praise. This scene had been revealed in prophetic vision to the holy seers of old, and man was powerless to turn aside the purposes of Jehovah. As the silenced Pharisees drew back, the words of Zechariah were taken up by hundreds of voices: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." {4Red 120.1}

The Pharisees were forced to desist from their efforts to calm the enthusiasm of the people. All their expostulations only served to increase their ardor. The world had never before seen such a triumphal procession. It was not like that of the earth's famous conquerors. No train of mourning captives, as trophies of kingly valor,

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made a feature of that imposing pageant. But about the Saviour were the glorious trophies of his labors of love for sinful man. There were the captives whom he had rescued from Satan's cruel power, praising God for their deliverance. The blind to whom he had restored sight pressed on, leading the way. The dumb, whose tongues he had loosed, shouted the loudest hosannas. The cripples whom he had healed bounded freely on, the most active in breaking the palm-branches and in waving them before the Saviour. Widows and orphans were among the multitude exalting the name of Jesus for his works of mercy to them. The lepers who had been cleansed by a word from him,

and rescued from a living death, spread their untainted garments in his path and hailed him as the King of Glory. Those who had been awakened by his magic voice from the sleep of death were in that throng. Lazarus, whose body had seen corruption in the grave, now restored to the full strength of glorious manhood, guided the humble beast upon which his Liberator rode. {4Red 120.2}

When the procession arrived at the summit of the hill and was about to descend into the city, Jesus halted, and all the multitude with him Jerusalem in all its glory lay before them, bathed in the light of the declining sun. The temple attracted all eyes. In stately grandeur it towered above all else, seeming to point toward Heaven as if directing the people upward to the only true and living God. This temple in its splendid majesty had long been the pride and glory of the Jewish nation. The Romans also prided themselves in it as an unequaled monument of magnificence. Their king had united

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with the Jews in embellishing it, and together they had spared no pains nor expense to furnish it with the most costly and beautiful decorations both without and within. {4Red 121.1}

A portion of the wall of the building had withstood the siege of armies, and, in its perfect masonry, appeared like one solid stone dug entire from the quarry. While the westering sun was tinting and gilding the heavens, its resplendent glory lit up the pure white marble of the temple and sparkled on its gold-capped pillars. From the crest of the hill where Jesus and his followers stood, it had the appearance of a massive structure of snow studded with flashing jewels. At the entrance to the temple was a vine composed of gold and silver, with green leaves and massive clusters of grapes, all executed at an enormous expense by the most skillful artists. This design represented Israel in the character of a prosperous vine. The gold, silver, and living green were all combined with such rare taste and exquisite workmanship, that, as it twined gracefully about the white and glistening pillars, clinging with shining tendrils to their golden ornaments, it was a wonderful thing of beauty, catching the splendor of the setting sun, and shining as if with a glory borrowed from Heaven. {4Red 122.1}

Jesus gazes upon the enchanting scene before him, and the vast multitude hush their shouts, spell-bound by this sudden vision of beauty. All eyes turn instinctively upon the Saviour, expecting to see in his countenance the admiration which they themselves feel. But instead of this they behold a cloud of sorrow gathering upon his countenance. They are surprised and disappointed to see the eyes of the Saviour fill

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with tears, and his body rock to and fro like a tree before the tempest, while a wail of anguish bursts from his quivering lips as if from the depths of a broken heart. What a sight was this for angels to behold! Their loved Commander in an agony of tears! What a sight was this for that glad throng who had accompanied him with shouts of triumph and waving of palm-branches to that summit overlooking the glorious city where they fondly hoped he would reign! Their acclamations were now silenced, while many tears flowed in sympathy with the grief they could not comprehend. {4Red 122.2}

Jesus had wept at the grave of Lazarus, but it was in a God-like grief in harmony with the occasion. But this sudden sorrow is like a note of wailing in a grand triumphal

chorus. In the midst of a scene of rejoicing, where all were paying him homage, Israel's King was in tears; not silent tears of gladness, but tears and groans of insuppressible agony. The multitude are struck with a sudden gloom while they look upon this grief which is incomprehensible to them. The tears of Jesus were not in anticipation of physical suffering as he contemplated his crucifixion, though just before him was the garden of Gethsemane where he knew that soon the horror of a great darkness would overshadow him. The sheep gate was also in sight through which for centuries the beasts for sacrificial offerings had been conducted. This gate was soon to open for him, the great Antitype toward whose sacrifice for the sins of the world all these offerings had pointed. Near by was Calvary, the scene of his approaching agony. {4Red 123.1}

Yet it is not because of these reminders of his

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cruel death that the Redeemer weeps and groans in anguish of spirit. His is no selfish sorrow. The thought of physical pain does not intimidate that noble, self-sacrificing soul. It is the sight of Jerusalem that pierces the heart of Jesus with anguish,--Jerusalem that had rejected the Son of God and scorned his love, who refused to be convinced by his mighty miracles and is about to take his life. He sees what she is in her guilt of rejecting her Redeemer, and what she might have been had she accepted Him who alone could heal her wound. He had come to save her; how can he give up the child of his care! {4Red 123.2}

He raised his hand,--that had so often blessed the sick and suffering,--and waving it toward the doomed city, in broken utterances of grief exclaimed: "If thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day the things which belong to thy peace--" Here the Saviour paused and left unsaid what might have been the condition of Jerusalem had she accepted the only help that God could give her,--the gift of his beloved Son. If Jerusalem had known what it was her privilege to know, and had acted according to the light bestowed upon her by God, she might have stood forth in the pride of prosperity, the queen of kingdoms, free in the strength of her God-given power. There would then have been no armed soldiers waiting at her gates, no Roman banners waving from her walls. The glorious destiny which might have blessed Jerusalem, had she accepted her Redeemer, rose before the Son of God. He saw that she might through him have been healed of her grievous malady, liberated from bondage, and established as the mighty metropolis of the earth. From her walls the dove

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of peace would have gone forth to all nations. She would have been the world's diadem of glory. {4Red 124.1}

But the bright picture of what Jerusalem might have been had she accepted the Son of God, fades from the Saviour's sight as he realizes what she is under the oppressive Roman yoke, bearing the frown of God, doomed to his retributive justice. He takes up the broken thread of his lamentations: "But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." {4Red 125.1}

Christ came to save Jerusalem with her children from the consequences of her former sins; but the unholy expectations of the Pharisees were not answered in the manner of his appearing. Pharisaical pride, hypocrisy, jealousy, and malice had prevented him from accomplishing his purpose. Jesus knew the terrible retribution which would be visited upon the doomed city. He sees Jerusalem encompassed with armies, the besieged inhabitants driven to starvation and death, mothers making a repast on the dead bodies of their own children, and both parents and children snatching the last morsel of food from one another, natural affection being destroyed through the gnawing pangs of hunger. He sees that the stubbornness of the Jews, as evinced in their rejection of his salvation, will also lead them to refuse their only remaining chance of safety, submission to the invading

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armies. He sees the wretched inhabitants suffering torture on the rack, and crucifixion, the beautiful palaces destroyed, the temple where God had revealed his glory, in ruins, and of all its pure and spotless walls, decorated with lofty pillars and gilded devices, not one stone left upon another, while the city is plowed like a field. Well may the Saviour weep in agony in view of such a fearful picture! {4Red 125.2}

Jerusalem had been the child of his care, and as a tender father mourns over a wayward son, so Jesus wept over Jerusalem. How can I give thee up! How can I see thee devoted to destruction and desolation! Must I let thee go to fill up the cup of thine iniquity! One soul is of such value that, in comparison with it, worlds sink into insignificance; but here was a whole nation to be lost. When the fast westering sun should pass from sight in the heavens, Jerusalem's day of grace would be at an end. While that vast procession was halting on the brow of Olivet, it was yet not too late for Jerusalem to repent and be saved. The Angel of Mercy was then folding her wings to step down from the golden throne and give place to Justice and swift-coming judgment. But Christ's great heart of love still pleads for Jerusalem, which had scorned all his mercies, despised his warnings, and was about to finish her iniquitous work by imbruing her hands in his blood. If Jerusalem would but repent, it is not yet too late. While the last rays of the setting sun are lingering on temple, tower, and flashing minaret, will not some good angel lead her to the Saviour's love, and avert the fearful doom that awaits her! Beautiful and unholy city, that had stoned the

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prophets, that had rejected the Son of God, that was locking herself, by her impenitence, in fetters of bondage,--thy day of mercy is almost spent! {4Red 126.1}

Here had lived a favored people; God made their temple his habitation; it was "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." The record of more than a thousand years of Christ's guardian care and tender love, such as a father bears his only child, was there. In that temple had the prophets uttered their solemn warnings. There had the burning censers waved, while incense, mingled with the prayers of the worshipers, had ascended to God. There the blood of beasts had flowed, typical of the blood of Christ. There Jehovah had manifested his glory above the mercy-seat. There the priests had officiated in flowing robes and jeweled breast-plates, and the pomp of symbol and ceremony had gone on for ages. But all this must have an end; for

Jerusalem has sealed her own doom, and her destruction is at hand. {4Red 127.1}

Contemplating the fate of the city he had loved, the soul of Jesus yearned over the child of his care. Unrequited love broke the heart of the Son of God. Little did the multitude know of the grief that weighed upon the spirit of Him whom they worshiped. They saw his tears and heard his groans, and for a brief space a mysterious awe interrupted their joyful demonstrations; but they could not understand the meaning of his lamentation over Jerusalem. Meanwhile, reports were brought to the rulers that Jesus was approaching the city attended by a great concourse of people. In trepidation they go out to meet him, hoping to disperse the crowd by means of their authority. As the procession is about to descend the

Mount of Olives, it is intercepted by the rulers. They inquire who and what is the cause of all this tumultuous rejoicing. As they, with much authority, repeat their question,--Who is this? the disciples, filled with a spirit of inspiration, are heard above all the noise of the crowd, repeating in eloquent strains the prophecies which answered this question. Adam will tell you, It is the seed of the woman that shall bruise the serpent's head. Ask Abraham, he will tell you, It is Melchizedek, King of Salem, King of Peace. Jacob will tell you, He is Shiloh of the tribe of Judah. Isaiah will tell you, Immanuel, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Jeremiah will tell you, The Branch of David, the Lord, our righteousness. Daniel will tell you, He is the Messiah. Hosea will tell you, He is the Lord God of Hosts, the Lord is his memorial. John the Baptist will tell you, He is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. The great Jehovah has proclaimed from his throne, This is my beloved Son. We, his disciples, declare, This is Jesus, the Messiah, the Prince of Life, the Redeemer of the world. And even the Prince of the powers of darkness acknowledges him, saying, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." {4Red 127.2}

PAMPHLETS / 5Red - Redemption Or The Sufferings Of Christ His Trial And Crucifixion (1877)

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PAMPHLETS / 5Red - Redemption Or The Sufferings Of Christ His Trial And Crucifixion (1877) / NOTE TO THE READER

NOTE TO THE READER

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST, HIS TRIAL, CONDEMNATION, CRUCIFIXION, AND DEATH, AS DEPICTED IN THIS LITTLE BOOK, CANNOT FAIL TO WAKEN THE DEEPEST INTEREST IN THE CHRISTIAN MIND, AND TO OPEN NEW CHANNELS

OF THOUGHT FOR ALL THOSE WHO READ IT IN A SPIRIT OF CANDOR. THE LIGHT HERE THROWN UPON THE LAST TEACHINGS AND ACTS OF CHRIST, PRIOR TO HIS CRUCIFIXION, MAKES PLAIN TO THE INQUIRING MIND MANY SACRED AND IMPORTANT TRUTHS; AND THE SPECIAL ILLUMINATIONS WITH WHICH THE AUTHOR HAS BEEN FAVORED BY HEAVEN, COMMEND THESE PAGES TO THE CAREFUL PERUSAL OF THE READER.

PUBLISHERS.

The Sufferings of Christ

The Passover Supper.

The scribes and priests now counseled together how they might take Jesus without raising a tumult among the people; for many of those who witnessed his mighty works believed him to be the prophet of the Most High, and would have been greatly incensed at any attempt upon his liberty. So the dignitaries decided that open violence would not be good policy, but that treachery must serve their purpose. {5Red 3.1}

Judas, one of the twelve, proposed secretly to betray Jesus into their hands, by leading them to one of the Saviour's resorts for prayer and retirement. In this quiet place they could make sure of their prey, for there would be no multitude to oppose them. Judas, ever greedy for gain, made a contract with the priests and rulers to betray his Master into their hands for thirty pieces of silver. The Lord of life and glory was sold to ignominy and death by one of his disciples for a paltry sum of money. {5Red 3.2}

The heart of Judas had not suddenly grown thus base and corrupt. His love of mammon, like any vice which is left unchecked, had daily grown stronger, until it overbalanced his love for the Saviour, and he had become an idolater.

We look with horror upon the treachery of Judas; but his case represents a large class who file in under the banner of Christ, yet are really his worst enemies. They use the name of Christian as a cloak to hide their evil deeds, and sell their integrity for money, and their Saviour for a little worldly advantage. {5Red 3.3}

After Judas had closed the contract by which he agreed to betray his Master into the hands of those who thirsted for his life, he mingled with the other disciples as though innocent of wrong, and interested in the work of preparing for the passover. The betrayer thought that his base purposes were hidden from his Master, although every day furnished fresh evidence that the thoughts and intents of all hearts were open unto him. {5Red 4.1}

Jesus met his disciples in the upper chamber, and they soon perceived that something weighed heavily upon his mind. At length, in a voice of touching sadness, he addressed them thus: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." He clearly foresaw the events which were to transpire in the near future. His heart was wrung with grief as he contemplated the ingratitude and cruelty of those he

had come to save, and saw pictured before him the terrible fate that awaited them in consequence. {5Red 4.2}

The interviews between Jesus and his disciples were usually seasons of calm joy, highly prized by all of them. The passover suppers had been scenes of special interest; but upon this occasion Jesus was troubled in spirit, and his disciples sympathized with his grief although they knew not its cause. This was virtually the last passover

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that was ever to be celebrated; for type was to meet antitype in the slaying of the Lamb of God for the sins of the world. {5Red 4.3}

"And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. 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. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." At this last passover the Lord's supper was instituted. {5Red 5.1}

Jesus, by his example, then gave his disciples a lesson of humility. Having girded himself like a servant, he washed the feet of his disciples, conversing with them the while in solemn tenderness. He, the spotless Son of God, stooped to wash the feet of his followers, as one of the last tokens of his love for them. When he had completed the task, he said unto them, "Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you." {5Red 5.2}

A contention had arisen among the disciples of Jesus as to who should be most honored in his kingdom; for notwithstanding the express instruction they had so often received to the

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contrary, they had clung to the idea that Jesus would establish a temporal kingdom in Jerusalem; and the late demonstrations upon his entering the city, and the manner in which he had received them, revived this belief in their minds. Jesus had checked their aspirations for honor, and now strengthened the lesson by an act of humility and love, calculated to impress them with a sense of their obligations to one another, and that instead of quarreling for place, each should count the others better than himself. {5Red 5.3}

As the disciples sat at the passover with their beloved Master, they observed that he still appeared greatly troubled and depressed. A cloud settled over them all, a premonition of some dreadful calamity, the character of which they did not understand. As they ate in silence, Jesus said, "Verily, I say unto you that one of you shall betray me." Amazement and consternation seized them at these words. They could not comprehend how any one of them could deal treacherously by their divine Teacher. For what cause could they betray him, and to whom? Whose heart could give birth to such

a design! Surely not one of the favored twelve who had been privileged above all others to hear his teachings, and who had experienced his marvelous love, and for whom he had shown such great respect by bringing them into close communion with himself! {5Red 6.1}

As they realized the full import of his words, and remembered how true his sayings were, a sudden fear and self-distrust seized them. They began to examine their own hearts to ascertain if one thought against the Master found lodgment there. With the most painful feelings, one

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after another inquired, "Lord, is it I?" But Judas sat silent. John, in deep distress, inquired at last, Who is it, Lord? and Jesus answered, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him, but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born." The disciples had searched one another's faces closely as they asked, "Lord, is it I?" and now the silence of Judas drew all eyes to himself. Amid the confusion of questions and the expressions of astonishment, Judas had not heard the words of Jesus in answer to John's question. But now, to escape the searching scrutiny of the disciples, he asked as they had done, "Master, is it I?" Jesus replied with solemn accents, "Thou hast said." Confused and overcome by the unexpected discovery of his crime, Judas hastily rose to leave the room; but as he went out, Jesus said, "What thou doest, do quickly." {5Red 6.2}

There was a touching forbearance manifested in the dealing of Jesus with Judas. It evinced an infinite mercy, giving him one more chance of repentance, by showing him that all his thoughts and purposes were fully known to the Son of God. He deigned to give one final, convincing proof of his divinity to Judas before the consummation of his treachery, that he might turn from his purpose before repentance was too late. But Judas, although surprised and alarmed, was not moved to repentance, but went forth and proceeded to carry out the work he had engaged to do. {5Red 7.1}

The purpose of the Saviour in pronouncing the woe upon Judas was twofold: First, to give the

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false disciple a last opportunity to save himself from the betrayer's doom; and, secondly, to give the disciples a crowning evidence of his Messiahship, in revealing the hidden purpose of Judas. Said Jesus: "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he." {5Red 7.2}

The withdrawal of Judas was a relief to all present. The Saviour's face immediately lighted, and the oppressive shadow was lifted from the disciples, as they saw the peace of Heaven return to the pale, worn countenance of their Lord. Jesus had much to say to his beloved disciples that he did not wish to say in the presence of the multitude, who could not understand the sacred truths he was about to unfold. Even the disciples could not fully understand them till after the resurrection should have taken place. {5Red 8.1}

Looking upon his faithful followers, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and

God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him." He then informed them of his approaching separation from them. The ardent Peter could not rest while the matter remained in uncertainty. He inquired, "Lord, whither goest thou?" Jesus answered, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterward." But Peter's interest was intensely roused, and he urged Jesus to explain his full meaning, saying, "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Jesus answered sorrowfully, "Wilt

thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." Then, looking with pitying love upon his little flock, so soon to be left without a shepherd, he sought to draw their minds from the perplexity into which his statements had thrown them, and said tenderly, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." {5Red 8.2}

With the deepest interest Jesus poured forth the burden of his soul in words of comfort, of counsel and prayer, which would ever remain imprinted on the minds and hearts of his disciples. These words from the lips of the Saviour, traced by the inspired John in chapters fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen, were repeated again and again by the disciples to stay their sinking hearts in their great disappointment and trial. Not until after the resurrection, however, were the words spoken upon this memorable occasion fully understood and appreciated. {5Red 9.1}

Jesus with his disciples now left the upper chamber, and crossed the brook Kedron. Sorrow and anguish again pressed heavily upon his heart. With touching sadness he addressed his companions: "All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen I will go before you into Galilee." Peter, again anxious to assure his

Master of his fidelity, said, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." Jesus, reproving his confidence as before, said, "Verily I say unto thee, that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." But Peter only "spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all." {5Red 9.2}

Jesus now repaired with his disciples to the garden of Gethsemane, at the foot of Mount Olivet, a retired place which he had often visited for seasons of communion with his Father. It was night; but the moon was shining bright, and revealed to him a flourishing grape-vine. Drawing the attention of the disciples to it, he said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." {5Red 10.1}

The Jewish nation was a fruitless branch, and was therefore to be separated from the living vine, which was Christ Jesus. The Gentiles were to be engrafted upon the

stalk, to become a living branch, partaker of the life that nourished the true vine. This branch was to be pruned that it might be fruitful. In view of his separation from his disciples, Jesus now exhorted them to connect themselves firmly to him by faith, that they might become a part of the living vine, and bear a rich harvest of fruit. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me,

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and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." {5Red 10.2}

When the sinner has repented of his sins, and is united with Christ, as the branch is engrafted in the vine, the nature of the man is changed, and he is a partaker of the divine nature. He treasures up the words of Christ, and they abide in him. The life-giving principle of the Saviour is communicated to the Christian. Just so the little scion, leafless and apparently lifeless, is engrafted into the living vine, and, fiber by fiber, vein by vein, drinks life and strength from it, till it becomes a flourishing branch of the parent stalk. {5Red 11.1}

He still impressed upon them the importance of carrying forward the work which he had begun, and bearing fruit to the glory of God: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." The disciples were the chosen depositaries of the truth of God. They were witnesses of the Father's acknowledgment of Jesus as the Son of God. They had beheld his miracles, heard his teachings, and it was theirs to give his message of salvation to the world, that through their evidence men might lay hold of Christ by living faith. Thus would the disciples bring forth fruit to the glory of God. {5Red 11.2}

Jesus assured his disciples that he would in no case forsake them, but would be clothed with power, and would become their Advocate at the right hand of the Father, to present the petitions they might ask in the name of his Son. The disciples did not then fully comprehend the

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words of their Master, but later in their religious experience they cherished the precious promise, and presented their prayers to the Father in the name of Jesus. {5Red 11.3}

Jesus warned his disciples not to expect the commendation of the world. Said he, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Those who are of the same spirit with the world receive its smiles and approbation; but the humble disciples of Jesus were to suffer scorn and persecution. Jesus declared that they should be brought before kings and rulers for his name's sake, and whosoever should destroy their lives would be so deceived by Satan as to think they were doing God service. Every indignity and cruelty that the ingenuity of man could devise would be visited upon the followers of Christ. But in all their trials they were to remember that their Master had endured like reproach and suffering. They were to remember his words: "The servant is not greater

than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me." {5Red 12.1}

Jesus carefully opened before his disciples the events which would follow his death, that when persecution should overtake them they might be prepared to endure it, and not be tempted to apostatize from their faith to avert suffering and dishonor. He impressed upon them the

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importance of their position as those who had witnessed the wonderful manifestations of God to his Son, who had beheld the miracles of Christ, and received his words of wisdom. Said he, "Ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." The history of those disciples, and the evidence which they were to record, were to be the study of thinking minds through all ages. {5Red 12.2}

Jesus plainly stated to the disciples that he had left the presence of his Father to come unto the world, and that he was now about to leave the world and return to his Father; but he refrained from crowding their minds and confusing their understanding. Said he, "I have many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now." He knew they were not strong enough to hear all the wonderful truths relative to his humiliation and death. After his resurrection they would be better able to understand and appreciate them. {5Red 13.1}

Jesus now had but a short time in which to comfort and instruct his little band of followers. His farewell counsel was rich in sympathy and truth. Exceeding precious to his disciples were those last moments passed with their beloved Master. Like a consecrated high priest he now poured forth the burden of his soul to his Father in a petition for his church such as the angels had never before heard. This prayer was deep and full, broad as the earth, and reaching high Heaven. With his human arm he encircled the children of Adam in a firm embrace; and with his strong divine arm he grasped the throne of the Infinite, thus uniting earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite God.

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{5Red 13.2}

In The Garden.

The Redeemer, in company with his disciples, slowly made his way to the garden of Gethsemane. The passover moon, broad and full, shone from a cloudless sky. The city of pilgrims' tents was hushed into silence. {5Red 14.1}

Jesus had been earnestly conversing with and instructing this disciples; but as he neared Gethsemane he became strangely silent. His disciples were perplexed, and anxiously regarded his countenance, hoping there to read an explanation of the change that had come over their Master. They had frequently seen him depressed, but never before so utterly sad and silent. As he proceeded, this strange sadness increased; yet they dared not question him as to the cause. His form swayed as if he was about to fall. His disciples looked anxiously for his usual place of retirement, that their Master might

rest. {5Red 14.2}

Upon entering the garden he said to his companions, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." Selecting Peter, James, and John to accompany him, he proceeded farther into the recesses of the garden. He had been accustomed to brace his spirit for trial and duty by fervent prayer in this retreat, and had frequently spent the entire night thus. On these occasions his disciples, after a little season of watching and prayer, would sleep undisturbed at a little distance from their Master until he awoke them in the morning to go forth and labor anew. So this act of Jesus called forth no remark from his companions.

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{5Red 14.3}

Every step that the Saviour now took was with labored effort. He groaned aloud as though suffering under the pressure of a terrible burden; yet he refrained from startling his three chosen disciples by a full explanation of the agony which he was to suffer. Twice his companions prevented him from falling to the ground. Jesus felt that he must be still more alone, and he said to the favored three, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me." His disciples had never before heard him utter such mournful tones. His frame was convulsed with anguish, and his pale countenance expressed a sorrow past all description. {5Red 15.1}

He went a short distance from his disciples-- not so far but that they could both see and hear him--and fell prostrate with his face upon the cold ground. He was overpowered by a terrible fear that God was removing his presence from him. He felt himself being separated from his Father by a gulf of sin, so broad, so black and deep that his spirit shuddered before it. He clung convulsively to the cold, unfeeling ground as if to prevent himself from being drawn still farther from God. The chilling dews of night fell upon his prostrate form, but the Redeemer heeded it not. From his pale, convulsed lips wailed the bitter cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." {5Red 15.2}

It was not a dread of the physical suffering he was soon to endure that brought this agony upon the Son of God. He was enduring the penalty of man's transgression, and shuddering

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beneath the Father's frown. He must not call his divinity to his aid, but as a man, he must bear the consequences of man's sin and the Creator's displeasure toward his disobedient subjects. As he felt his unity with the Father broken up, he feared that his human nature would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the prince of the power of darkness; and in that case the human race would be irrecoverably lost, Satan would be victor, and the earth would be his kingdom. The sins of the world weighed heavily upon the Saviour, and bowed him to the earth; and the Father's anger in consequence of that sin seemed crushing out his life. {5Red 15.3}

In the conflict of Christ with Satan in the wilderness of temptation, the destiny of the human race was at stake. But Christ was conqueror, and the tempter left him for a season. He had now returned for the last fearful conflict. Satan had been preparing for this final trial during the three years of Christ's ministry. Everything was at stake with

him. If he failed here, his hope of mastery was lost; the kingdoms of the earth would finally become Christ's who would "bind the strong man" (Satan), and cast him out. {5Red 16.1}

During this scene of the Saviour's anguish, the disciples were at first much troubled to see their Master, usually so calm and dignified, wrestling with a sorrow that exceeded all utterance; but they were tired, and finally dropped asleep, leaving him to agonize alone. At the end of an hour, Jesus, feeling the need of human sympathy, rose with painful effort and staggered to the place where he had left his companions.

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But no sympathizing countenance greeted him after his long struggle; the disciples were fast asleep. Ah! if they had realized that this was their last night with their beloved master while he lived a man upon earth, if they had known what the morrow would bring him, they would hardly have yielded to the power of slumber. {5Red 16.2}

The voice of Jesus partially aroused them. They discerned his form bending over them, his expression and attitude indicating extreme exhaustion. They scarcely recognized in his changed countenance the usually serene face of their Master. Singling out Simon Peter, he addressed him: "Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?" Oh! Simon, where is now thy boasted devotion? Thou, who didst but lately declare thou couldst go with thy Lord to prison or to death, hast left him in the hour of his agony and temptation, and sought repose in sleep! {5Red 17.1}

John, the loving disciple who had leaned on the breast of Jesus, was also sleeping. Surely, the love of John for his Master should have kept him awake. His earnest prayers should have mingled with those of his loved Saviour in the time of his supreme sorrow. The self-sacrificing Redeemer had passed entire nights in the cold mountains or in the groves, praying for his disciples, that their faith might not fail them in the hour of their temptation. Should Jesus now put to James and John the question he had once asked them: "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" they would not have ventured to answer, "We are able."

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{5Red 17.2}

The evidence of the weakness of his disciples excited the pity and sympathy of the Son of God. He questioned their strength to endure the test they must undergo in witnessing his betrayal and death. He did not sternly upbraid them for their weakness, but, in view of their coming trial, exhorted them: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Then, his spirit moving in sympathy with their frailty, he framed an excuse for their failure in duty toward him: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." {5Red 18.1}

Again the Son of God was seized with superhuman agony, and, fainting and exhausted, staggered back to the place of his former struggle. Again he was prostrated to the earth. His suffering was even greater than before. The cypress and palm trees were the silent witnesses of his anguish. From their leafy branches dropped heavy dew upon his stricken form, as if nature wept over its Author wrestling alone with the powers of darkness. {5Red 18.2}

A few hours before, Jesus had stood like a mighty cedar, withstanding the storm of

opposition that spent its fury upon him. Stubborn wills, and hearts filled with malice and subtlety strove in vain to confuse and overpower him. He stood forth in divine majesty as the Son of God. But now he was like a bruised reed beaten and bent by the angry storm. A short time before, he had poured out his soul to his disciples in noble utterances, claiming unity with the Father, and giving his elect church into his arms in the language of one who had divine authority. Now his voice uttered suppressed wails of

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anguish, and he clung to the cold ground as if for relief. {5Red 18.3}

The words of the Saviour were borne to the ears of the drowsy disciples: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." The anguish of God's dear Son forced drops of blood from his pores. Again he staggered to his feet, his human heart yearning for the sympathy of his companions, and repaired to where his disciples were sleeping. His presence roused them, and they looked upon his face with fear, for it was stained with blood, and expressed an agony of mind which was to them unaccountable. {5Red 19.1}

He did not again address them, but, turning away, sought again his retreat and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of a great darkness. The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. The awful moment had arrived which was to decide the destiny of the world. The heavenly hosts waited the issue with intense interest. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. The Son of God might even then refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty men. He might wipe the bloody sweat from his brow, and leave men to perish in their iniquity. Will the Son of the Infinite God drink the bitter potion of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequence of God's curse, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." {5Red 19.2}

Three times has he uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last crowning sacrifice. But now the history of the human

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race comes up before the world's Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish under the Father's displeasure. He sees the power of sin, and the utter helplessness of man to save himself. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world arise before him. He beholds its impending fate, and his decision is made. He will save man at any cost to himself. He accepts his baptism of blood, that perishing millions through him may gain everlasting life. He left the courts of Heaven, where all was purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that had fallen by transgression, and he will not turn from the mission he has chosen. He will reach to the very depths of misery to rescue a lost and ruined race. {5Red 19.3}

Having made the decision and reached the final crisis, he fell in a dying condition to the earth from which he had partially risen. Where now were his disciples, to place their hands tenderly beneath the head of their fainting Master, and bathe that brow, marred indeed more than the sons of men? The Saviour trod the winepress alone, and of all the people there was none with him. And yet he was not alone. He had said, "I and my

Father are one." God suffered with his Son. Man cannot comprehend the sacrifice made by the infinite God in giving up his Son to reproach, agony, and death. This is the evidence of the Father's boundless love to man. {5Red 20.1}

The angels who did Christ's will in Heaven were anxious to comfort him; but it was beyond their power to alleviate his sorrow. They had never felt the sins of a ruined world, and they beheld with astonishment the object of

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their adoration subject to a grief beyond all expression. Though the disciples had failed to sympathize with their Lord in the trying hour of his conflict, all Heaven was full of sympathy and waiting the result with painful interest. When it was finally determined, an angel was sent from the throne of God to minister unto the stricken Redeemer. {5Red 20.2}

The disciples were suddenly aroused from their slumber by a bright light shining upon and around the Son of God. They started up in amazement, and beheld a heavenly being, clothed in garments of light, bending over their prostrate Master. With his right hand he lifted the head of the divine sufferer upon his bosom, and with his left hand he pointed toward Heaven. His voice was like the sweetest music, as he uttered soothing words presenting to the mind of Christ the grand results of the victory he had gained over the strong and wily foe. Christ was victor over Satan; and, as the result of his triumph, millions were to be victors with him in his glorified kingdom. {5Red 21.1}

Well was it for the children of men that the angel's errand was not to notify the Saviour that his thrice-repeated prayer, Let this cup pass from me, had been granted. Then indeed might the disciples have slept on, locked in the slumber of hopeless despair. But the angel was sent from Heaven to support the Redeemer in drinking the cup that was presented him. The language of his prayer was now changed; in the spirit of submission he prayed: "If this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." A heavenly serenity now rested upon the Saviour's pale and blood-stained face.

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{5Red 21.2}

The glorious vision of the angel dazzled the eyes of the disciples. They remembered the mount of transfiguration, the glory that encircled Jesus in the temple, and the voice of God issuing from the cloud. They saw the same glory here revealed, and had no farther fear for their Master, since God had taken him in charge and an angel was present to protect him from his foes. They were weary and heavy with sleep, and again they dropped into unconsciousness. {5Red 22.1}

The Saviour of the world arose and sought his disciples, and, for the third time, found them fast asleep. He looked sorrowfully upon them. His words, however, aroused them: "Sleep on now, and take your rest; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." {5Red 22.2}

Even while these words were upon his lips, the footsteps of the mob that was in search of him were heard. Judas took the lead and was closely followed by the high priest. Jesus turned to his disciples, as his enemies approached, and said, "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." The countenance of the Saviour

wore an expression of calm dignity; no traces of his recent agony were visible as he stepped forth to meet his betrayer. {5Red 22.3}

He stood in advance of his disciples, and inquired, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." As these words were uttered, the mob staggered back; and the priests, elders, soldiers, and even Judas, dropped powerless to the ground. This gave Jesus ample opportunity to escape from them if he had chosen to do so. But he stood

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as one glorified amid that coarse and hardened band. When Jesus answered. "I am he," the angel who had lately ministered unto him moved between him and the murderous mob, who saw a divine light illuminating the Saviour's face, and a dove-like form overshadowing him. Their wicked hearts were filled with terror. They could not for a moment stand upon their feet in the presence of this divine glory, and they fell as dead men to the ground. {5Red 22.4}

The angel withdrew; the light faded away; Jesus was left standing, calm and self-possessed, with the bright beams of the moon upon his pale face, and still surrounded by prostrate, helpless men, while the disciples were too much amazed to utter a word. When the angel departed, the Roman soldiers started to their feet, and, with the priests and Judas, gathered about Christ as though ashamed of their weakness, and fearful that he would yet escape from their hands. Again the question was asked by the Redeemer, "Whom seek ye?" Again they answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." The Saviour then said, "I have told you that I am he. If, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way"--pointing to the disciples. In this hour of humiliation Christ's thoughts were not for himself, but for his beloved disciples. He wished to save them from any farther trial of their strength. {5Red 23.1}

Judas, the betrayer, did not forget his part, but came close to Jesus, and took his hand as a familiar friend, and bestowed upon him the traitor's kiss. Jesus said to him, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" His voice trembled with sorrow as he addressed the deluded Judas: "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"

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This most touching appeal should have roused the conscience of the betrayer, and touched his stubborn heart; but honor, fidelity, and human tenderness had utterly forsaken him. He stood bold and defiant, showing no disposition to relent. He had given himself up to the control of Satan, and he had no power to resist him. Jesus did not reject the traitor's kiss. In this he gives us an example of forbearance, love, and pity, that is without a parallel. {5Red 23.2}

Though the murderous throng were surprised and awed by what they had seen and felt, their assurance and hardihood returned as they saw the boldness of Judas in touching the person of Him whom they had so recently seen glorified. They now laid violent hands upon Jesus, and proceeded to bind those precious hands that had ever been employed in doing good. {5Red 24.1}

When the disciples saw that band of strong men lying prostrate and helpless on the ground, they thought surely their Master would not suffer himself to be taken; for the same power that prostrated that hireling mob could cause them to remain in a state of

helplessness until Jesus and his companions should pass unharmed beyond their reach. They were disappointed and indignant as they saw the cords brought forward to bind the hands of Him whom they loved. Peter in his vehement anger rashly cut off, with his sword, an ear of the servant of the high priest. {5Red 24.2}

When Jesus saw what Peter had done, he released his hands, though held firmly by the Roman soldiers, and saying, "Suffer ye thus far," he touched the wounded ear, and it was instantly made whole. He then said to Peter, "Put up

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again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Jesus then turned to the chief priest, and captains of the temple, who helped compose that murderous throng, "and said, are ye come out as against a thief with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled." {5Red 24.3}

When the disciples saw that Jesus did not deliver himself from his enemies, but permitted himself to be taken and bound, they were offended that he should suffer this humiliation to himself and them. They had just witnessed an exhibition of his power in prostrating to the ground those who came to take him, and in healing the servant's ear, which Peter had cut off, and they knew that if he chose he could deliver himself from the murderous mob. They blamed him for not doing so, and mortified and terror-stricken by his unaccountable conduct they forsook him and fled. Christ had foreseen this desertion, and in the upper chamber had forewarned them of the course which they would take at this time, saying, "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." {5Red 25.1}

Judas was himself surprised that Jesus should deliver himself into the hands of those who

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sought to destroy him. He had frequently known the Saviour's enemies to lay plans to take him, but Jesus would quietly depart and defeat their murderous designs. Now the betrayer saw with astonishment that his Master suffered himself to be bound and led away. The false disciple flattered himself, however, that Jesus had only permitted himself to be taken that he might manifest his power by delivering himself from his enemies in a miraculous manner. He knew that nothing else could free him from that armed band. For three years the Jews had been secretly planning to take him, and now that they had accomplished this they would not let him escape death, if they could prevent it. {5Red 25.2}

Jesus was hurried off by the hooting mob. He moved painfully, for his hands were tightly bound and he was closely guarded. He was first conducted to the house of Annas, the father-in-law of the high priest, the man whose counsel was sought and carried out by the Jewish people as the voice of God. Annas craved the fearful satisfaction of first seeing Jesus of Nazareth a bound captive. Having once been shown

to Annas, he was hurried away; for the priests and rulers had decided that if they once had possession of his person, there should be no delays in his trial and condemnation. This was because they feared that the people, remembering his acts of charity and mercy among them, would rescue him out of their hands.

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{5Red 26.1}

In the Judgment Hall.

The armed band, with their prisoner, threaded the dark and narrow streets, guided by torches and lanterns, for it was yet early morning and very dark. Amid insult and mockery, the Saviour was hurried to the palace of the officiating high priest, Caiaphas. Here he was coarsely accused by his persecutors, and sneeringly questioned by the priest, and reviled by the whole assembly. But while enduring this mockery of an examination, the Saviour's heart was pierced by a keener pang than it was in the power of his enemies to inflict. It was when he heard his beloved disciple deny him with cursing and swearing. {5Red 27.1}

After deserting their Master in the garden, two of the disciples regained their presence of mind and ventured to follow, at a distance, the mob that had Jesus in charge. These disciples were Peter and John. The priest recognized John as a well-known disciple of Jesus, and admitted him to the hall where the Saviour was being questioned because he hoped that John, while witnessing the humiliation of his leader, would become affected with the same spirit that actuated his enemies, and scorn the idea of one who could be subjected to such indignities, being the Son of God. John, having secured himself an entrance, spoke in behalf of his companion, Peter, and gained the same favor for him. {5Red 27.2}

The coldest hour of the night was that preceding the dawn, and a fire had been lighted in the hall. Around this a company were gathered; and Peter presumptuously took his place with

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the rest by the fire, and stood warming himself. He did not wish to be recognized as one of the disciples of Jesus, and he thought by mingling carelessly with the people he would be taken for one of those who had brought Jesus to the hall. {5Red 27.3}

But, as the light flashed upon Peter's countenance, the woman who kept the door cast a searching glance upon him; she had noticed that he came in with John, and conjectured that he was one of Christ's followers. She interrogated him in a taunting manner: "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" Peter was startled and confused; the eyes of the company instantly fastened upon him. He pretended not to understand her, but she was persistent, and said to those around her that this man was with Jesus. Peter, feeling compelled to answer, said angrily, "Woman, I know him not." This was the first denial, and immediately the cock crew. O Peter! So soon ashamed of thy Master! So soon to cowardly deny thy Lord! The Saviour is dishonored and deserted in his humiliation by one of his most zealous disciples. {5Red 28.1}

In the first place, Peter had not designed that his real character should be known;

and, in assuming an air of indifference, he placed himself on the enemy's ground, and became an easy subject to Satan's temptation. He appeared to be disinterested in the trial of his Master, while in reality his heart was wrung with sorrow as he heard the cruel taunts and saw the mockery and abuse he was suffering. In addition to this he was surprised and angry that Jesus should humiliate himself and his followers by passively submitting to such treatment. Under these conflicting emotions, it was difficult to preserve his character

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of indifference. His appearance was unnatural, as he endeavored to join with the persecutors of Jesus in their untimely jests, in order to cover his true feelings. {5Red 28.2}

He was acting a lie, and while trying to talk unconcernedly he could not restrain expressions of indignation at the abuse heaped upon his Master. Accordingly attention was called to him the second time, and he was again charged with being a follower of Jesus. He now denied the accusation with an oath. The cock crew the second time; but Peter heard it not, for he was now thoroughly intent upon carrying out the character which he had assumed. One of the servants of the high priest, being a near kinsman to the man whose ear the disciple had cut off, asked him, "Did not I see thee in the garden with him?" "Surely thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto." {5Red 29.1}

At this, Peter flew into a rage, and to fully deceive his questioners, and to justify his assumed character, he denied his Master with cursing and swearing. And immediately the cock crew the third time. Peter heard it then; and while the degrading oaths were fresh upon his lips, and the shrill crowing of the cock was yet ringing in his ears, the Saviour turned his face from the frowning judges, and looked full upon his poor disciple. At the same time Peter's eyes were involuntarily fixed upon his Master. He read in that gentle countenance deep pity and sorrow; but there was no anger there. {5Red 29.2}

Peter was conscience-smitten; his memory was aroused; he recalled to mind his promise of a few short hours before, that he would go to

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prison or to death for his Lord. He remembered his grief when the Saviour told him in the upper chamber that he would deny his Master thrice that same night. Peter had just declared that he knew not Jesus, but he now realized with bitter grief how well his Lord knew him, and how accurately he had read his heart, the falseness of which was unknown even to himself. He groaned in spirit as he realized that not only was his Master enduring the bitterest humiliation at the hands of his enemies, but he was suffering additional dishonor at the hands of one of his disciples, who had forsaken and refused to acknowledge him in the hour of his trial. {5Red 29.3}

The look of Christ conveyed volumes to the repentant Peter. He read in that glance sorrow, love, and pardon. A tide of memories rushed over him. He remembered the Saviour's tender mercy, his kindness and long-suffering, the patience with which he dealt with his followers. He remembered the caution of Jesus to him: "Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." He reflected with horror upon his base ingratitude, his

falsehood and perjury. He looked once more at his Master, and saw a sacrilegious hand raised to smite him in the face. Unable to longer endure the scene, he rushed, heart-broken, from the hall. {5Red 30.1}

He pressed on in solitude and darkness, he knew and cared not whither. At last he found himself in the garden of Gethsemane, where a short time before he had slept while the Saviour wrestled with the powers of darkness. The suffering face of his Lord, stained with bloody

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sweat and convulsed with anguish, rose before him. He remembered with bitter remorse that Jesus had wept and agonized in prayer alone while those who should have sustained him in that trying hour were sleeping. He remembered his solemn charge: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." The scene of a few short hours before came vividly to his mind. He witnessed again the tears and groans of Jesus. It was torture to his bleeding heart to know that he had added the heaviest burden to the Saviour's humiliation and grief. He fell prostrate upon the very spot where his Lord had sunk beneath his inexpressible weight of woe. {5Red 30.2}

Peter's first mistake was in sleeping when Christ had bidden him to watch and pray. At the most critical moment, when the Son of God was in need of his sympathy and heartfelt prayers, he was incapable of giving them to him. The disciples lost much by sleeping; Jesus designed to fortify them for the severe test of faith to which they were to be subjected. If they had spent that mournful period in the garden in watching with the dear Saviour, and in prayer to God, Peter would not have been left to depend upon his own feeble strength; he would not have denied his Lord. {5Red 31.1}

This important night-watch should have been spent by the disciples in noble mental struggles and prayers, which would have brought them strength to witness the terrible agony of the Son of God. It would have prepared them, as they should behold his sufferings upon the cross, to understand in some degree the nature of the overpowering anguish which he endured. They would then have been better able to recall the

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words he had spoken to them in reference to his sufferings, death, and resurrection; and amid the gloom of that trying hour some rays of hope would have lighted up the darkness, and sustained their faith. Christ had told them before that these things would take place. He knew the power which the prince of darkness would use to paralyze the senses of his disciples when they should be watching and praying. {5Red 31.2}

The disciple John, upon entering the judgment hall, did not try to conceal the fact that he was one of the followers of Jesus. He did not mingle with the rough company that were insulting and mocking his Master. He was not questioned, for he did not assume a false character and thus lay himself liable to suspicion. He sought a retired corner secure from observation of the mob, but as near Jesus as it was possible for him to be. In this place he could hear and see all that transpired at the trial of his Lord. {5Red 32.1}

If Peter had been called to fight for his Master, he would have proved a bold and courageous soldier; but he became a coward when the finger of scorn was pointed at

him. Many who do not hesitate to engage in active warfare for the Lord, are driven to deny their faith through the ridicule of their enemies. They place themselves in the way of temptation by associating with those whom they should avoid. They thus invite the enemy to tempt them, and are led to do and say that which they would never have been guilty of under other circumstances. The disciple of Christ, who, in our day, disguises his faith through dread of suffering or reproach, denies his Lord as virtually as did Peter in the judgment hall. There are always those who

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boast of their freedom of thought and action, and laugh at the scruples of the conscientious who fear to do wrong. Yet if those righteous persons are persuaded to yield their faith, they are despised by the very ones who were Satan's agents to tempt them to their ruin. {5Red 32.2}

Peter, however, as well as John, witnessed much of the mock trial of Jesus. It was necessary that there should be a pretense of legal trial; but great secrecy was maintained lest the people should obtain information of what was being done, and come forward with their testimony in vindication of Jesus, bringing to light the mighty works which he had done. This would bring the indignation of the people upon the Sanhedrim: their acts would be condemned and brought to naught; and Jesus would be liberated and receive new honor at the hands of the people. {5Red 33.1}

While the members of the Sanhedrim council were being called together, Annas and Caiaphas the priest questioned Jesus, with the purpose of provoking him to make some statement which they could use to his disadvantage. They brought two charges against him, by one or both of which they meant to effect his condemnation. One was that he was a disturber of the peace, the leader of a rebellion. If this charge could be verified he would be condemned by the Roman authorities. The other charge was that he was a blasphemer. This, if proved true, would secure his condemnation among the Jews. {5Red 33.2}

The high priest questioned Jesus concerning his doctrine, and the disciples who believed in him. Jesus answered briefly: "I spake openly

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to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them; behold, they know what I said." {5Red 33.3}

Jesus was well aware that his questioner designed to draw some statement from him which should awaken the fears of the Roman authorities that he was seeking to establish a secret society with the purpose of finally setting up a new kingdom. He therefore plainly stated to Annas that he had no secrets in regard to his purpose or doctrines. Turning upon his interrogator he said with startling emphasis, "Why askest thou me?" Had not the priests and rulers set spies to watch his movements and report his every word? Had they not been present at every gathering of the people, and carried information of all his sayings and doings on these occasions to the priests? "Ask them that heard me, what I have said," replied Jesus; and his words were a rebuke to Annas, who had hunted him for months, striving to entrap him, and to bring him before a secret tribunal, in which the people could have no voice, that he might obtain by

perjury what it was impossible to gain by fair means. {5Red 34.1}

The words of Jesus were so close and pointed that the high priest felt that his very soul was being read by his prisoner. Though Annas was filled with hatred against Jesus at these words, he disguised it until a more fitting opportunity presented itself of giving vent to his malice and jealousy. But one of the servants of the high priest, assuming that his master was not treated

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with due respect, struck Jesus in the face, saying, "Answerest thou the high priest so?" To this insulting question and blow, Jesus mildly returned, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" {5Red 34.2}

The Majesty of Heaven might have summoned to his aid legions of loyal angels to protect him against the malignity of his enemies; but it was his mission, in the character of humanity, meekly to endure taunts and stripes, leaving an example of patient forbearance to the children of men. Those into whose power Jesus had fallen had no respect for this sublime forbearance. The fact that he was a passive captive in their hands was the signal for them to wreak upon him the basest insults which their corrupt hearts could invent. {5Red 35.1}

When the council was fully assembled in the judgment hall, Caiaphas took his position as presiding officer. This man had ever regarded Jesus as his rival. The combined simplicity and eloquence of the Saviour had attracted large crowds to listen to his teachings, which contained wisdom such as they had never heard from the lips of priests or scribes. The anxiety of the people to hear Jesus, and their readiness to accept his doctrines, had roused the bitter jealousy of the high priest. {5Red 35.2}

Jesus stood calm and serene before the high priest, while the eyes of the multitude were upon him, and the wildest excitement prevailed around. For a moment Caiaphas looked upon the captive, struck with a sudden admiration for his dignified bearing. A conviction came over him that this man was akin to God. The next instant he banished the thought, scorning the suggestions of his own mind. Immediately, his voice was heard in

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sneering, haughty tones, requesting Jesus to work before him one of those mighty miracles which had given him such fame among the people; but his words fell upon the ears of the Saviour as though he heard them not. {5Red 35.3}

The people involuntarily compared the excited and malignant deportment of Annas and Caiaphas with the calm, majestic bearing of Jesus. A holy influence seemed to emanate from the Saviour and pervade the atmosphere surrounding him. The question arose even in the minds of the hardened multitude present, Is this man of Godlike presence to be sentenced as a common criminal? Caiaphas, perceiving the influence that was obtaining, hastened the trial. He took his position on the throne of judgment, while Jesus stood at its foot. On either side were the judges and those specially interested in the trial. The Roman soldiers were ranged on the platform, below the throne. {5Red 36.1}

The high priest arose in his gorgeous robe, with glittering tiara and costly breastplate, upon which, in former days, the light of God's glory had often flashed. In

strong contrast with this display were the coarse habiliments of Jesus. And yet he who was clad in homely garb had reigned in the courts of Heaven, crowned, and with garments of brightness, attended by holy angels. Yet there he stood at the foot of an earthly throne to be tried for his life. {5Red 36.2}

The priests and rulers had decided in counsel together that Jesus must be condemned, whether or not they could furnish evidence of his guilt. It was necessary to bring charges against him which would be regarded as criminal by the Roman power or they could legally effect nothing

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against him. His accusers could find plenty who would testify that he had denounced the priests and scribes; that he had called them hypocrites and murderers; but this would weigh nothing with the Romans, who were themselves disgusted with the pretension of the Pharisees. Such testimony would also weigh nothing with the Sadducees; for in their sharp contentions with the Pharisees, they had used to them language of the same import. His accusers were anxious to avoid raising the opposition of the Sadducees against the Pharisees; for if the two parties fell to contending among themselves, Jesus would be likely to escape from their hands. {5Red 36.3}

They could secure abundant evidence that Jesus had disregarded their traditions, and spoken irreverently of many of their ordinances; but such evidence was of no value, as it would have no weight with either the Romans or Sadducees. They dared not accuse him of Sabbath-breaking for fear an examination would reveal what had been the character of his work upon that day. In that event his miracles wrought to heal the afflicted would be brought to light, and defeat the very object they wished to gain. {5Red 37.1}

Christ had said, concerning the temple of his body, that he could destroy it, and raise it again in three days. These words were understood by his hearers to refer to the Jewish temple. Of all that Jesus had said, the priests could find nothing which they could use against him save this. The Romans had engaged in rebuilding and embellishing the temple. They took great pride in it as a work of science and art; and the priests counted upon their indignation when it was proven that Jesus, a humble man, had declared

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himself able to build it in three days if it should be destroyed. On this ground, Romans and Jews, Pharisees and Sadducees, could meet; for all held the temple in great veneration. {5Red 37.2}

In addition to this they had bribed false witnesses to testify that Jesus was guilty of inciting rebellion and seeking to establish a separate government. This they hoped would farther excite the apprehensions of the Romans and accomplish the desired object. But when these witnesses were called, their testimony was so vague and contradictory that it was worthless. Upon cross-questioning, they were led to falsify their own statements. It was becoming apparent to the people that the charges against Jesus could not be maintained. The life of the Saviour had been so faultless, and his doctrine so pure, that envy and malice could find little in either capable of being misrepresented. {5Red 38.1}

Two witnesses were at last found whose evidence was not so contradictory as the others had been. One of them, a corrupt man who had sold his honor for a sum of money, spoke of Christ as on a level with himself. Said he, "This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days." In the figurative language of prophecy, Jesus had thus foretold his own death and resurrection, his conflict and victory; but his enemies had misconstrued his words to suit their own purposes. The words of Jesus were truth and verity; the evidence was false and malicious. If the words of Jesus had been reported exactly as he uttered them, there would have been nothing offensive in them. If he had been a mere man, as they assumed him to be, his declaration

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would only have indicated an unreasonable, boastful spirit, but could not have been construed into blasphemy. {5Red 38.2}

Caiaphas urged Jesus to answer to the charge made against him; but the Saviour, knowing that his sentence was already determined, answered him nothing. The evidence gained from the last two witnesses proved nothing against him worthy of death; and Jesus himself remained calm and silent. The priests and rulers began to fear that they would fail to gain their object after all. They were disappointed and perplexed that they had failed to gain anything from the false witnesses upon which to condemn their prisoner. Their only hope now was to make Jesus speak out and say something which would condemn him before the people. {5Red 39.1}

The silence of Christ upon this occasion had already been described by Isaiah in prophetic vision: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." {5Red 39.2}

The high priest now raised his right hand to toward Heaven in a most imposing manner, and with a solemn voice addressed Jesus: "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Thus appealed to by the highest acknowledged authority in the nation, and in the name of the Most High, Jesus, to show proper respect for the law, answered, "Thou hast said." Every ear was bent to listen, and every eye was fixed upon his face, as with calm voice and dignified manner, he made this reply. A heavenly light seemed to illuminate his pale countenance as he added, "Nevertheless

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I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. {5Red 39.3}

For a moment the divinity of Christ flashed through his guise of humanity; and the high priest quailed before the penetrating eyes of the Saviour. That look seemed to read his hidden thoughts, and burn into his heart; and never in after-life did he forget that searching glance of the persecuted Son of God. This voluntary confession of Jesus, claiming his Sonship with God, was made in the most public manner, and under the most solemn oath. In it he presented to the minds of those present a reversal of the scene then being enacted before them, when he, the Lord of life and glory, would be seated at the right hand of God, the supreme Judge of Heaven and earth, from whose

decision there could be no appeal. He brought before them a view of that day, when, instead of being surrounded and abused by a riotous mob, headed by the priests and judges of the land, he would come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, escorted by legions of angels, to pronounce the sentence of his enemies. {5Red 40.1}

Jesus knew what would be the result of this announcement; that it would secure his condemnation. The object of the designing priests was now gained. Jesus had declared himself to be the Christ. The high priest, in order to give those present the impression that he was jealous for the insulted majesty of Heaven, rent his garments, and, lifting his hands toward heaven as if in holy horror, said, in a voice calculated to rouse the excited people to violence, "He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?

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behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye?" The answer of the judges was, "He is guilty of death." {5Red 40.2}

The priests and judges, exulting in the advantage they had gained through the words of Jesus, but anxious to hide their malicious satisfaction, now pressed close to him, and, as if they could not believe that they had heard aright, simultaneously inquired, "Art thou the Christ? tell us." Jesus looked calmly at his hypocritical questioners, and answered, "If I tell you, ye will not believe. And if I ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go." Jesus could have traced down the prophecies, and given his accusers evidence that the very things were then taking place which had been predicted in regard to Messiah. He could have silenced them thus; but they would not then have believed. He could have pointed them to his mighty miracles; but they had set their hearts against the light of Heaven, and no power could change them. {5Red 41.1}

There were some in that assembly who heeded the words of Jesus and noted his Godlike bearing as he stood serenely before the infuriated judges. The gospel seed found lodgment that day in hearts where it was eventually to spring up and yield an abundant harvest. The reverence and awe which his words inspired in the hearts of many who heard them were to increase and develop into perfect faith in Jesus as the world's Redeemer. Some of the witnesses of that scene were themselves afterward placed in a similar position to that of Jesus in the judgment hall; and were tried for their lives because they were the disciples of Christ. {5Red 41.2}

When the condemnation of Jesus was pronounced

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by the judges, a satanic fury took possession of the people. The roar of voices was like that of wild beasts. They made a rush toward Jesus, crying, He is guilty, put him to death! and had it not been for the Roman soldiers, Jesus would not have lived to be hanged upon the cross of Calvary. He would have been torn in pieces before his judges, had not Roman authority interfered, and by force of arms withheld the violence of the mob. {5Red 41.3}

Although Jesus was bound, yet he was also guarded, and held by two men lest he should escape from the hands of his persecutors. The judges and rulers now entirely forgot the dignity of their office, and abused the Son of God with foul epithets, railing upon him in regard to his parentage, and declaring that his presumption in proclaiming

himself the Messiah, notwithstanding his low birth, made him deserving of the most ignominious death. Most dissolute men engaged in this infamous abuse of the Saviour. An old garment was thrown over his head, and his jeering persecutors struck him in the face, crying, "Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?" Upon the garment being removed, one poor wretch spat in his face. But the Saviour directed no word or look of retaliation against the deluded souls around him, who had cast off all restraint because they perceived that the priests and rulers sanctioned their acts. {5Red 42.1}

Jesus realized that the hosts of Heaven were witnessing his humiliation, and that the least angel, if summoned to his aid, could have instantly dispersed that insulting throng, and delivered him from their power. Jesus himself could have stricken down the excited multitude

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like dead men, by a look or word of his divinity, or driven them frightened from his presence, as he had the defilers of the temple. But it was in the plan of redemption that he should suffer the scorn and abuse of wicked men, and he consented to all this when he became the Redeemer of man. The angels of God faithfully recorded every insulting look, word, and act directed against their beloved Commander; and the base men who scorned and spat upon the calm, pale face of Christ, were one day to look upon it in its glory, shining brighter than the sun. In that awful time they would pray to the rocks and the mountains: "Hide us from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." {5Red 42.2}

Jesus was pushed hither and thither, and so insulted and abused that at last the Roman officers were ashamed and angry that a man against whom nothing had yet been proven should be subject to the brutal treatment of the worst class of persons. Accordingly they accused the Jewish authorities of assuming to exercise a power that did not belong to them, in trying a man for his life, and pronouncing his condemnation. They declared that in doing this they infringed upon the Roman power, and that it was even against the Jewish law to condemn any man to death on his own testimony. This intervention of Roman authority caused a lull in the rude excitement. {5Red 43.1}

Just then a hoarse voice rang through the hall, which sent a thrill of terror through the hearts of all present: He is innocent. Spare him, O Caiaphas! He has done nothing worthy of death! The tall form of Judas was now

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seen pressing his way through the startled crowd. His face was pale and haggard, and large drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead. He rushed to the throne of judgment, and threw down before the high priest the pieces of silver he had received as the price of his Lord's betrayal. He eagerly grasped the robe of Caiaphas, and implored him to release Jesus, declaring that he was innocent of all crime. Caiaphas angrily shook him off, but he was confused and knew not what to say. The perfidy of the priests was revealed before the people. It was evident to all that Judas had been bribed to deliver Jesus into the hands of those who sought his life. {5Red 43.2}

Judas continued to beseech Caiaphas to do nothing against Jesus, declaring that he was indeed the Son of God, and cursing himself that he had betrayed innocent blood.

But the high priest, having recovered his self-possession, answered with chilling scorn, "What is that to us? see thou to that." He then represented to the people that Judas was some poor maniac, one of the mad followers of Jesus, and charged them not to let any influence prevail to release the prisoner, who was a base deceiver. {5Red 44.1}

Finding his prayers were in vain, Judas fell at the feet of Jesus, acknowledging him to be the Son of God, begging forgiveness for his sin, and imploring him to exercise his God-like power and deliver himself from his enemies. The Saviour did not reproach his betrayer either by look or word. He knew that he was suffering the bitterest remorse for his crime. He gazed compassionately upon Judas, and declared that for that hour he had come into the world.

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{5Red 44.2}

A murmur of surprise ran through the assembly at the heaven forbearance manifested by Jesus. Again a conviction swept over their minds that this man was more than mortal. But the question then arose, If he was indeed the Son of God, why did he not free himself from his bonds and rise triumphant above his accusers? {5Red 45.1}

The love of money had perverted the nobler nature of Judas, making him a fit agent for Satan to use in the betrayal of Christ. When Judas had become annoyed at the implied rebuke of Jesus because of his covetous spirit upon the occasion of Mary anointing her Lord with costly ointment, he yielded to the tempter, and gave Satan easy access to his mind. But when he decided to sell his Master to the murderous priests and rulers, he had no thought that Jesus would permit himself to be taken. He thought the priests would be cheated of their bribe, and he, the betrayer, would secure the money to use for some purpose of his own, and Jesus would have a new opportunity to display his divine power in delivering himself from the wiles of his enemies. {5Red 45.2}

From the time of his betrayal in the garden, Judas had not lost sight of the Saviour. He eagerly looked for him to surprise his enemies by appearing before them in the character of the Son of God, setting at naught all their plots and power. But when he saw him meekly submitting to their abuse, suffering himself to be tried and condemned to death, his heart smote him, and he realized the full extent of his own crime --he had sold his divine Master to shame and death. He remembered how kind and considerate Jesus had ever been to him, and his heart filled with remorse and anguish. He now

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despised the covetousness which Jesus had reproved, and which had tempted him to sell the Saviour for a few pieces of silver. {5Red 45.3}

Perceiving that his entreaties to spare the life of Jesus availed nothing with the high priest, he rushed from the hall in despair, crying, It is too late! It is too late! He felt unable to live to see Jesus crucified, and, in an agony of remorse, went out and hanged himself. {5Red 46.1}

Afterward the money which Judas had cast down before the priest was used for the purchase of a public burial ground. "And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day." {5Red 46.2}

If any testimony had been needed to prove the innocence of Jesus, it was given in the confession of Judas. Not only was it an evidence of the innocence of the Saviour, but the event was a direct fulfillment of prophecy. In prophetic vision Zechariah had looked down the ages and seen the trial of God's dear Son. The act of Judas is thus described: "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."

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{5Red 46.3}

Condemnation of Jesus.

When Jesus was asked the question, Art thou the Son of God? he knew that to answer in the affirmative would make his death certain; a denial would leave a stain upon his humanity. There was a time to be silent, and a time to speak. He had not spoken until plainly interrogated. In his lessons to his disciples he had declared: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in Heaven." When challenged, Jesus did not deny his relationship with God. In that solemn moment his character was at stake and must be vindicated. He left on that occasion an example for man to follow under similar circumstances. He would teach him not to apostatize from his faith to escape suffering or even death. {5Red 47.1}

Had the Jews possessed the authority to do so, they would have executed Jesus at once upon the hasty condemnation of their judges; but such power had passed from them into the hands of the Romans, and it was necessary that the case be referred to the proper authorities of that government for final decision. The Jews were anxious to hasten the trial and execution of Jesus, because if it were not brought about at once there would be a delay of a week on account of the immediate celebration of the passover. In that case Jesus would be kept in bonds, and the intense excitement of the mob that was clamoring for his life, would have been allayed, and a natural reaction would have set in. The better part of the people would have become aroused in his

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behalf, and in all probability his release would be accomplished. The priests and rulers felt that there was no time to lose. {5Red 47.2}

The whole Sanhedrim, followed by the multitude, escorted Jesus to the judgment hall of Pilate, the Roman governor, to secure a confirmation of the sentence they had just pronounced. The Jewish priests and rulers could not themselves enter Pilate's hall for fear of ceremonial defilement, which would disqualify them for taking part in the paschal feast. In order to condemn the spotless Son of God, they were compelled to appeal for judgment to one whose threshold they dared not cross for fear of defilement. Blinded by prejudice and cruelty, they could not discern that their passover festival was of no value, since they had defiled their souls by the rejection of Christ. The great salvation that he brought was typified by the deliverance of the children of Israel, which event was commemorated by the feast of the passover. The innocent lamb slain in

Egypt, the blood of which sprinkled upon the door-posts caused the destroying angel to pass over the homes of Israel, prefigured the sinless Lamb of God, whose merits can alone avert the judgment and condemnation of fallen man. The Saviour had been obedient to the Jewish law, and observed all its divinely appointed ordinances. He had just identified himself with the paschal lamb as its great antitype, by connecting the Lord's supper with the passover. What a bitter mockery then was the ceremony about to be observed by the priestly persecutors of Jesus! {5Red 48.1}

Pilate beheld, in the accused, a man bearing the marks of violence, but with a serene and noble countenance and dignified bearing. Many cases

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had been tried before the Roman governor, but never before had there stood in his presence a man like this. He discovered no trace of crime in his face; and something in the prisoner's appearance excited his sympathy and respect. He turned to the priests, who stood just without the door, and asked, "What accusation bring ye against this man?" {5Red 48.2}

They were not prepared for this question. They had not designed to state the particulars of the alleged crime of Jesus. They had expected that Pilate would, without delay, confirm their decision against the Saviour. However they answered him that they had tried the prisoner according to their law and found him deserving of death. Said they, "If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him up unto thee." But Pilate was not satisfied with the explanation of the Jews, and reminded them of their inability to execute the law. He intimated that if their judgment only was necessary to procure his condemnation, it was useless to bring the prisoner to him. Said he, "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." {5Red 49.1}

The treacherous priests felt that they were outwitted; they saw that it would not do to specify the grounds for their condemnation of Jesus. The charge of blasphemy would be regarded by Pilate as the expression of religious bigotry and priestly jealousy; and the case would be at once dismissed. But if they could excite the apprehensions of the Roman governor that Jesus was a leader of sedition, their purpose would be accomplished. Tumults and insurrections were constantly arising among the Jews against the

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Roman government, for many affirmed that it was against the Jewish law to pay tribute to a foreign power. The authorities had found it necessary to deal very rigorously with these revolts among the people, and were constantly on the watch for developments of that character, in order to suppress them at once. But Jesus had always been obedient to the reigning power. When the scheming priests sought to entrap him by sending spies to him with the question, "Is it lawful to render tribute to Caesar?" he had directed their attention to the image and superscription of Caesar upon the tribute money, and answered, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." Jesus himself had paid tribute, and had taught his disciples to do so. {5Red 49.2}

In their extremity the priests called the false witnesses to their aid. "And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, a king." {5Red 50.1}

Pilate was not deceived by this testimony. He now became confident that a deep plot had been laid to destroy an innocent man, who stood in the way of the Jewish dignitaries. He turned to the prisoner and "asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it." Jesus stood before Pilate, pale, bruised, and faint from loss of sleep and food. He had been hurried from place to place, and subjected to insult and violence; yet his bearing was noble, and his countenance was lighted as though a sunbeam were shining upon it. {5Red 50.2}

When his answer was heard by Caiaphas, who stood at the threshold of the judgment hall, the high priest joined with others in calling Pilate to

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witness that Jesus had admitted his crime by this answer, which was a virtual acknowledgment that he was seeking to establish a throne in Judah in opposition to the power of Caesar. Priests, scribes, and rulers, all united in noisy denunciations of Jesus, and in importuning Pilate to pronounce sentence of death upon him. The lawless uproar of the infuriated priests and dignitaries of the temple confused the senses of the Roman governor. Finally, when some measure of quiet was secured, he again addressed Jesus, saying, "Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marveled." The silence of the Saviour perplexed him. He saw in the prisoner no marks of a seditious character, and he had no confidence in the accusations of the priests. Hoping to gain the truth from him, and to escape from the clamor of the excited crowd, he requested Jesus to step with him into his house. When he had done so, and the two were alone, Pilate turned to Jesus, and in a respectful voice asked him, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" {5Red 50.3}

Jesus did not directly answer this question. He knew that conviction was awakened in the heart of Pilate, and he wished to give him an opportunity to acknowledge how far his mind had been influenced in the right direction. He therefore answered, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" The Saviour wished a statement from Pilate whether his question arose from the accusations just made by the Jews, or from his desire to receive light from Christ. Pilate longed for a more intelligent faith. The dignified bearing of Jesus, and his

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calm self-possession when placed in a position where there would naturally be developed a spirit of hate and revenge, astonished Pilate and won his deep respect. The direct question just asked him by Jesus was immediately understood by him, which evidenced that his soul was stirred by conviction. But pride rose in the heart of the Roman judge and overpowered the Spirit of God. "Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me; what hast thou done?" {5Red 51.1}

Pilate's golden opportunity had passed. Jesus, however, did not leave him without farther light. At his desire God sent an angel to Pilate's wife; and, in a dream, she was shown the pure life and holy character of the man who was about to be consigned to a cruel death. Jesus did not directly answer the question of Pilate as to what he had done; but he plainly stated to him his mission:-- {5Red 52.1}

"My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my

servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." {5Red 52.2}

Jesus thus sought to convince Pilate that he was innocent of aspiring to kingly honors upon earth. Pilate had been confused by the disturbed and divided elements of the religious world, and his mind grasped eagerly at the words of Jesus declaring that he had come into

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the world to bear witness to the truth. Pilate had heard many voices cry, Here is the truth! I have the truth! But this man, arraigned as a criminal, who claimed to have the truth, stirred his heart with a great longing to know what it was, and how it could be obtained. He inquired of Jesus, "What is truth?" But he did not wait for a reply; the tumult of the excited crowd was continually increasing; their impatient cries jarred upon his ears, and recalled him to his judicial position. He went out to the Jews, who stood beyond the door of the hall, and declared in an emphatic voice, "I find in him no fault at all." {5Red 52.3}

Those words, traced by the pen of inspiration, will forever stand as a proof to the world of the base perfidy and falsehood of the Jews in their charges against Jesus. Even the heathen magistrate pronounced him innocent. As Pilate thus spoke, the rage and disappointment of the priests and elders knew no bounds. They had made great efforts to accomplish the death of Jesus, and now that there appeared to be a prospect of his release they seemed ready to tear him in pieces. They lost all reason and self-control, and gave vent to curses and maledictions against him, behaving more like demons than men. They were loud in their censures of Pilate, and threatened the vengeance of the Roman law against him if he refused to condemn one who, they affirmed, had set himself up against Caesar. {5Red 53.1}

During all this uproar, Jesus stood unmoved, uttering no word in answer to the abuse that was heaped upon him. He had spoken freely to Pilate when alone with him, that the light of his truth might illuminate the darkened

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understanding of the Roman governor; and now he could say nothing more to prevent him from committing the fearful act of condemning to death the Son of God. Pilate turned again to Jesus and inquired, "Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly." {5Red 53.2}

Angry voices were now heard, declaring that the seditious influence of Jesus was well known throughout all the country. Said they, "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place." Pilate at this time had no thought of condemning Jesus, because he was certain that he was the victim of the envious and designing priests. As he afterward stated to Jesus, he had the power to condemn or to release him; but he dreaded the ill-will of the people; so when he heard that Jesus was a Galilean and was under the jurisdiction of Herod, he embraced the

opportunity to spare himself from farther difficulty, and refused to decide the case, sending him to Herod, who was then in Jerusalem. {5Red 54.1}

Jesus was faint and weary from loss of sleep and food, and the ill-treatment he had received; yet his suffering condition awakened no pity in the hearts of his persecutors. He was dragged away to the judgment hall of Herod amid the hooting and insults of the merciless mob. Besides escaping responsibility in regard to the trial of Jesus, Pilate thought this would be a good opportunity to heal an old quarrel between himself and Herod. He thought that this act on his part would be regarded by Herod as an acknowledgment of his superior authority, and

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would thus bring about a reconciliation. In this he was not wrong for the two magistrates made friends over the trial of the Saviour. {5Red 54.2}

When Herod had first heard of Jesus and the mighty works wrought by him, he was terror-stricken, and said, "It is John whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead;" "therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him." Herod had never before met Jesus, but he had long desired to see him, and witness his marvelous power. He was pleased that he was brought to him a prisoner, for he made no doubt that he could force him to work a miracle as a condition of saving his life. Herod's conscience was far less sensitive than when he had trembled with horror at the request of Herodias for the head of John the Baptist. For a time he had felt the keen stings of remorse for the terrible act he had committed to gratify the revenge of a cruel woman; but his moral perceptions had become more and more degraded by his licentious life, till his sins appeared but trifles in his eyes. The men who are capable of the worst crimes are those who have once been convicted by the Spirit of truth, and have turned away from the light into the darkness of iniquity. Herod had very nearly become a disciple of John; but at the very point of decision, he had fallen into the snare of Satan and put to death one whom he knew to be a true prophet. {5Red 55.1}

As the Saviour was brought before Herod, the rabble surged and pressed about, crying out against the prisoner, some charging him with one crime and some with another. Herod commanded silence and directed that Jesus be unbound, for he wished to interrogate him. He

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looked with curiosity, mingled with an impulse of pity, upon the pale, sad face of the Saviour, which was marked with deep wisdom and purity, but showed extreme weariness and suffering. Herod, as well as Pilate, knew from his acquaintance with the character of the Jews, that malice and envy had caused them to condemn this innocent man. {5Red 55.2}

Herod urged Jesus to save his life by working a miracle that would give evidence of his divine power. But the Saviour had no such work to do. He had taken upon himself the nature of man, and was not to perform a miracle to gratify the curiosity of wicked men, nor to save himself one jot of the pain and humiliation that man would suffer under similar circumstances. Herod urged him to prove that he was not an impostor by demonstrating his power before the crowd. He summoned for the purpose maimed, crippled, and deformed persons, and, in an authoritative manner, commanded Jesus to

heal these subjects in his presence, urging that if he had really worked such remarkable cures as were reported of him, he still had power to do like wonders, and could now turn it to his own profit by procuring his release. {5Red 56.1}

But Jesus stood calmly before the haughty ruler as one who neither saw nor heard. Herod repeatedly urged his proposition upon Jesus, and reiterated the fact that he had the power to release or to condemn him. He even dared to boast of the punishment he had inflicted upon the prophet John for presuming to reprove him. To all this, Jesus made no answer either by word or look. Herod was irritated by the profound silence of the prisoner, which indicated an utter

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indifference to the royal personage before whom he had been summoned. Open rebuke would have been more palatable to the vain and pompous ruler than to be thus silently ignored. {5Red 56.2}

Had Jesus desired to do so, he could have spoken words which would have pierced the ears of the hardened king. He could have stricken him with fear and trembling by laying before him the full iniquity of his life, and the horror of his approaching doom. But Jesus had no light to give one who had gone directly contrary to the knowledge he had received from the greatest of prophets. The ears of Christ had ever been open to the earnest plea of even the worst sinners; but he had no ear for the commands of Herod. Those eyes, that had ever rested with pity and forgiveness upon the penitent sinner, however defiled and lowly, had no look to bestow upon Herod. Those lips, that had dropped precious words of instruction, and were ever ready to answer the questions of those who sought knowledge, and to speak comfort and pardon to the sinful and desponding, had no words for proud and cruel Herod. That heart, ever touched by the presence of human woe, was closed to the haughty king who felt no need of a Saviour. {5Red 57.1}

The silence of Jesus could no longer be borne by Herod; his face grew dark with passion, and he angrily threatened Jesus; but the captive still remained unmoved. Herod then turned to the multitude and denounced him as an impostor. His accusers well knew that he was no impostor; they had seen too many evidences of his power to be thus misled. They knew that even the grave had opened at his command, and the dead had walked forth, clothed again with life. They had

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been greatly terrified when Herod commanded him to work a miracle; for of all things they dreaded an exhibition of his divine power, which would prove a death-blow to their plans, and would perhaps cost them their lives. Therefore the priests and rulers began to cry out vehemently against him, accusing him of working miracles through the power given him of Beelzebub, the prince of devils. {5Red 57.2}

Some cried out that he claimed to be the Son of God, the King of Israel. Herod, hearing this, said, in derision, A king, is he? Then crown him, and put upon him a royal robe, and worship your king. Then turning to Jesus he angrily declared that if he refused to speak, he should be delivered into the hands of the soldiers, who would have little respect for his claims or his person; if he was an impostor it would be no more than he deserved; but if he was the Son of God he could save himself by working a miracle.

No sooner were these words uttered than the mob, at the instigation of the priests, made a rush toward Jesus. Had not the Roman soldiers forced them back, the Saviour would have been torn in pieces. {5Red 58.1}

At the suggestion of Herod, a crown was now plaited from a vine bearing sharp thorns, and this was placed upon the sacred brow of Jesus; and an old tattered purple robe, once the garment of a king, was placed upon his noble form, while Herod and the Jewish priests encouraged the insults and cruelty of the mob. Jesus was then placed upon a large block, which was derisively called a throne, an old reed was placed in his hand as a scepter, and, amid satanic laughter, curses, and jeers, the rude throng bowed to him mockingly as to a king. Occasionally some

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murderous hand snatched the reed that had been placed in his hand, and struck him on the head with it, forcing the thorns into his temples, and causing the blood to flow down his face and beard. {5Red 58.2}

Satan instigated the cruel abuse of the debased mob, led on by the priest and rulers, to provoke, if possible, retaliation from the world's Redeemer, or to drive him to deliver himself by a miracle from the hands of his persecutors, and thus break up the plan of salvation. One stain upon his human life, one failure of his humanity to bear the terrible test imposed upon it, would make the Lamb of God an imperfect offering, and the redemption of man would be a failure. But he who could command the heavenly hosts, and in an instant call to his aid legions of holy angels, one of whom could have immediately overpowered that cruel mob,--he who could have stricken down his tormentors by the flashing forth of his divine majesty,--submitted to the coarsest insult and outrage with dignified composure. As the acts of his torturers degraded them below humanity, into the likeness of Satan, so did the meekness and patience of Jesus exalt him above the level of humanity. {5Red 59.1}

When Herod saw that Jesus submitted passively to all the indignity that was heaped upon him, preserving an unparalleled serenity through it all, he was moved by a sudden fear that after all this might not be a common man who stood before him. He was greatly perplexed when he looked upon the pure, pale face of the prisoner, and questioned if he might not be a god come down to earth. The very silence of Jesus spoke conviction to the heart of the king, such as no words could have done. Herod noticed that while

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some bowed before Jesus in mockery, others, who came forward for the same purpose, looked into the sufferer's face and saw expressed there a look so like a king that they turned back, ashamed of their own audacity. Herod was ill at ease, and, hardened as he was, dared not ratify the condemnation of the Jews; and he therefore sent Jesus back to Pilate. {5Red 59.2}

The Saviour, tottering with weariness, pale and wounded, wearing a robe of mockery and a crown of thorns, was mercilessly hurried back to the court of the Roman governor. Pilate was very much irritated; for he had congratulated himself on being rid of a fearful responsibility when he referred the accusers of Jesus to Herod. He now impatiently inquired of the Jews what they would have him do. He reminded them that

he had already examined the prisoner and found no blame in him; that his accusers had failed to sustain a single charge against him; that he had sent Jesus to Herod, a tetrarch of Galilee, and one of their own nation, who also found nothing worthy of death against the prisoner. Said Pilate, "I will therefore chastise him and release him." {5Red 60.1}

Here Pilate exposed his weakness. He had declared that Jesus was innocent of the crimes of which he was accused, yet he was willing to make a partial sacrifice of justice and principle in order to compromise with an unfeeling mob; he was willing to suffer an innocent man to be scourged, that their inhuman wrath might be appeased. But the fact that he proposed to make terms with them placed Pilate at a disadvantage with the ungovernable crowd, who now presumed upon his indecision, and clamored the more for the life of the prisoner. Pilate turned to the people, and

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represented to them that the priests and elders had not substantiated in any degree the charges brought against Jesus. He hoped by this means to raise their sympathy for him, so they would be willing to release him. Meanwhile Jesus had fallen through exhaustion upon the marble pavement. Just then a messenger pressed through the crowd, and placed in Pilate's hand a letter from his wife, which ran thus:-- {5Red 60.2}

"Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." Pilate's wife was not a Jew; but the angel of God had sent this warning to her, that, through her, Pilate might be prevented from committing the terrible crime of delivering up to death the divine Son of God. {5Red 61.1}

Pilate turned pale when he read the message; but the priests and rulers had occupied the interval in farther inflaming the minds of the people, till they were wrought up to a state of insane fury. The governor was forced to action; he turned to the crowd and spoke with great earnestness: "Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" It was customary at this feast for the governor to release one prisoner, whomsoever the people desired to be set at liberty. Pilate seized this as an opportunity to save Jesus; and by giving them a choice between the innocent Saviour and the notable robber and murderer, Barabbas, he hoped to rouse them to a sense of justice. But great was his astonishment when the cry, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas!" was started by the priests, and taken up by the mob, resounding through the hall like the hoarse cry of demons.

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{5Red 61.2}

Pilate was dumb with surprise and disappointment; but by appealing to the people, and yielding his own judgment, he had compromised his dignity, and lost control of the crowd. The priests saw that though he was convinced of the innocence of Jesus, he could be intimidated by them, and they determined to carry their point. So when Pilate inquired, "What shall I do then with Jesus, who is called Christ?" they with one accord cried out, "Let him be crucified!" {5Red 62.1}

"And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified." Here Pilate again revealed his weakness, in submitting the sentence of Jesus to a lawless and infuriated mob. How true were the words of the

prophet: "Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." The governor's cheek paled as he heard the terrible cry: "Crucify him!" He had not thought it would come to that--a man whom he had repeatedly pronounced innocent, to be consigned to the most dreaded of deaths. He now saw what a terrible thing he had done in placing the life of a just man in the balance against the decision of those, who, from envy and malice, had delivered him up to trial. Pilate had taken step after step in the violation of his conscience, and in excusing himself from judging with equity and fairness, as his position demanded he should do, until now he found himself almost helpless in the hands of the Jews. {5Red 62.2}

Again he asked the question, "Why, what evil hath he done?" and again they cried out, "Crucify him!" Once more Pilate expostulated with them against putting to death one against whom they

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could prove nothing. Again, to conciliate them, he proposed to chastise him and let him go. It was not enough that the Saviour of the world, faint with weariness and covered with wounds, must be subjected to the shameful humiliation of such a trial; but his sacred flesh must be bruised and mangled to gratify the satanic fury of the priests and rulers. Satan, with his hellish army had gained possession of them. {5Red 62.3}

Pilate, in the vain hope of exciting their pity, that they might decide this was sufficient punishment, now caused Jesus to be scourged in the presence of the multitude. The pale sufferer, with a crown of thorns upon his head, and stripped to the waist, revealing the long, cruel stripes, from which the blood flowed freely, was then placed side by side with Barabbas. Although the face of Jesus was stained with blood, and bore marks of exhaustion and pain, yet his noble character could not be hidden, but stood out in marked contrast with that of the robber chief, whose every feature proclaimed him to be a debased and hardened desperado. {5Red 63.1}

Pilate was filled with sympathy and amazement as he beheld the uncomplaining patience of Jesus. Gentleness and resignation were expressed in every feature; there was no cowardly weakness in his manner, but the strength and dignity of long-suffering. Pilate did not doubt that the sight of this man, who had borne insult and abuse in such a manner, when contrasted with the repulsive criminal by his side, would move the people to sympathy, and they would decide that Jesus had already suffered enough. But he did not understand the fanatical hatred of the priests for Christ, who, as the Light of the

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world, had made apparent their darkness and error. {5Red 63.2}

Pilate, pointing to the Saviour, in a voice of solemn entreaty said to priests, rulers, and people, "Behold the man." "I bring him forth to you that ye may know that I find no fault in him." But the priests had moved the mob to mad fury; and, instead of pitying Jesus in his suffering and forbearance, they cried, "Crucify him, crucify him!" and their hoarse voices were like the roaring of wild beasts. Pilate, losing all patience with their unreasoning cruelty, cried out despairingly, "Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him." {5Red 64.1}

The Roman governor, familiarized with cruel scenes, educated amid the din of

battle, was moved with sympathy for the suffering prisoner, who, contemned and scourged, with bleeding brow and lacerated back, still had more the bearing of a king upon his throne than that of a condemned criminal. But the hearts of his own people were hardened against him. The priests declared, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." {5Red 64.2}

Pilate was startled by these words; he had no correct idea of Christ and his mission; but he had an indistinct faith in God and in beings superior to humanity. The thought that had once before passed through his mind now took more definite shape, and he questioned if it might not be a divine personage who stood before him, clad in the purple robe of mockery, and crowned with thorns, yet with such a noble bearing that the stanch Roman trembled with awe as he gazed upon him.

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{5Red 64.3}

"When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer." Jesus had already told Pilate that he was the Messiah, that his kingdom was not of this world; and he had no farther words for a man who so abused the high office of judge as to yield his principles and authority to the demands of a blood-thirsty rabble. Pilate was vexed at the silence of Jesus, and haughtily addressed him:-- {5Red 65.1}

"Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Jesus here laid the heaviest burden of guilt upon the Jewish judges, who had received unmistakable evidence of the divinity of Him whom they had condemned to death, both from the prophecies and his own teachings and miracles. What a scene was this to hand down to the world through all time! The pitying Saviour, in the midst of his intense suffering and grief, excuses as far as possible the act of Pilate, who might have released him from the power of his enemies. {5Red 65.2}

Pilate was now more convinced than before of the superiority of the man before him, and tried again and again to save him. "But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar." This was touching Pilate in a weak point. He had been looked upon with some suspicion by the government;

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and he knew that a report of unfaithfulness on his part would be likely to cost him his position. He knew that if the Jews became his enemies he could hope for no mercy at their hands; for he had before him an example of the perseverance with which they sought to destroy one whom they hated without reason. {5Red 65.3}

The implied threat in the declaration of the priests, regarding his allegiance to Caesar, intimidated Pilate, so that he yielded to the demands of the mob, and delivered Jesus up to the crucifixion rather than risk losing his position. But the very thing he dreaded came upon him afterward in spite of his precautions. His honors were stripped from him; he was cast down from his high office; and, stung by remorse and wounded pride, he committed suicide not long after the crucifixion. {5Red 66.1}

"When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." Caiaphas answered defiantly, "His blood be on us, and on our children;" and his words were echoed by the priests and rulers, and taken up by the crowd in an inhuman roar of voices. "Then answered all the people and said, His blood be on us, and on our children." {5Red 66.2}

At this exhibition of satanic madness, the light of conviction shone more clearly upon the mind of Pilate. He had never before witnessed such rash presumption and heartless cruelty. And in strong contrast with the ungovernable passion of his persecutors was the dignified repose of Jesus. In his own mind Pilate said, He

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is a god, and thought he could discern a soft light shining about his head. Looking thus upon Christ he turned pale with fear and self-condemnation; then, confronting the people with a troubled countenance, he said, I am clear of his blood. Take ye him and crucify him; but mark ye, priests and rulers, I pronounce him a just man, and may He whom he claims as his Father judge you for this day's work, and not me. Then turning to Jesus he continued, Forgive me for this act; I am not able to save you. {5Red 66.3}

Only a short time before, the governor had declared to his prisoner that he had power to release or to condemn him; but he now thought that he could not save him, and also his own position and honor; and he preferred to sacrifice an innocent life rather than his own worldly power. Had he acted promptly and firmly at the first, carrying out his convictions of right, his will would not have been overborne by the mob; they would not have presumed to dictate to him. His wavering and indecision proved his irredeemable ruin. How many, like Pilate, sacrifice principle and integrity, in order to shun disagreeable consequences. Conscience and duty point one way, and self-interest points another; and the current, setting strongly in the wrong direction, sweeps away into the thick darkness of guilt him who compromises with evil. {5Red 67.1}

Satan's rage was great as he saw that all the cruelty which he had led the Jews to inflict upon Jesus had not forced the least murmur from his lips. Although he had taken upon himself the nature of man, he was sustained by a Godlike fortitude, and departed in no particular from the will of his Father.

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{5Red 67.2}

Wonder, O Heavens! and be astonished, O earth! Behold the oppressor and the oppressed. A vast multitude inclose the Saviour of the world. Mocking and jeering are mingled with the coarse oaths of blasphemy. His lowly birth and his humble life are commented upon by unfeeling wretches. His claim to be the Son of God is ridiculed by the chief priests and elders, and the vulgar jest and insulting sneer are passed from lip to lip. Satan has full control of the minds of his servants. In order to do this effectually, he had commenced with the chief priests and the elders, and imbued them with a religious frenzy. This they had communicated to the rude and uncultivated mob, until there was a corrupt harmony in the feelings of all, from the hypocritical priests and elders down to the most debased. Christ, the precious Son of God, was led forth and delivered to the people to be crucified. {5Red 68.1}

Calvary.

They hurried Jesus away with loud shouts of triumph; but their noise ceased for a time when they passed a retired place, and saw at the foot of a lifeless tree the dead body of Judas, who had betrayed Christ. It was a most revolting spectacle; his weight had broken the cord by which he had hung himself to the tree, and, in falling, his body had become horribly mangled, and was then being devoured by dogs. The mutilated remains were ordered to be buried at once, and the crowd passed on; but there was less noisy mockery, and many a pale face revealed the fearful thoughts within. Retribution seemed

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already to be visiting those who were guilty of the blood of Jesus. {5Red 68.2}

By this time the news of the condemnation of Jesus had spread through all Jerusalem, striking terror and anguish to thousands of hearts, but bringing a malicious joy to many who had been reproved by the teachings of the Saviour. The priests had been bound by a promise not to molest any of his disciples if Jesus were delivered up to them; so all classes of people flocked to the scene of outrage, and Jerusalem was left almost empty. Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, had not been summoned to the Sanhedrim council, and their voices had nothing to do with condemning Jesus. They were present at his crucifixion, but unable to change or modify his terrible sentence. {5Red 69.1}

The disciples and believers from the region round about joined the throng that followed Jesus to Calvary. The mother of Jesus was also there, supported by John, the beloved disciple. Her heart was stricken with unutterable anguish; yet she, with the disciples, hoped that the painful scene would change, and Jesus would assert his power, and appear before his enemies as the Son of God. Then again her mother's heart would sink as she remembered words in which he had briefly referred to the things which were that day being enacted. {5Red 69.2}

Jesus had scarcely passed the gate of Pilate's house when the cross which had been prepared for Barabbas was brought out and laid upon his bruised and bleeding shoulders. Crosses were also placed upon the companions of Barabbas, who were to suffer death at the same time with Jesus. The Saviour had borne his burden but a

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few rods, when, from loss of blood and excessive weariness and pain, he fell fainting to the ground. As he lay beneath the heavy burden of the cross, how the heart of the mother of Christ longed to place a supporting hand beneath his wounded head, and bathe that brow that had once been pillowed upon her bosom. But, alas, that mournful privilege was denied her. {5Red 69.3}

When Jesus revived, the cross was again placed upon his shoulders and he was forced forward. He staggered on for a few steps, bearing his heavy load, then fell as one lifeless to the ground. He was at first pronounced to be dead, but finally he again revived. The priests and rulers felt no compassion for their suffering victim; but they saw that it was impossible for him to carry the instrument of torture farther. They were

puzzled to find any one who would humiliate himself to bear the cross to the place of execution. The Jews could not do it because of defilement, and their consequent inability to keep the coming passover festival. {5Red 70.1}

While they were considering what to do, Simon, a Cyrenian, coming from an opposite direction, met the crowd, was seized at the instigation of the priests, and compelled to carry the cross of Christ. The sons of Simon were disciples of Jesus, but he himself had never been connected with him. This occasion was a profitable one for him. The cross he was forced to bear became the means of his conversion. His sympathies were deeply stirred in favor of Jesus; and the events of Calvary, and the words uttered by Jesus, caused him to acknowledge that he was the Son of God. Simon ever after felt grateful to God for the singular providence which placed

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him in a position to receive evidence for himself that Jesus was the world's Redeemer. {5Red 70.2}

When Jesus was thought to be dying beneath the burden of the cross, many women, who, though not believers in Christ, were touched with pity for his sufferings, broke forth into a mournful wailing. When Jesus revived, he looked upon them with tender compassion. He knew they were not lamenting him because he was a teacher sent from God, but from motives of common humanity. He looked upon the weeping women and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves, and for your children." {5Red 71.1}

Jesus did not despise their tears, but the sympathy which they expressed wakened a deeper chord of sympathy in his own heart for them. He forgot his own grief in contemplating the future fate of Jerusalem. Only a short time ago the people had cried out, "His blood be on us and on our children." How blindly had they invoked the doom they were soon to realize! Many of the very women who were weeping about Jesus were to perish with their children in the siege of Jerusalem. {5Red 71.2}

Jesus referred not only to the destruction of Jerusalem, but to the end of the world. Said he, "Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" The innocent were represented by the green tree. If God suffered his wrath because of the sins of the world to fall upon the Redeemer, in that he was permitted to suffer death by crucifixion, what might be expected to come upon the impenitent and unbelieving, who had slighted the mercies of God,

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purchased for them by the death of his Son? The mind of Jesus wandered from the destruction of Jerusalem to a wider judgment, when all the impenitent would suffer condemnation for their sins; when the Son of man should come, attended not by a murderous mob, but by the mighty hosts of God. {5Red 71.3}

A great multitude followed the Saviour to Calvary, many mocking and deriding; but some were weeping and recounting his praise. Those whom he had healed of various infirmities, and those whom he had raised from the dead, declared his marvelous works with earnest voice, and demanded to know what Jesus had done that he should be treated as a malefactor. Only a few days before, they had attended him with joyful

hosannas, and the waving of palm-branches, as he rode triumphantly to Jerusalem. But many who had then shouted his praise because it was popular to do so, now swelled the cry of "Crucify him! Crucify him!" {5Red 72.1}

Upon the occasion of Christ riding into Jerusalem, the disciples had been raised to the highest pitch of expectation. They had pressed close about their Master, and had felt that they were highly honored to be connected with him. Now they followed him in his humiliation at a distance. They were filled with inexpressible grief, and disappointed hopes. How were the words of Jesus verified: "All ye will be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." Yet the disciples still had faint hope that their Master would manifest his power at the last moment, and deliver himself from his enemies.

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{5Red 72.2}

Upon arriving at the place of execution, the condemned were bound to the instruments of torture. While the two thieves wrestled in the hands of those who stretched them upon the cross, Jesus made no resistance. The mother of Jesus looked on with agonizing suspense, hoping that he would work a miracle to save himself. Surely He who had given life to the dead would not suffer himself to be crucified. What torture must this woman have endured as she witnessed the shame and suffering of her son, yet was not able to minister to him in his distress! Bitter grief and disappointment filled her heart. Must she give up her faith that he was the true Messiah? Would the Son of God allow himself to be thus cruelly slain? She saw his hands stretched upon the cross--those dear hands that had ever dispensed blessings, and had been reached forth so many times to heal the suffering. And now the hammer and nails were brought, and as the spikes were driven through the tender flesh and fastened to the cross, the heart-stricken disciples bore away from the cruel scene the fainting form of the mother of Christ. {5Red 73.1}

Jesus made no murmur of complaint; his face remained pale and serene, but great drops of sweat stood upon his brow. There was no pitying hand to wipe the death-dew from his face, nor words of sympathy and unchanging fidelity to stay his human heart. He was treading the wine-press all alone; and of all the people there was none with him. While the soldiers were doing their fearful work, and he was enduring the most acute agony, Jesus prayed for his enemies--"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." His mind was borne from his

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own suffering to the crime of his persecutors, and the terrible but just retribution that would be theirs. He pitied them in their ignorance and guilt. No curses were called down upon the soldiers who were handling him so roughly, no vengeance was invoked upon the priests and rulers who were the cause of all his suffering, and were then gloating over the accomplishment of their purpose, but only a plea for their forgiveness-- "for they know not what they do." {5Red 73.2}

Had they known that they were putting to exquisite torture one who had come to save the sinful race from eternal ruin, they would have been seized with horror and remorse. But their ignorance did not remove their guilt; for it was their privilege to know

and accept Jesus as their Saviour. They rejected all evidence, and not only sinned against Heaven in crucifying the King of Glory, but against the commonest feelings of humanity in putting to a torturous death an innocent man. Jesus was earning the right to become the Advocate for man in the Father's presence. That prayer of Christ for his enemies embraced the world, taking in every sinner who should live, until the end of time. {5Red 74.1}

After Jesus was nailed to the cross, it was lifted by several powerful men, and thrust with great violence into the place prepared for it, causing the most excruciating agony to the Son of God. Pilate then wrote an inscription in three different languages and placed it upon the cross, above the head of Jesus. It ran thus: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." This inscription, placed so conspicuously upon the cross, irritated the Jews. In Pilate's court they had cried, Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar!

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They declared that whoever claimed other than Caesar for a king was a traitor. But they had overreached themselves in disclaiming any desire to have a king of their own nation. Pilate, in his inscription, wrote out the sentiments which they had expressed. It was a virtual declaration, and so understood by all, that the Jews acknowledged that on account of their allegiance to the Roman power, any man who aspired to be king of the Jews, however innocent in other respects, should be judged by them worthy of death. There was no other offense named in the inscription; it simply stated that Jesus was the king of the Jews. {5Red 74.2}

The Jews saw this, and asked Pilate to change the inscription. Said the chief priests, "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews." But Pilate, angry with himself because of his former weakness, and thoroughly despising the jealous and artful priests and rulers, coldly replied, "What I have written I have written." {5Red 75.1}

And now a terrible scene was enacted. Priests, rulers, and scribes forgot the dignity of their sacred offices, and joined with the rabble in mocking and jeering the dying Son of God, saying, "If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself." And some deridingly repeated among themselves: "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." "And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest

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the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross." {5Red 75.2}

These men, who professed to be the expounders of prophecy, were themselves repeating the very words which inspiration had foretold they would utter upon this occasion; yet, in their blindness, they did not perceive that they were fulfilling prophecy. The dignitaries of the temple, the hardened soldiers, the vile thief upon the cross, and the base and cruel among the multitude, all united in their abuse of Christ. {5Red 76.1}

The thieves who were crucified with Jesus suffered like physical torture with him; but one was only hardened and rendered desperate and defiant by his pain. He took up the

mocking of the priests, and railed upon Jesus, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." The other malefactor was not a hardened criminal; his morals had been corrupted by association with the base, but his crimes were not so great as were those of many who stood beneath the cross reviling the Saviour. {5Red 76.2}

In common with the rest of the Jews, he had believed that Messiah was soon to come. He had heard Jesus, and been convicted by his teachings; but through the influence of the priests and rulers he had turned away from him. He had sought to drown his convictions in the fascinations of pleasure. Corrupt associations had led him farther and farther into wickedness, until he was arrested for open crime and condemned to die upon the cross. During that day of trial he had been in company with Jesus in the judgment hall and on the way to Calvary. He had heard Pilate declare him to be a just man; he had marked his Godlike deportment

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and his pitying forgiveness of his tormentors. In his heart he acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God. {5Red 76.3}

When he heard the sneering words of his companion in crime, he "rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." Then, as his heart went out to Christ, heavenly illumination flooded his mind. In Jesus, bruised, mocked, and hanging upon the cross, he saw his Redeemer, his only hope, and appealed to him in humble faith: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom! And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee today, [BY PLACING THE COMMA AFTER THE WORD *TODAY,* INSTEAD OF AFTER THE WORD *THEE,* AS IN THE COMMON VERSIONS, THE TRUE MEANING OF THE TEXT IS MORE APPARENT.] shalt thou be with me in Paradise." {5Red 77.1}

Jesus did not promise the penitent thief that he should go with him, upon the day of their crucifixion, to Paradise; for he himself did not ascend to his Father until three days afterward. See John 20:17. But he declared unto him, "I say unto thee *today*--" meaning to impress the fact upon his mind, that at *that time,* while enduring ignominy and persecution, he had the power to save sinners. He was man's Advocate with the Father, having the same power as when he healed the sick and raised the dead to life; it was his divine right to promise *that day* to the repentant, believing malefactor, "Thou shalt be with me in Paradise." {5Red 77.2}

The criminal upon the cross, notwithstanding

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his physical suffering, felt in his soul the peace and comfort of acceptance with God. The Saviour, lifted upon the cross, enduring pain and mockery, rejected by the priests and elders, is sought by a guilty, dying soul with a faith discerning the world's Redeemer in Him who is crucified like a malefactor. For such an object did the Son of God leave Heaven, to save lost and perishing sinners. While the priests and rulers, in their self-righteous scorn, fail to see his divine character, he reveals himself to the penitent thief as the sinner's Friend and Saviour. He thus teaches that the vilest sinner may find pardon and salvation through the merits of the blood of Christ. {5Red 77.3}

The Spirit of God illuminated the mind of this criminal, who took hold of Christ by

faith, and, link after link, the chain of evidence that Jesus was the Messiah was joined together, until the suffering victim, in like condemnation with himself, stood forth before him as the Son of God. While the leading Jews deny him, and even the disciples doubt his divinity, the poor thief, upon the brink of eternity, at the close of his probation, calls Jesus his Lord! Many were ready to call him Lord when he wrought miracles, and also after he had risen from the grave; but none called him Lord as he hung dying upon the cross, save the penitent thief, who was saved at the eleventh hour. {5Red 78.1}

This was a genuine conversion under peculiar circumstances, for a special and peculiar purpose. It testified to all beholders that Jesus was not an impostor, but sustained his character, and carried out his mission to the closing scene of his earthly life. Never in his entire ministry were words

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more grateful to his ears than the utterance of faith from the lips of the dying thief, amid the blasphemy and taunts of the mob. But let no one neglect present opportunities and delay repentance, presuming on the eleventh-hour conversion of the thief, and trusting to a death-bed repentance. Every ray of light neglected leaves the sinner in greater darkness than before, till some fearful deception may take possession of his mind, and his case may become hopeless. Yet there are instances, like that of the poor thief, where enlightenment comes at the last moment, and is accepted with an intelligent faith. Such penitents find favor with Christ. {5Red 78.2}

With amazement the angels beheld the infinite love of Jesus, who, suffering the most excruciating agony of mind and body, thought only of others, and encouraged the penitent soul to believe. While pouring out his life in death, he exercised a love for man stronger than death. In Christ's humiliation, he, as a prophet, had addressed the daughters of Jerusalem; as priest and Advocate, he had pleaded with the Father to forgive the sins of his destroyers; as a loving Saviour, he had forgiven the iniquity of the penitent thief who called upon him. Many who witnessed those scenes upon Calvary were afterward established by them in the faith of Christ. {5Red 79.1}

The serpent lifted up in the wilderness represented the Son of man lifted upon the cross. Christ said to Nicodemus, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." In the wilderness all who looked upon the elevated brazen serpent lived, while those who

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refused to look died. The two thieves upon the cross represent the two great classes of mankind. All have felt the poison of sin, represented by the sting of the fiery serpent in the wilderness. Those who look upon and believe in Jesus Christ, as the thief looked upon him when lifted upon the cross, shall live forever; but those who refuse to look upon him and believe in him, as the hardened thief refused to look upon and believe in the crucified Redeemer, shall die without hope. {5Red 79.2}

The enemies of Jesus now awaited his death with impatient hope. That event they imagined would forever hush the rumors of his divine power, and the wonders of his miracles. They flattered themselves that they should then no longer tremble because of his influence. The unfeeling soldiers who had stretched the body of Jesus upon the

cross, divided his clothing among themselves, contending over one garment, which was woven without seam. They finally decided the matter by casting lots for it. The pen of inspiration had accurately described this scene hundreds of years before it took place: "For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet." "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots." {5Red 80.1}

The eyes of Jesus wandered over the multitude that had collected together to witness his death, and he saw at the foot of the cross John supporting Mary, the mother of Christ. She had returned to the terrible scene, not being able to longer remain away from her son. The last lesson of Jesus was one of filial love. He looked upon the grief-stricken face of his mother, and

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then upon John; said he, addressing the former: "Woman, behold thy son." Then, to the disciple: "Behold thy mother." John well understood the words of Jesus, and the sacred trust which was committed to him. He immediately removed the mother of Christ from the fearful scene of Calvary. From that hour he cared for her as would a dutiful son, taking her to his own home. O pitiful, loving Saviour! Amid all his physical pain, and mental anguish, he had a tender, thoughtful care for the mother who had borne him. He had no money to leave her, by which to insure her future comfort, but he was enshrined in the heart of John, and he gave his mother unto the beloved disciple as a sacred legacy. This trust was to prove a great blessing to John, a constant reminder of his beloved Master. {5Red 80.2}

The perfect example of Christ's filial love shines forth with undimmed luster from the mist of ages. While enduring the keenest torture, he was not forgetful of his mother, but made all provision necessary for her future. The followers of Christ should feel that it is a part of their religion to respect and provide for their parents. No pretext of religious devotion can excuse a son or daughter from fulfilling the obligations due to a parent. {5Red 81.1}

The mission of Christ's earthly life was now nearly accomplished. His tongue was parched, and he said, "I thirst." They saturated a sponge with vinegar and gall and offered it him to drink; and when he had tasted it, he refused it. And now the Lord of life and glory was dying, a ransom for the race. It was the sense of sin, bringing

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the Father's wrath upon him as man's substitute, that made the cup he drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God. Death is not to be regarded as an angel of mercy. Nature recoils from the thought of dissolution, which is the consequence of sin. {5Red 81.2}

But it was not the dread of death which caused the inexpressible agony of Jesus. To believe this would be to place him beneath the martyrs in courage and endurance; for many of those who have died for their faith, yielded to torture and death, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. Christ was the prince of sufferers; but it was not bodily anguish that filled him with horror and despair; it was a sense of the malignity of sin, a knowledge that man had become so familiar with sin that he did not realize its enormity, that it was so deeply rooted in the human heart as to

be difficult to eradicate. {5Red 82.1}

As man's substitute and surety, the iniquity of men was laid upon Christ; he was counted a transgressor that he might redeem them from the curse of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam of every age was pressing upon his heart; and the wrath of God, and the terrible manifestation of his displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of his Son with consternation. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour, in this hour of supreme anguish, pierced his heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. Every pang endured by the Son of God upon the cross, the blood drops that flowed from his head, his hands, and feet, the convulsions of agony which racked his frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled his soul at the hiding of his Father's face from

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him, speak to man, saying, It is for love of thee that the Son of God consents to have these heinous crimes laid upon him; for thee he spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise and immortal life. He who stilled the angry waves by his word, and walked the foam-capped billows, who made devils tremble, and disease flee from his touch, who raised the dead to life and opened the eyes of the blind,--offers himself upon the cross as the last sacrifice for man. He, the sin-bearer, endures judicial punishment for iniquity, and becomes sin itself for man. {5Red 82.2}

Satan, with his fierce temptations, wrung the heart of Jesus. Sin, so hateful to his sight, was heaped upon him till he groaned beneath its weight. No wonder that his humanity trembled in that fearful hour. Angels witnessed with amazement the despairing agony of the Son of God, so much greater than his physical pain that the latter was hardly felt by him. The hosts of Heaven veiled their faces from the fearful sight. {5Red 83.1}

Inanimate nature expressed a sympathy with its insulted and dying Author. The sun refused to look upon the awful scene. Its full, bright rays were illuminating the earth at midday, when suddenly it seemed to be blotted out. Complete darkness enveloped the cross, and all the vicinity about, like a funeral pall. There was no eclipse or other natural cause for this darkness, which was deep as midnight without moon or stars. The dense blackness was an emblem of the soul-agony and horror that encompassed the Son of God. He had felt it in the garden of Gethsemane, when from his pores were forced drops of blood, and where he would have died had not an angel been sent from the courts of Heaven

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to invigorate the divine sufferer, that he might tread his blood-stained path to Calvary. {5Red 83.2}

The darkness lasted three full hours. No eye could pierce the gloom that enshrouded the cross, and none could penetrate the deeper gloom that flooded the suffering soul of Christ. A nameless terror took possession of all who were collected about the cross. The silence of the grave seemed to have fallen upon Calvary. The cursing and reviling ceased in the midst of half-uttered sentences. Men, women, and children prostrated themselves upon the earth in abject terror. Vivid lightnings, unaccompanied by thunder, occasionally flashed forth from the cloud, and revealed the

cross and the crucified Redeemer. {5Red 84.1}

Priests, rulers, scribes, executioners, and the mob, all thought their time of retribution had come. After a while, some whispered to others that Jesus would now come down from the cross. Some attempted to grope their way back to the city, beating their breasts and wailing in fear. {5Red 84.2}

At the ninth hour the terrible darkness lifted from the people, but still wrapt the Saviour as in a mantle. The angry lightnings seemed to be hurled at him as he hung upon the cross. Then "Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" As the outer gloom settled about Christ, many voices exclaimed, The vengeance of God is upon him! The bolts of God's wrath are hurled upon him because he claimed to be the Son of God! When the Saviour's despairing cry rang out, many who had believed on him were filled with terror; hope left them; if God had forsaken Jesus, what was

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to become of his followers, and the doctrine they had cherished? {5Red 84.3}

The darkness now lifted itself from the oppressed spirit of Christ, and he revived to a sense of physical suffering, and said, "I thirst." Here was a last opportunity for his persecutors to sympathize with and relieve him; but when the gloom was removed, their terror abated, and the old dread returned that Jesus might even yet escape them, "and one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down." {5Red 85.1}

In yielding up his precious life, Christ was not cheered by triumphant joy; all was oppressive gloom. There hung upon the cross the spotless Lamb of God, his flesh lacerated with stripes and wounds; those precious hands, that had ever been ready to relieve the oppressed and suffering, extended upon the cross, and fastened by the cruel nails; those patient feet, that had traversed weary leagues in the dispensing of blessings and in teaching the doctrine of salvation to the world, bruised and spiked to the cross; his royal head wounded by a crown of thorns; those pale and quivering lips, that had ever been ready to respond to the plea of suffering humanity, shaped to the mournful words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" {5Red 85.2}

In silence the people watch for the end of this fearful scene. Again the sun shines forth; but the cross is enveloped in darkness. Priests and rulers look toward Jerusalem; and lo, the dense cloud has settled upon the city, and over Judah's plains, and the fierce lightnings of God's wrath are directed against the fated city. Suddenly

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the gloom is lifted from the cross, and in clear trumpet tones, that seem to resound throughout creation, Jesus cries, "It is finished;" "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." A light encircled the cross, and the face of the Saviour shone with a glory like unto the sun. He then bowed his head upon his breast, and died. {5Red 85.3}

All the spectators stood paralyzed, and with bated breath gazed upon the Saviour. Again darkness settled upon the face of the earth, and a hoarse rumbling like heavy thunder was heard. This was accompanied by a violent trembling of the earth. The multitude were shaken together in heaps, and the wildest confusion and consternation

ensued. In the surrounding mountains, rocks burst asunder with loud crashing, and many of them came tumbling down the heights to the plains below. The sepulchers were broken open, and the dead were cast out of their tombs. Creation seemed to be shivering to atoms. Priests, rulers, soldiers, and executioners were mute with terror, and prostrate upon the ground. {5Red 86.1}

The darkness was again lifted from Calvary, and hung like a pall over Jerusalem. At the moment in which Christ died, there were priests ministering in the temple before the vail which separated the holy from the most holy place. Suddenly they felt the earth tremble beneath them, and the vail of the temple, a strong, rich drapery that had been renewed yearly, was rent in twain from top to bottom by the same bloodless hand that wrote the words of doom upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace. The most holy place, that had been sacredly entered by human feet only once a year, was revealed to the common gaze.

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God had ever before protected his temple in a wonderful manner; but now its sacred mysteries were exposed to curious eyes. No longer would the presence of God overshadow the earthly mercy-seat. No longer would the light of his glory flash forth upon, nor the cloud of his disapproval shadow, the precious stones in the breast-plate of the high priest. {5Red 86.2}

When Christ died upon the cross of Calvary, a new and living way was opened to both Jew and Gentile. The Saviour was henceforth to officiate as Priest and Advocate in the Heaven of heavens. From henceforth the blood of beasts offered for sin was valueless; for the Lamb of God had died for the sins of the world. The darkness upon the face of nature expressed her sympathy with Christ in his expiring agony. It evidenced to humanity that the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the world, was withdrawing his beams from the once favored city of Jerusalem, and from the world. It was a miraculous testimony given of God, that the faith of after generations might be confirmed. {5Red 87.1}

Jesus did not yield up his life till he had accomplished the work which he came to do; and he exclaimed with his parting breath, "It is finished!" Angels rejoiced as the words were uttered; for the great plan of redemption was being triumphantly carried out. There was joy in Heaven that the sons of Adam could now, through a life of obedience, be exalted finally to the presence of God. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost. {5Red 87.2}

When the Christian fully comprehends the magnitude of the great sacrifice made by the Majesty of Heaven, then will the plan of salvation

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be magnified before him, and to meditate upon Calvary will awaken the deepest and most sacred emotions of his heart. Contemplation of the Saviour's matchless love should absorb the mind, touch and melt the heart, refine and elevate the affections, and completely transform the whole character. The language of the apostle is, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." And we may look toward Calvary and exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

{5Red 87.3}

With the death of Christ the hopes of his disciples seemed to perish. They looked upon his closed eyelids and drooping head, his hair matted with blood, his pierced hands and feet, and their anguish was indescribable. They had not believed until the last that he would die, and they could hardly credit their senses that he was really dead. The Majesty of Heaven had yielded up his life, forsaken of the believers, unattended by one act of relief or word of sympathy; for even the pitying angels had not been permitted to minister to their beloved Commander. {5Red 88.1}

Evening drew on, and an unearthly stillness hung over Calvary. The crowd dispersed, and many returned to Jerusalem greatly changed in spirit from what they had been in the morning. Many of them had then collected at the crucifixion from curiosity, and not from hatred toward Christ. Still they accepted the fabricated reports of the priests concerning him, and looked upon him as a malefactor. At the execution they had imbibed the spirit of the leading Jews,

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and, under an unnatural excitement, had united with the mob in mocking and railing against him. {5Red 88.2}

But when the earth was draped with blackness, and they stood accused by their own consciences, reason again resumed her sway, and they felt guilty of doing a great wrong. No jest nor mocking laughter was heard in the midst of that fearful gloom; and when it was lifted, they solemnly made their way to their homes, awestruck and conscience-smitten. They were convinced that the accusations of the priests were false, that Jesus was no pretender; and a few weeks later they were among the thousands who became thorough converts to Christ, when Peter preached upon the day of Pentecost, and the great mystery of the cross was explained with other mysteries in regard to Messiah. {5Red 89.1}

The Roman officers in charge were standing about the cross when Jesus cried out, "It is finished," in a voice of startling power, and then instantly died with that cry of victory upon his lips. They had never before witnessed a death like that upon the cross. It was an unheard-of thing for one to die thus within six hours after crucifixion. Death by crucifixion was a slow and lingering process; nature became more and more exhausted until it was difficult to determine when life had become extinct. But for a man dying thus to summon such power of voice and clearness of utterance as Jesus had done, immediately before his death, was such an astonishing event that the Roman officers, experienced in such scenes, marveled greatly; and the centurion who commanded the detachment of soldiers on duty there, immediately declared, "Truly this was the Son of God." Thus three men, differing

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widely from one another, openly declared their belief in Christ upon the very day of his death --he who commanded the Roman guard, he who bore the cross of his Saviour, and he who died upon the cross by his side. {5Red 89.2}

The spectators, and the soldiers who guarded the cross, were convinced, so far as their minds were capable of grasping the idea, that Jesus was the Redeemer for whom Israel had so long looked. But the darkness that mantled the earth could not be more

dense than that which enveloped the minds of the priests and rulers. They were unchanged by the events they had witnessed, and their hatred of Jesus had not abated with his death. {5Red 90.1}

At his birth the angel star in the heavens had known Christ, and had conducted the seers to the manger where he lay. The heavenly hosts had known him, and sung his praise over the plains of Bethlehem. The sea had acknowledged his voice, and was obedient to his command. Disease and death had recognized his authority, and yielded their prey to his demand. The sun had known him, and hidden its face of light from the sight of his dying anguish. The rocks had known him, and shivered into fragments at his dying cry. Although inanimate nature recognized, and bore testimony of Christ, that he was the Son of God, yet the priests and rulers knew not the Saviour, rejected the evidence of his divinity, and steeled their hearts against his truths. They were not so susceptible as the granite rocks of the mountains. {5Red 90.2}

The Jews were unwilling that the bodies of those who had been executed should remain that night upon the cross. They dreaded to have

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the attention of the people directed any farther to the events attending the death of Jesus. They feared the results of that day's work upon the minds of the public. So, under pretext that they did not wish the sanctity of the Sabbath to be defiled by the bodies remaining upon the cross during that holy day, which was the one following the crucifixion, the leading Jews sent a request to Pilate that he would permit them to hasten the death of the victims, so that their bodies might be removed before the setting of the sun. {5Red 90.3}

Pilate was unwilling as they were that the spectacle of Jesus upon the cross should remain a moment longer than was necessary. The consent of the governor having been obtained, the legs of the two that were crucified with Jesus were broken to hasten their death; but Jesus was already dead, and they broke not his legs. The rude soldiers, who had witnessed the looks and words of Jesus upon his way to Calvary, and while dying upon the cross, were softened by what they had witnessed, and were restrained from marring him by breaking his limbs. Thus was prophecy fulfilled, which declared that a bone of him should not be broken; and the law of the passover, requiring the sacrifice to be perfect and whole, was also fulfilled in the offering of the Lamb of God. "They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it; according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it." {5Red 91.1}

A soldier, at the suggestion of the priests who wished to make the death of Jesus sure, thrust his spear into the Saviour's side, inflicting a wound which would have caused instant death

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if he had not already been dead. From the wide incision made by the spear there flowed two copious and distinct streams, one of blood, the other of water. This remarkable fact was noted by all the beholders, and John states the occurrence very definitely; he says: "One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done

that the scripture should be fulfilled. A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced." {5Red 91.2}

After the resurrection, the priests and rulers caused the report to be circulated that Jesus did not die upon the cross, that he merely fainted and was afterward resuscitated. Another lying report affirmed that it was not a real body of flesh and bone but the likeness of a body that was laid in the tomb. But the testimony of John concerning the pierced side of the Saviour, and the blood and water that flowed from the wound, refutes these falsehoods that were brought into existence by the unscrupulous Jews. {5Red 92.1}

At the Sepulcher.

Treason against the Roman government was the alleged crime for which Jesus was executed, and persons put to death for this offense were taken down by the common soldiers and consigned to a burial ground reserved exclusively for that class of criminals who had suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

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{5Red 92.2}

John was at a loss to know what measures he should take in regard to the body of his beloved Master. He shuddered at the thought of its being handled by rough and unfeeling soldiers, and placed in a dishonored burial place. He knew he could obtain no favors from the Jewish authorities, and he could hope little from Pilate. But Joseph and Nicodemus came to the front in this emergency. Both of these men were members of the Sanhedrim, and acquainted with Pilate. Both were men of wealth and influence. They were determined that the body of Jesus should have an honorable burial. {5Red 93.1}

Joseph went boldly to Pilate, and begged from him the body of Jesus for burial. His prayer was speedily granted by Pilate, who firmly believed Jesus to have been innocent. Pilate now for the first time heard from Joseph that Jesus was really dead. The knowledge had been purposely kept from him, although various conflicting reports had reached his ears concerning the strange events attending the crucifixion. Now he learned that the Saviour died at the very moment when the mysterious darkness that enshrouded the earth had passed away. Pilate was surprised that Jesus had died so soon; for those who were crucified frequently lingered days upon the cross. The account which Pilate now received of the death of Jesus caused him more firmly to believe that he was no ordinary man. The Roman governor was strangely agitated, and regretted most keenly the part he had taken in the condemnation of the Saviour. {5Red 93.2}

The priests and rulers had charged Pilate and his officers to guard against any deception which the disciples of Jesus might attempt to

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practice upon them in regard to the body of their Master. Pilate, therefore, before granting the request of Joseph, sent for the centurion who was in command of the soldiers at the cross, and heard for a certainty from his lips that Jesus was dead; and in

compliance with Pilate's earnest request he recounted the fearful scenes of Calvary, corroborating the testimony of Joseph. {5Red 93.3}

Pilate then gave an official order that the body of Jesus should be given to Joseph. While the disciple John was anxious and troubled about the sacred remains of his beloved Master, Joseph of Arimathea returned with the commission from the governor; and Nicodemus, anticipating the result of Joseph's interview with Pilate, came with a costly mixture of myrrh and aloes of about one hundred pounds' weight. The most honored in all Jerusalem could not have been shown more respect in death. {5Red 94.1}

The women of Galilee had remained with the disciple John to see what disposition would be made of the body of Jesus, which was very precious to them, although their faith in him as the promised Messiah had perished with him. The disciples were plunged in sorrow; they were so overwhelmed by the events which had transpired that they were unable to recall the words of Jesus stating that just such things would take place concerning him. The women were astonished to see Joseph and Nicodemus, both honored and wealthy councilors, as anxious and interested as themselves for the proper disposal of the body of Jesus. {5Red 94.2}

Neither of these men had openly attached himself to the Saviour while he was living, although both believed on him. They knew

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that if they declared their faith they would be excluded from the Sanhedrim council, on account of the prejudice of the priests and elders toward Jesus. This would have cut them off from all power to aid or protect him by using their influence in the council. Several times they had shown the fallacy of the grounds of his condemnation, and protested against his arrest, and the council had broken up without accomplishing that for which it had been called together; for it was impossible to procure the condemnation of Jesus without the unanimous consent of the Sanhedrim. The object of the priests had finally been obtained by calling a secret council, to which Joseph and Nicodemus were not summoned. {5Red 94.3}

The two councilors now came boldly forth to the aid of the disciples. The help of these rich and honored men was greatly needed at that time. They could do for the slain Saviour what it was impossible for the poorer disciples to do; and their influential positions protected them, in a great measure, from censure and remonstrance. While the acknowledged disciples of Christ were too thoroughly disheartened and intimidated to show themselves openly to be his followers, these men came boldly to the front and acted their noble part. {5Red 95.1}

Gently and reverently they removed with their own hands the body of Jesus from the instrument of torture, their sympathetic tears falling fast as they looked upon his bruised and lacerated form, which they carefully bathed and cleansed from the stain of blood. Joseph owned a new tomb, hewn from stone, which he was reserving for himself; it was near Calvary, and he now

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prepared this sepulcher for Jesus. The body, together with the spices brought by Nicodemus, was carefully wrapped in a linen sheet, and the three disciples bore their precious burden to the new sepulcher, wherein man had never before lain. There they

straightened those mangled limbs, and folded the bruised hands upon the pulseless breast. The Galilean women drew near, to see that all had been done that could be done for the lifeless form of their beloved Teacher. Then they saw the heavy stone rolled against the entrance of the sepulcher, and the Son of God was left at rest. The women were last at the cross, and last at the tomb of Christ. While the evening shades were gathering, Mary Magdalene and the other Marys lingered about the sacred resting-place of their Lord, shedding tears of sorrow over the fate of Him whom they loved. {5Red 95.2}

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NOTE TO THE READER

THIS LITTLE BOOK, RECORDING THE HISTORY OF THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST, IS PRESENTED TO THE READER IN THE BELIEF THAT ITS PERUSAL WILL AID HIM IN STUDYING THE SACRED SCRIPTURES. THIS, WITH THE PRECEDING BOOKS OF THIS SERIES, CONTAINS MANY FEATURES OF THE LIFE AND MISSION OF CHRIST, NOT PRESENTED IN ANY OTHER WORK.

PUBLISHERS

The Resurrection of Christ

After the Crucifixion

The Jewish priests and rulers had now carried out their fiendish purpose of putting to death the Son of God; but their apprehensions were not quieted, nor was their jealousy of Christ dead. Mingled with the joy of gratified revenge, there was an ever-present fear that his dead body lying in Joseph's tomb would come forth to life. They had labored to believe that he was a deceiver; but it was in vain. They everywhere heard inquiries for Jesus of Nazareth from those who had not heard of his death, and had brought their sick and dying friends to the passover to be healed by the great Physician. The priests knew in their hearts that Jesus had been all-powerful; they had witnessed his miracle at the grave of Lazarus; they knew that he had there raised the dead to life, and they

trembled for fear he would himself rise from the dead. {6Red 3.1}

They had heard him declare that he had power to lay down his life and to take it up again; they remembered that he had said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up;" they put this and that together, and were afraid. When Judas had betrayed his Master to the priests, he had repeated to them

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the declaration which Jesus had privately made to his disciples while on their way to the city. He had said, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him; and the third day he shall rise again." They remembered many things which he had said, that they now recognized as plain prophecies of the events which had taken place. They did not desire to think of these things, but they could not shut them from their understanding. Like their father, the devil, they believed and trembled. {6Red 3.2}

Now that the frenzy of excitement was passed, the image of Christ would intrude upon their minds, as he stood serene and uncomplaining before his enemies, suffering their taunts and abuse without a murmur. They remembered the prayer for forgiveness, offered in behalf of those who nailed him to the cross, his forgetfulness of his own suffering, and his merciful response to the prayer of the dying thief, the darkness which covered the earth, its sudden lifting, and his triumphant cry, "It is finished," which seemed to resound through the universe, his immediate death, the quaking of the earth and the shivering of the rocks, the opening of the graves and the rending of the vail of the temple. All these remarkable circumstances pressed upon their minds the overpowering evidence that Jesus was the Son of God. {6Red 4.1}

They rested but little upon the Sabbath. Though they would not step over a Gentile's threshold for fear of defilement, yet they held a

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council concerning the body of Christ. They knew that the disciples would not attempt to remove him until after the Sabbath; but they were anxious that all precautions should be taken at its close. Therefore "the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulcher be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first." Pilate was as unwilling as were the Jews that Jesus should rise with power to punish the guilt of those who had destroyed him, and he placed a band of Roman soldiers at the command of the priests. Said he, "Ye have a watch; go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulcher sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch." {6Red 4.2}

The discipline of the Roman army was very severe. A sentinel found sleeping at his post was punishable with death. The Jews realized the advantage of having such a guard about the tomb of Jesus. They placed a seal upon the stone that closed the sepulcher, that it might not be disturbed without the fact being known, and took every precaution against the disciples practicing any deception in regard to the body of Jesus.

But all their plans and precautions only served to make the triumph of the resurrection more complete, and to more fully establish its truth. {6Red 5.1}

How must God and his holy angels have looked upon all those preparations to guard the body of

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the world's Redeemer! How weak and foolish must those efforts have seemed! The words of the psalmist picture this scene: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." Roman guards and Roman arms were powerless to confine the Lord of life within the narrow inclosure of the sepulcher. Christ had declared that he had power to lay down his life and to take it up again. The hour of his victory was near. {6Red 5.2}

God had ruled the events clustering around the birth of Christ. There was an appointed time for him to appear in the form of humanity. A long line of inspired prophecy pointed to the coming of Christ to our world, and minutely described the manner of his reception. Had the Saviour appeared at an earlier period in the world's history, the advantages gained to Christians would not have been so great, as their faith would not have been developed and strengthened by dwelling upon the prophecies which stretched into the far future, and recounted the events which were to transpire. {6Red 6.1}

Because of the wicked departure of the Jews from God, he had allowed them to come under the power of a heathen nation. Only a certain limited power was granted the Jews; even the Sanhedrim was not allowed to pronounce final judgment upon any important case which involved the infliction of capital punishment. A people controlled, as were the Jews, by bigotry

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and superstition, are most cruel and unrelenting. The wisdom of God was displayed in sending his Son to the world at a time when the Roman power held sway. Had the Jewish economy possessed full authority, we should not now have a history of the life and ministry of Christ among men. The jealous priests and rulers would have quickly made away with so formidable a rival. He would have been stoned to death on the false accusation of breaking the law of God. The Jews put no one to death by crucifixion; that was a Roman method of punishment; there would therefore have been no cross upon Calvary. Prophecy would not then have been fulfilled; for Christ was to be lifted up in the most public manner on the cross, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness. {6Red 6.2}

Had the coming of Christ been deferred many years later, until the Jewish power had become still less, prophecy would have failed of its fulfillment; for it would not have been possible for the Jews, with their waning power, to have influenced the Roman authorities to sign the death-warrant of Jesus upon the lying charges presented, and there would have been no cross of Christ erected upon Calvary. Soon after the Saviour's execution the method of death by crucifixion was abolished. The scenes

which took place at the death of Jesus, the inhuman conduct of the people, the supernatural darkness which veiled the earth, and the agony of nature displayed in the rending of the rocks and the flashing of the lightning, struck them with such remorse and terror, that the cross, as an instrument of death, soon fell into disuse. At the destruction of Jerusalem, when mob power again

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obtained control, crucifixion was again revived for a time, and many crosses stood upon Calvary. {6Red 7.1}

Christ coming at the time and in the manner which he did was a direct and complete fulfillment of prophecy. The evidence of this, given to the world through the testimony of the apostles and that of their contemporaries, is among the strongest proofs of the Christian faith. We were not eye-witnesses of the miracles of Jesus, which attest his divinity; but we have the statements of his disciples who were eye-witnesses of them, and we see by faith through their eyes, and hear through their ears; and our faith with theirs grasps the evidence given. {6Red 8.1}

The apostles accepted Jesus upon the testimony of prophets and righteous men, stretching over a period of many centuries. The Christian world have a full and complete chain of evidence running through both the Old and the New Testament; in the one pointing to a Saviour to come, and in the other fulfilling the conditions of that prophecy. All this is sufficient to establish the faith of those who are willing to believe. The design of God was to leave the race a fair opportunity to develop faith in the power of God, and of his Son, and in the work of the Holy Spirit. {6Red 8.2}

The priests who ministered before the altar had gloomy presentiments as they looked upon the vail, rent by unseen hands from top to bottom, and which there had not been time to replace or to fully repair. The uncovering of the sacred mysteries of the most holy place brought to them a shuddering dread of coming calamity. Many of the officiating priests were deeply convicted of the true character of Jesus; their searching

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of the prophecies had not been in vain, and after he was raised from the dead they acknowledged him as the Son of God. {6Red 8.3}

During that memorable passover the scenes of the crucifixion were the theme of thought, and the topic of conversation. Hundreds had brought with them to the passover their afflicted relatives and friends, expecting to see Jesus and prevail upon him to heal and save them. Great was their disappointment to find that he was not at the feast; and when they were told that he had been executed as a criminal, their indignation and grief knew no bounds. {6Red 9.1}

The multitudes of sufferers who had come with the expectation of being healed by the Saviour sank under their disappointment. The streets and the temple courts were filled with mourning. The sick were dying for want of the healing touch of Jesus of Nazareth. Physicians were consulted in vain; there was no skill like that of Him who lay in state in Joseph's tomb. The afflicted, who had long looked forward to this time as their only hope of relief, asked in vain for the Healer they had sought. {6Red 9.2}

The revenge which the priests thought would be so sweet had already become bitterness to them. They knew that they were meeting the severe censure of the

people; they knew that the very persons whom they had influenced against Jesus were now horrified by their own shameful work. As they witnessed all these proofs of the divine influence of Jesus, they were more afraid of his dead body in the tomb than they had been of him when he was living and among them. The possibility of his coming forth from the sepulcher filled their guilty souls with

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indescribable terror. They felt that Jesus might at any time stand before them, the accused to become the accuser, the condemned to in turn condemn, the slain to demand justice in the death of his murderers. {6Red 9.3}

The Resurrection.

Every preparation had been made at the sepulcher to prevent any surprise or fraud being perpetrated by the disciples. The night had worn slowly away, and the darkest hour before daybreak had come. The Roman guards were keeping their weary watch, the sentinels pacing to and fro before the sepulcher, while the remainder of the detachment of one hundred soldiers were reclining upon the ground in different positions, taking what rest they could. But angels were also guarding the sepulcher, one of whom could have stricken down the whole Roman army by the putting forth of his power. {6Red 10.1}

One of the most exalted order of angels is sent from Heaven; his countenance is like the lightning, and his garments white as snow. He parts the darkness from his track, and the whole heavens are lit with his resplendent glory. The sleeping soldiers start simultaneously to their feet, and gaze with awe and wonder at the open, lighted heavens, and the vision of brightness which approaches. The earth trembles and heaves; soldiers, officers, and sentinels all fall as dead men prostrate upon the earth. The evil angels, who have triumphantly claimed the body of Christ, flee in terror from the place. One of the mighty, commanding angels who has, with his company, been keeping watch over the

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tomb of his Master, joins the powerful angel who comes from Heaven; and together they advance directly to the sepulcher. {6Red 10.2}

The angelic commander laid hold of the great stone which had required many strong men to place it in position, rolled it away, and took his seat upon it, while his companion entered the sepulcher and unwound the wrappings from the face and head of Jesus. Then the mighty angel, with a voice that caused the earth to quake, was heard: Jesus, thou Son of God, thy Father calls thee! Then he who had earned the power to conquer death and the grave came forth, with the tread of a conqueror, from the sepulcher, amid the reeling of the earth, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder. An earthquake marked the hour when Christ laid down his life; and another earthquake signaled the moment when he took it up again in triumph. {6Red 11.1}

Jesus was the first-fruits of them that slept. When he came forth from the tomb he called a multitude from the dead, thus settling forever the long-disputed question of the resurrection. In raising this multitude of captives from the dead, he gives evidence that

there will be a final resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus. The believers in Christ thus receive the very light they want in regard to the future life of the pious dead. {6Red 11.2}

Satan was bitterly incensed that his angels had fled from the presence of the heavenly angels, and that Christ had conquered death, and shown by this act what his future power was to be. All the triumph that Satan had experienced in witnessing his own power over men, which had urged them on to insult and murder the Son

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of God, fled before this exhibition of the divine power of Christ. He had dared to hope that Jesus would not take up his life again; but his courage failed him when the Saviour came forth, having paid the full ransom of man, and enabled him to overcome Satan in his own behalf in the name of Christ, the Conqueror. The arch-enemy now knew that he must eventually die, and that his kingdom would have an end. {6Red 11.3}

In this scene of the resurrection of the Son of God is given a lively image of the glory that will be revealed at the general resurrection of the just at the second appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Then the dead that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth to life; and not only the earth, but the heavens themselves, shall be shaken. A few graves were opened at the resurrection of Christ; but at his second coming all the precious dead, from righteous Abel to the last saint that dies, shall awake to glorious, immortal life. {6Red 12.1}

If the soldiers at the sepulcher were so filled with terror at the appearance of one angel clothed with heavenly light and strength, that they fell as dead men to the ground, how will his enemies stand before the Son of God, when he comes in power and great glory, accompanied by ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels from the courts of Heaven? Then the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed as a cottage. The elements shall be in flames, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. {6Red 12.2}

At the death of Jesus the soldiers had beheld the earth wrapped in profound darkness at midday; but at the resurrection they saw the brightness

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of the angels illuminate the night, and heard the inhabitants of Heaven singing with great joy and triumph: Thou hast vanquished Satan and the powers of darkness! Thou hast swallowed up death in victory! "And I heard a loud voice saying in Heaven, Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night." {6Red 12.3}

The casting down of Satan as an accuser of the brethren in Heaven was accomplished by the great work of Christ in giving up his life. Notwithstanding Satan's persistent opposition, the plan of redemption was being carried out. Man was esteemed of sufficient value for Christ to sacrifice his life for him. Satan, knowing that the empire he had usurped would in the end be wrested from him, determined to spare no pains to destroy as many as possible of the creatures whom God had created in his image. He hated man because Christ had manifested for him such forgiving love and pity, and he now prepared to practice upon him every species of deception by which he might be

lost; he pursued his course with more energy because of his own hopeless condition. {6Red 13.1}

Christ came to earth to vindicate the claims of his Father's law, and his death shows the immutability of that law. But Satan thrusts upon man the fallacy, that the law of God was abolished by the death of Christ, and he thus leads many professed Christians to transgress the Father's commandments, while they assume devotion to his Son. {6Red 13.2}

The Christian world is not sufficiently

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acquainted with the history of Satan, and the terrible power that he wields. Many look upon him as a mere imaginary being. Meanwhile he has crept into the popular mind; he sways the people--he assumes the character of an angel of light--he marshals his trained forces like a skilled general--he has gained profound knowledge of human nature, and can be logical, philosophical, or hypocritically religious. {6Red 13.3}

He now prepared to work upon the minds of the priests in regard to the event of the resurrection of Christ. He knew that, having already fallen into his trap, and committed the horrible crime of slaying the Son of God, they were entirely in his power, and their only course to escape the wrath of the people was to persist in denouncing Jesus as an impostor, and to accuse his disciples of stealing away his body that they might declare him to be risen from the dead. {6Red 14.1}

After the exceeding glory of the angelic messenger had faded from the heavens and from the sepulcher, the Roman guards ventured to raise their heads and to look about them. They saw that the great stone at the door of the sepulcher was removed, and they arose in consternation to find the body of Jesus gone and the tomb empty. They turned from the sepulcher, overwhelmed by what they had seen and heard, and made their way with all haste to the city, relating to those whom they met the marvelous scenes they had witnessed. Some of the disciples, who had passed a sleepless night, heard the wonderful story with mingled hope and fear. Meanwhile a messenger was dispatched to the priests and rulers, announcing to them: Christ whom ye crucified is risen from the dead!

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{6Red 14.2}

A servant was immediately sent with a private message summoning the Roman guard to the palace of the high priest. There they were closely questioned; they gave a full statement of what they had witnessed at the sepulcher: That an awful messenger had come from Heaven with face like the lightning for brightness, and with garments white as snow; that the earth shook and trembled, and they were stricken powerless; that the angel had laid hold of the immense stone at the door of the sepulcher, and had rolled it away as if it had been a pebble; that a form of great glory had emerged from the sepulcher; that a chorus of voices had made the heavens and earth vocal with songs of victory and joy; that when the light had faded out, and the music had ceased, they had recovered their strength, found the tomb empty, and the body of Jesus nowhere to be found. {6Red 15.1}

When the priests, scribes, and rulers heard this account, their faces were blanched

to a deadly pallor. They could not utter a word. With horror they perceived that two-thirds of the prophecy concerning Messiah had now been fulfilled, and their hearts failed them with fear of what might be about to take place. They could not question the evidence of the witnesses before them. Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified one, had indeed risen from the dead. {6Red 15.2}

When they had recovered from their first shock at hearing this news, they began to consider what course they would best pursue, and Satan was present to suggest ways and means. They felt that they had placed themselves where they had no alternative but to brave it out, and deny Christ to the very last. They reasoned that if

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this report should be circulated among the people, they would not only be stripped of their honor and authority, but would probably lose their lives. Jesus had said that he would rise from the dead and ascend to Heaven; they determined to keep the people in ignorance of the fulfillment of his word. They thought this could be done if the Roman guard could be bought with money. {6Red 15.3}

They found upon trial that the guard could be induced by large bribes to deny their former report, and to testify that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus in the night, while the sentinels slept. It was a crime punishable by death for a sentinel to sleep at his post; and, in order to secure the evidence they wished, the priests promised to insure the safety of the guard. The Roman soldiers sold their integrity to the false Jews for money. They came in before the priests burdened with a most startling message of truth, and went out with a burden of money, and with a lying report upon their tongues which had been framed for them by the priests. {6Red 16.1}

Meanwhile a messenger had been sent, bearing the news to Pilate. When he heard what had occurred, his soul was filled with terror. He shut himself within his home, not wishing to see any one; but the priests found their way into his presence, and urged him to make no investigation of the affirmed neglect of the sentinels, but to let the matter pass. Pilate at length consented to this, after having a private interview with the guard, and learning all the particulars from them. They dared not conceal anything from the governor for fear of losing their lives. Pilate did not prosecute the matter farther, but from that time there was no more peace or comfort for him.

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{6Red 16.2}

The Women at the Tomb.

The spices with which the body of Jesus was to be anointed had been prepared on the day preceding the Sabbath. Early in the morning of the first day of the week, the Marys, with certain other women, went to the sepulcher to proceed with the work of embalming the body of the Saviour. As they neared the garden, they were surprised to see the heavens beautifully lighted up, and the earth trembling beneath their feet. They hastened to the sepulcher, and were astonished to find that the stone was rolled away from the door, and that the Roman guard were not there. They noticed a light shining about the tomb, and, looking in, saw that it was empty. {6Red 17.1}

Mary then hastened with all speed to the disciples, and informed them that Jesus was not in the sepulcher where they had laid him. While she was upon this errand, the other women, who waited for her at the sepulcher, made a more thorough examination of the interior, to satisfy themselves that their Lord was indeed gone. Suddenly they beheld a beautiful young man, clothed in shining garments, sitting by the sepulcher. It was the angel who had rolled away the stone, and who now assumed a character that would not terrify the women who had been the friends of Christ, and assisted him in his public ministry. But notwithstanding the veiling of the brightness of the angel, the women were greatly amazed and terrified at the glory of the Lord which encircled him. They turned to flee from the sepulcher, but the heavenly messenger addressed

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them with soothing and comforting words: "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you." {6Red 17.2}

As the women responded to the invitation of the angel, and looked again into the sepulcher, they saw another angel of shining brightness, who addressed them with the inquiry: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen; remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." These angels were well acquainted with the words of Jesus to his disciples, for they had been with him in the capacity of guardian angels, through all the scenes of his life, and had witnessed his trial and crucifixion. {6Red 18.1}

With combined wisdom and tenderness, the angels reminded the women of the words of Jesus, warning them beforehand of his crucifixion and resurrection. The women now fully comprehended the words of their Master, which at the time were veiled in mystery to them. They gathered fresh hope and courage. Jesus had declared that he would rise from the dead, and had rested his claims as the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, upon his future resurrection from the dead. {6Red 18.2}

Mary, who had first discovered that the tomb was empty, hurried to Peter and John, and announced that the Lord had been taken out of the

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sepulcher, and she knew not where they had laid him. At these words the disciples both hastened to the sepulcher, and found it as Mary had said. The body of their Master was not there, and the linen clothes lay by themselves. Peter was perplexed; but John believed that Jesus had risen from the dead, as he had told them he should do. They did not understand the scripture of the Old Testament, which taught that Christ should rise from the dead; but the belief of John was based upon the words of Jesus himself while he was yet with them. {6Red 18.3}

The disciples left the sepulcher, and returned to their homes; but Mary could not bear to leave while all was uncertainty as to what had become of the body of her Lord. As she stood weeping, she stooped down to once more look into the sepulcher; and lo, there were two angels, clothed in garments of white. They were disguised by an

appearance of humanity, and Mary did not recognize them as celestial beings. One sat where the head of Jesus had rested, and the other where his feet had been. They addressed Mary with the words: "Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." In view of the open sepulcher, and the disappearance of her Master's body, Mary was not easily comforted. {6Red 19.1}

In her abandonment of grief she did not notice the heavenly appearance of those who addressed her. As she turned aside to weep, another voice inquired, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" Her eyes were so blinded by tears that she did not observe the person who spoke to her, but she immediately

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grasped the idea of obtaining from her interrogator some information concerning the whereabouts of her Master's body. She thought that the speaker might be the one who had charge of the garden, and she addressed him pleadingly: "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." {6Red 19.2}

She felt that if she could only gain possession of the precious crucified body of her Saviour, it would be a great consolation to her grief. She thought that if this rich man's tomb was considered too honorable a place for her Lord, she would herself provide a place for him. Her great anxiety was to find him, that she might give him honorable burial. But now the voice of Jesus himself fell upon her astonished ears. He said to her, "Mary." Instantly her tears were brushed away; and he whom she supposed was the gardener stood revealed before her--it was Jesus! For a moment she forgot in her joy that he had been crucified; she stretched forth her hands to him, saying, "Rabboni!" Jesus then said, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." {6Red 20.1}

Jesus refused to receive the homage of his people until he knew that his sacrifice had been accepted by the Father, and until he had received the assurance from God himself that his atonement for the sins of his people had been full and ample, that through his blood they might gain eternal life. Jesus immediately ascended to Heaven and presented himself before the throne of God, showing the marks of shame and cruelty upon his brow, his hands and feet. But he refused

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to receive the coronet of glory, and the royal robe, and he also refused the adoration of the angels as he had refused the homage of Mary, until the Father signified that his offering was accepted. {6Red 20.2}

He also had a request to prefer concerning his chosen ones upon earth. He wished to have the relation clearly defined that his redeemed should hereafter sustain to Heaven, and to his Father. His church must be justified and accepted before he could accept heavenly honor. He declared it to be his will that where he was, there his church should be; if he was to have glory, his people must share it with him. They who suffer with him on earth must finally reign with him in his kingdom. In the most explicit manner Christ pleaded for his church, identifying his interest with theirs, and advocating, with a love and constancy stronger than death, their rights and titles gained through him.

{6Red 21.1}

God's answer to this appeal goes forth in the proclamation: "Let all the angels of God worship him." Every angelic commander obeys the royal mandate, and Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain; and that lives again a triumphant conqueror! echoes and re-echoes through all Heaven. The innumerable company of angels prostrate themselves before the Redeemer. The request of Christ is granted; the church is justified through him, its representative and head. Here the Father ratifies the contract with his Son, that he will be reconciled to repentant and obedient men, and take them into divine favor through the merits of Christ. Christ guarantees that he will make a man "more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of

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Ophir." All power in Heaven and on earth is now given to the Prince of life; yet he does not for a moment forget his poor disciples in a sinful world, but prepares to return to them, that he may impart to them his power and glory. Thus did the Redeemer of mankind, by the sacrifice of himself, connect earth with Heaven, and finite man with the infinite God. {6Red 21.2}

Jesus said to Mary, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." When he closed his eyes in death upon the cross, the soul of Christ did not go at once to Heaven, as many believe, or how could his words be true--"I am not yet ascended to my Father"? The spirit of Jesus slept in the tomb with his body, and did not wing its way to Heaven, there to maintain a separate existence, and to look down upon the mourning disciples embalming the body from which it had taken flight. All that comprised the life and intelligence of Jesus remained with his body in the sepulcher; and when he came forth it was as a whole being; he did not have to summon his spirit from Heaven. He had power to lay down his life and to take it up again. {6Red 22.1}

The brightest morning that ever dawned upon a fallen world, was that in which the Saviour rose from the dead; but it was of no greater importance to man than the day upon which his trial and crucifixion took place. It was no marvel to the heavenly host that He who controlled the power of death, and had life in himself, should awaken from the sleep of the grave. But it was a marvel to them that their loved Commander should die for rebellious men. {6Red 22.2}

Christ rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day, and when holy beings of both Heaven and earth

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were astir on the morning of the first day of the week, he rose from the grave to renew his work of teaching his disciples. But this fact does not consecrate the first day of the week, and make it a Sabbath. Jesus, prior to his death, established a memorial of the breaking of his body and the spilling of his blood for the sins of the world, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper, saying, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." And the repentant believer, who takes the steps required in conversion, commemorates in his baptism the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. He goes down into the water in the likeness of Christ's death and burial, and he is raised out of the water in the likeness of his resurrection--not to take up the old life of sin, but to live a new life in Christ Jesus. {6Red 22.3}

The other women who had seen and been addressed by the angels, left the sepulcher with mingled feelings of fear and great joy. They hastened to the disciples, as the angels had directed, and related to them the things which they had seen and heard. Peter was expressly mentioned by the angel as one to whom the women were to communicate their news. This disciple had been the most despondent of all the little company of Christ's followers, because of his shameful denial of the Lord. Peter's remorse for his crime was well understood by the holy angels, and their tender compassion for the wayward and sorrowing is revealed in the solicitude they manifested for the unhappy disciple, and which evidenced to him that his repentance was accepted, and his sin forgiven. {6Red 23.1}

When the disciples heard the account which

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the women brought, they were astonished. They began to recall the words of their Lord which foretold his resurrection. Still, this event, which should have filled their hearts with joy, was a great perplexity to them. After their great disappointment in the death of Christ, their faith was not strong enough to accept the fact of the resurrection. Their hopes had been so blighted that they could not believe the statement of the women, but thought that they were the subjects of an illusion. Even when Mary Magdalene testified that she had seen and spoken with her Lord, they still refused to believe that he had risen. {6Red 23.2}

They were terribly depressed by the events that had crowded upon them. On the sixth day they had seen their Master die; upon the first day of the succeeding week they found themselves deprived of his body, and the stigma resting upon them of having stolen it away for the purpose of practicing a deception upon the people. They despaired of ever correcting the false impressions that had gained ground against them; and now they were newly perplexed by the reports of the believing women. In their trouble their hearts yearned for their beloved Master, who had always been ready to explain the mysteries that perplexed them and to smooth their difficulties. {6Red 24.1}

Jesus at Emmaus.

On this same day Jesus met several of his disciples, and greeted them with "All hail," upon which they approached him and held him by the feet and worshiped him. He permitted this

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homage, for he had then ascended to his Father, and had received his approval, and the worship of the holy angels. Late in the afternoon of the same day, two of the disciples were on their way to Emmaus, eight miles from Jerusalem. They had come to the city to keep the passover, and the news of the morning in regard to the removal of the body of Jesus from the sepulcher had greatly perplexed them. This perplexity had been increased by the reports of the women concerning the heavenly messengers, and the appearance of Jesus himself. They were now returning to their home to meditate and pray, in hope of gaining some light in reference to these matters which so confused their understanding. {6Red 24.2}

These two disciples had not held a prominent position beside Jesus in his ministry, but they were earnest believers in him. Soon after they began their journey, they observed a stranger coming up behind them, who presently joined their company; but they were so busy with perplexing thoughts, which they were communicating to each other, that they scarcely noticed they were not alone. Those strong men were so burdened with grief that they wept as they traveled on. Christ's pitying heart of love saw here a sorrow which he could relieve. The disciples were reasoning with each other concerning the events of the past few days, and marveling how the fact of Jesus yielding himself up to a shameful death could be reconciled with his claims as the Son of God. {6Red 25.1}

One maintained that he could be no pretender, but had been himself deceived in regard to his mission and his future glory. They both feared that what his enemies had flung in his teeth was

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too true--"He saved others; himself he cannot save." Yet they wondered how he could be so mistaken in himself, when he had given them such repeated evidence that he could read the hearts of others. And the strange reports of the women threw them into still greater uncertainty. {6Red 25.2}

Long might these disciples have perplexed themselves over the mysteries of the past few days, if they had not received enlightenment from Jesus. He, disguised as a stranger, entered into conversation with them. "But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him. Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." {6Red 26.1}

They then recounted to him the facts of the trial and crucifixion of their Master, together with the testimony of the women in regard to the removal of his body, and vision of angels which they had seen, the news of the resurrection, and the report of those disciples who had gone to the sepulcher. "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

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{6Red 26.2}

The disciples were silent from amazement and delight. They did not venture to ask the stranger who he was. They listened to him intently, charmed by his intelligence, and drawn toward him by his gracious words and manner, as he opened the Scriptures to their understanding, showing them from prophecy how Christ must suffer, and after suffering enter into his glory. {6Red 27.1}

Jesus began with the first book written by Moses, and traced down through all the prophets the inspired proof in regard to his life, his mission, his suffering, death, and

resurrection. He did not deem it necessary to work a miracle to evidence that he was the risen Redeemer of the world; but he went back to the prophecies, and gave a full and clear explanation of them to settle the question of his identity, and the fact that all which had occurred to him was foretold by the inspired writers. Jesus ever carried the minds of his hearers back to the precious mine of truth found in the Old-Testament Scriptures. The esteem in which he held those sacred records is exemplified in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, where he says, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." The apostles also all testify to the importance of the Old Testament Scriptures. Peter says: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Luke thus speaks of the prophets who predicted the coming of Christ: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people; and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the

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mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began." {6Red 27.2}

It is the voice of Christ that speaks through the prophets and patriarchs, from the days of Adam even down to the closing scenes of time. This truth was not discerned by the Jews who rejected Jesus, and it is not discerned by many professing Christians today. A beautiful harmony runs through the Old and New Testaments; passages which may seem dark at a first reading, present clear interpretations when diligently studied, and compared with other scripture referring to the same subject. A careful search of the prophecies would have so enlightened the understanding of the Jews that they would have recognized Jesus as the predicted Messiah. But they had interpreted those predictions to meet their own perverted ideas and ambitious aspirations. {6Red 28.1}

The disciples had been confused by the interpretations and traditions of the priests, and hence their darkness and unbelief in regard to the trial, death, and resurrection of their Master. These misinterpreted prophecies were now made plain to the understanding of the two disciples, by Him who, through his Holy Spirit, inspired men to write them. Jesus showed his disciples that every specification of prophecy regarding Messiah had found an exact fulfillment in the life and death of their Master. He addressed them as a stranger, and as one who was astonished that they had not interpreted the Scriptures correctly, which would have relieved them from all their difficulties. {6Red 28.2}

Although Jesus had previously taught them in regard to the prophecies, yet they had been

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unable to entirely relinquish the idea of the temporal kingdom of Christ at his first coming. Their preconceived views led them to look upon his crucifixion as the final destruction of all their hopes. But when, in the midst of their discouragement, they were shown that the very things which had caused them to despair formed the climax of proof that their belief had been correct, their faith returned with increased strength. They now comprehended many things which their Master had said before his trial, and which they could not at that time understand. Everything was clear and plain to their

minds. In the life and death of Jesus they saw the fulfillment of prophecy, and their hearts burned with love for their Saviour. {6Red 28.3}

Many professed Christians throw aside the Old Testament, and shut themselves up to the New. The cry now is, "Away with the law and the prophets, and give us the gospel of Christ." If the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament Scriptures were all that was necessary to establish belief, why did not Jesus upon this occasion merely refer to the doctrines he had taught, the wisdom and purity of his character, and the miracles he had performed, as sufficient evidence of his Messiahship? {6Red 29.1}

The history of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, as that of the Son of God, cannot be fully demonstrated without the evidence contained in the Old Testament. Christ is revealed in the Old Testament as clearly as in the New. The one testifies of a Saviour to come, while the other testifies of a Saviour that *has* come in the manner predicted by the prophets. In order to appreciate the plan of redemption, the Scripture

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of the Old Testament must be thoroughly understood. It is the glorified light from the prophetic past that brings out the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament with clearness and beauty. The miracles of Jesus are a proof of his divinity; but the strongest proofs that he is the world's Redeemer are found in the prophecies of the Old Testament compared with the history of the New. Jesus said to the Jews "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." At that time there was no other scripture in existence save that of the Old Testament; so the injunction of the Saviour is plain. {6Red 29.2}

As the disciples walked on with Jesus, listening intently to his gracious words, nothing in his bearing suggested to them that they were listening to other than a casual pilgrim, returning from the feast, but one who thoroughly understood the prophecies. He walked as carefully as they over the rough stones, halting with them for a little rest after climbing some unusually steep place. Thus the two disciples made their way along the mountainous road in company with the divine Saviour, who could say, "All power is given unto me in Heaven and on earth." {6Red 30.1}

This mighty conqueror of death, who had reached to the very depths of human misery to rescue a lost world, assumed the humble task of walking with the two disciples to Emmaus, to teach and comfort them. Thus he ever identifies himself with his suffering and perplexed people. In our hardest and most trying paths, lo, Jesus is with us to smooth the way. He is the same Son of man, with the same sympathies and love

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which he had before he passed through the tomb and ascended to his Father. {6Red 30.2}

At length, as the sun was going down, the disciples with their companion arrived at their home. The way had never before seemed so short to them, nor had time ever passed so quickly. The stranger made no sign of halting; but the disciples could not endure the thought of parting so soon from one who had inspired their hearts with new hope and joy, and they urged him to remain with them over night. Jesus did not at once yield to their invitation, but seemed disposed to pursue his journey. Thereupon the

disciples, in their affection for the stranger, importuned him earnestly to tarry with them, urging as a reason that "the day was far spent." Jesus yielded to their entreaties and entered their humble abode. {6Red 31.1}

The Saviour never forces his presence upon us. He seeks the company of those whom he knows need his care, and gives them an opportunity to urge his continuance with them. If they, with longing desire, entreat him to abide with them he will enter the humblest homes, and brighten the lowliest hearts. While waiting for the evening meal, Jesus continued to open the Scriptures to his hosts, bringing forward the evidence of his divinity, and unfolding to them the plan of salvation. The simple fare was soon ready, and the three took their position at the table, Jesus taking his place at the head as was his custom. {6Red 31.2}

The duty of asking a blessing upon the food usually devolved upon the head of the family; but Jesus placed his hands upon the bread and blessed it. At the first word of his petition the disciples looked up in amazement. Surely none

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other than their Lord had ever done in this manner. His voice strikes upon their ear as the voice of their Master, and, behold, there are the wounds in his hands! It is indeed the well-known form of their beloved Master! For a moment they are spell-bound; then they arise to fall at his feet and worship him; but he suddenly disappears from their midst. {6Red 31.3}

Now they know that they have been walking and talking with the risen Redeemer. Their eyes had been clouded so that they had not before discerned him, although the truths he uttered had sunk deep in their discouraged hearts. He who had endured the conflict of the garden, the shame of the cross, and who had gained the victory over death and the tomb--He, before whom angels had fallen prostrate, worshiping with thanksgiving and praise, had sought the two lonely and desponding disciples, and been in their presence for hours, teaching and comforting them, yet they had not known him. {6Red 32.1}

Jesus did not first reveal himself in his true character to them, and then open the Scriptures to their minds; for he knew that they would be so overjoyed to see him again, risen from the dead, that their souls would be satisfied. They would not hunger for the sacred truths which he wished to indelibly impress upon their minds, that they might impart them to others, who should in their turn spread the precious knowledge, until thousands of people should receive the light given that day to the despairing disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus. {6Red 32.2}

He maintained his disguise till he had interpreted the Scriptures, and had led them to an intelligent faith in his life, his character, his mission

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to earth, and his death and resurrection. He wished the truth to take firm root in their minds, not because it was supported by his personal testimony, but because the typical law, and the prophets of the Old Testament, agreeing with the facts of his life and death, presented unquestionable evidence of that truth. When the object of his labors with the two disciples was gained, he revealed himself to them that their joy might be full, and then vanished from their sight. {6Red 32.3}

When these disciples left Jerusalem, to return to their homes, they intended to take up their old employment again, and conceal their blighted hopes as best they could. But now their joy exceeded their former despair. "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" {6Red 33.1}

They forgot their hunger and fatigue, and left the prepared repast, for they could not tarry in their homes and hold their newly found knowledge from the other disciples. They longed to impart their own joy to their companions, that they might rejoice together in a living Saviour risen from the dead. Late as it was, they set about retracing their way to Jerusalem; but how different were their feelings now from those which depressed them when they set out upon their way to Emmaus. Jesus was by their side, but they knew it not. He heard with gladness their expressions of joy and gratitude as they talked with each other by the way. {6Red 33.2}

They were too happy to notice the difficulties of the rough, uncertain road. There was no moon to light them, but their hearts were light with

the joy of a new revelation. They picked their way over the rough stones, and the dangerous ledges, sometimes stumbling and falling in their haste. But not at all disconcerted by this, they pressed resolutely on. Occasionally they lost their path in the darkness, and were obliged to retrace their steps until they found the track, when they renewed their journey with fresh speed. They longed to deliver their precious message to their friends. Never before had human lips such tidings to proclaim; for the fact of Christ's resurrection was to be the great truth around which all the faith and hope of the church would center. {6Red 33.3}

In the Upper Chamber.

When the disciples arrived at Jerusalem they entered the eastern gate, which was open on festal occasions. The houses were dark and silent, but they made their way through the narrow streets by the light of the rising moon. They knew that they would find their brethren in the memorable upper chamber where Jesus had spent the last night before his death. Here the disciples had passed the Sabbath in mourning for their Lord. And now they had no disposition to sleep, for exciting events were being related among them. Cautious hands unbarred the door to the repeated demand of the two travelers; they entered, and with them also entered Jesus, who had been their unseen companion all the way. {6Red 34.1}

They found the disciples assembled, and in a state of excitement. Hope and faith were struggling for ascendency in their minds. The report

of Mary Magdalene, and that of the other women, had been heard by all; but some were too hopeless to believe their testimony. The evidence of Peter, concerning his interview with the risen Lord, was borne with great ardor and assurance, and had more weight with the brethren, and their faith began to revive. When the disciples from Emmaus entered with their joyful tidings, they were met by the exclamation from many

voices: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." {6Red 34.2}

The two from Emmaus told their story of how the Lord had opened their eyes, and revealed to them the straight chain of prophecy which reached from the days of the patriarchs to that time, and foreshadowed all that had transpired regarding their Saviour. The company heard this report in breathless silence. Some were inspired with new faith; others were incredulous. Suddenly Jesus himself was in their midst. His hands were raised in blessing, and he said unto them, "Peace be unto you." {6Red 35.1}

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet." {6Red 35.2}

There they beheld the feet and hands marred by the cruel nails; and they recognized his melodious voice, like none other they had ever heard. "And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled

fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them." Faith and joy now took the place of doubt and unbelief, and they acknowledged their risen Saviour with feelings which no words could express. {6Red 35.3}

Jesus now expounded the Scriptures to the entire company, commencing with the first book of Moses, and dwelling particularly on the prophecy pointing to the time then present, and foretelling the sufferings of Christ and his resurrection. "And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." {6Red 36.1}

The disciples now began to realize the nature and extent of their commission. They were to proclaim to the world the wonderful truths which Christ had intrusted to them. The events of his life, his death, and resurrection, the harmony of prophecy with those events, the sacredness of the law of God, the mysteries of the plan of salvation, the power of Jesus for the remission of sins--to all these things were they witnesses, and it was their work to make them known to all men, beginning at Jerusalem. They were to proclaim a gospel of peace and salvation through repentance and the power of the Saviour. At

the first advent of Jesus to the world, the angel announced: Peace on earth, and good will to men. After his earthly life was completed, he came forth from the dead, and, appearing for the first time to his assembled disciples, addressed them with the blessed words, "Peace be unto you." {6Red 36.2}

Jesus is ever ready to speak peace to souls that are troubled with doubts and fear.

This precious Saviour waits for us to open the door of our heart to him, and say, Abide with us. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Our life is a continual strife; we must war against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness, and foes that never sleep; we must resist temptations, and overcome as Christ overcame. When the peace of Jesus enters our heart we are calm and patient under the severest trials. {6Red 37.1}

The resurrection of Jesus was a sample of the final resurrection of all who sleep in him. The risen body of the Saviour, his deportment, the accents of his speech, were all familiar to his followers. In like manner will those who sleep in Jesus rise again. We shall know our friends even as the disciples knew Jesus. Though they may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured in this mortal life, yet in their resurrected and glorified body their individual identity will be perfectly preserved, and we shall recognize, in the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, the lineaments of those we love. {6Red 37.2}

The death of Jesus had left Thomas in blank despair. His faith seemed to have gone out in

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utter darkness. He was not present in the upper chamber when Jesus appeared to his disciples. He had heard the reports of the others, and had received copious proof that Jesus had risen, but stolid gloom and stubborn unbelief closed his heart against all cheering testimony. As he heard the disciples repeat their account of the wonderful manifestation of the resurrected Saviour, it only served to plunge him in deeper despair; for if Jesus had really risen from the dead there could be no farther hope of his literal earthly kingdom. It also wounded his vanity to think that his Master would reveal himself to all his disciples but him; so he was determined not to believe, and for an entire week he brooded over his wretchedness, which seemed all the darker as contrasted with the reviving hope and faith of his brethren. {6Red 37.3}

During this time he frequently, when in company with his brethren, reiterated the words, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." He would not see through the eyes of his brethren, nor exercise faith which was dependent upon their testimony. He ardently loved his Lord, but jealousy and unbelief took possession of his mind and heart. {6Red 38.1}

The upper chamber was the home of a number of the disciples, and every evening they all assembled in this place. On a certain evening Thomas decided to meet with his brethren; for notwithstanding his unbelief, he cherished a faint hope, unacknowledged to himself, that the good news was true. While the disciples were partaking of their usual meal, and meanwhile

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canvassing the evidences of the truth of their faith which Christ had given them in the prophecies, "then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." {6Red 38.2}

He then reproved the unbelieving who had not received the testimony of those who

had seen him, and, turning to Thomas, said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." These words showed that he had read the thoughts and words of Thomas. The doubting disciple knew that none of his companions had seen Jesus for a week, and therefore could not have told the Master of his stubborn unbelief. He recognized the person before him as his Lord who had been crucified; he had no desire for farther proof; his heart leaped for joy as he realized that Jesus was indeed risen from the dead. He cast himself at the feet of his Master in deep affection and devotion, crying, "My Lord and my God." {6Red 39.1}

Jesus accepted his acknowledgment, but mildly rebuked him for his unbelief: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Jesus here showed Thomas that his faith would have been more acceptable to him if he had believed the evidence of his brethren, and had not refused to believe until he had seen Jesus with his own eyes. If the world should follow this example of Thomas, no one would believe unto salvation; for all who now receive Christ do so through the testimony of others. {6Red 39.2}

Many who have a weak and wavering faith, reason that if they had the evidence which

Thomas had from his companions they would not doubt as he did. They do not realize that they have not only that evidence, but additional testimony piled up about them on every side. Many who, like Thomas, wait for all cause of doubt to be removed, may never realize their desire as he did, but gradually become entrenched in their unbelief, until they cannot perceive the weight of evidence in favor of Jesus, and, like the skeptical Jews, what little light they have will go out in the darkness which closes around their minds. To reject the plain and conclusive evidences of divine truth hardens the heart, and blinds the understanding. The precious light, being neglected, fades utterly from the mind that is unwilling to receive it. {6Red 39.3}

Jesus, in his treatment of Thomas, gave his followers a lesson regarding the manner in which they should treat those who have doubts upon religious truth, and who make those doubts prominent. He did not overwhelm Thomas with words of reproach, nor did he enter into a controversy with him; but, with marked condescension and tenderness, he revealed himself unto the doubting one. Thomas had taken a most unreasonable position, in dictating the only conditions of his faith; but Jesus, by his generous love and consideration, broke down all the barriers he had raised. Persistent controversy will seldom weaken unbelief, but rather put it upon self-defense, where it will find new support and excuse. Jesus, revealed in his love and mercy as the crucified Saviour, will wring from many once unwilling lips the acknowledgment of Thomas, "My Lord and my God."

{6Red 40.1}

Jesus at Galilee.

The captives brought up from the graves at the time of the resurrection of Jesus were his trophies as a conquering Prince. Thus he attested his victory over death and the grave; thus he gave a pledge and an earnest of the resurrection of all the righteous dead. Those who were called from their graves went into the city, and appeared unto many in their resurrected forms, and testified that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead, and that they had risen with him. The voice that cried, "It is finished," was heard among the dead. It pierced the walls of sepulchers, and summoned the sleepers to arise. Thus shall it be when God's voice shall be heard shaking the heavens and earth. That voice will penetrate the graves and unbar the tombs. A mighty earthquake will then cause the world to reel to and fro like a drunkard. Then Christ, the King of Glory, shall appear, attended by all the heavenly angels. The trumpet shall sound, and the Life-giver shall call forth the righteous dead to immortal life. {6Red 41.1}

It was well known to the priests and rulers that certain persons who were dead had risen at the resurrection of Jesus. Authentic reports were brought to them of different ones who had seen and conversed with these resurrected ones, and heard their testimony that Jesus, the Prince of life, whom the priests and rulers had slain, was risen from the dead. The false report that the disciples had robbed the sepulcher of the body of their Master was so diligently circulated that very many believed it. But the priests, in

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manufacturing their false report, overreached themselves, and all thinking persons, not blinded by bigotry, detected the falsehood. {6Red 41.2}

If the soldiers had been asleep, they could not know how the sepulcher became empty. If one sentinel had been awake, he would assuredly have wakened others. If they had really slept, as they affirmed they had, the consequence was well known to all. The penalty for such neglect of duty was death, and there could be no hope of pardon; so the offenders would not be likely to proclaim their fault. If the Jewish priests and rulers had discovered the sentinels asleep at their post, they would not have passed the matter over so lightly, but would have demanded a thorough investigation of the matter, and the full penalty of the law upon the unfaithful soldiers. {6Red 42.1}

Had they had the least faith in the truthfulness of their statements, they would have called the disciples to account, and visited upon them the most unrelenting punishment. That they did not do this was a thorough proof of the innocence of the disciples, and of the fact that the priests were driven to the dire necessity of fabricating and circulating a lie to meet the evidence accumulating against them, and establishing the truth of the resurrection of Jesus, and his claims as the divine Son of God. The oft-repeated appearance of Jesus to his disciples, and the persons of the dead who were resurrected with him, also did much to plant the truth in the minds of those who were willing to believe. {6Red 42.2}

This fabrication of the Jews has a parallel in our time; the proud persecutors of righteousness expend their time, influence, and money to silence or controvert the evidence of truth; and the

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most inconsistent measures are taken to accomplish this object. And there are not wanting persons of intelligence who will greedily swallow the most ridiculous falsehoods

because they accord with the sentiments of their hearts. This reveals the sad fact that God has given them up to blindness of mind, and hardness of heart. There are innocent persons, who may be deceived for a time because of the confidence they place in their deceivers; but if they are teachable, and really desire a knowledge of the truth, they will have opportunity to perceive it. Doubts and perplexities will vanish; they will discover the inconsistencies of their false guides; for error itself bears a constrained testimony for the truth. {6Red 42.3}

The priests and rulers were in continual dread lest, in walking the streets, or within the privacy of their own homes, they should meet face to face with the resurrected Christ. They felt that there was no safety for them; bolts and bars seemed but poor protection against the risen Son of God. {6Red 43.1}

Before his death Jesus had, in the upper chamber, told his disciples that after he was risen he would go before them into Galilee; and on the morning of the resurrection the angel at the sepulcher had said unto the women, "Go your way; tell his disciples, and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you." The disciples were detained at Jerusalem during the passover week, for their absence would have been interpreted as disaffection and heresy. During that time they assembled together at evening in the upper chamber, where some of them had their home; here Jesus

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twice revealed himself to them, and bade them tarry for a time at Jerusalem. {6Red 43.2}

As soon as the passover was finished, the brethren left Jerusalem, and went to Galilee as they had been directed. Seven of the disciples were in company; they were clad in the humble garb of fishermen; they were poor in worldly goods, but rich in the knowledge and practice of the truth, which gave them, in the sight of Heaven, the highest rank as teachers. They had not been students in the school of the prophets, but for three years they had taken lessons from the greatest educator the world has ever known. Under his tuition they had become elevated, intelligent, and refined, fit mediums through which the souls of men might be led to a knowledge of the truth. {6Red 44.1}

Much of the time of the Saviour's ministry was spent on the shores of Galilee, and there many of his most wonderful miracles were performed. As the disciples gathered together in a place where they were not likely to be disturbed, their minds were full of Jesus and his mighty works. On this sea, when their hearts were filled with terror, and the fierce storm was hurrying them on to destruction, Jesus had walked upon the crested billows to their rescue. Here the wildest storm was hushed by his voice, which said to the raging deep, "Peace, be still." Within sight was the beach, where, by a mighty miracle, he had fed above ten thousand persons from a few small loaves and fishes. Not far distant was Capernaum, the scene of his most wonderful manifestations, in healing the sick and in raising the dead. As the disciples looked again

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upon Galilee, their minds were full of the words and deeds of their Saviour. {6Red 44.2}

The evening was pleasant, and Peter, who retained much of his old love for boats and fishing, proposed that they should go out upon the sea and cast their nets. This proposition met with the approval of all, for they were poor and in need of food and

clothing, which they would be able to procure with the proceeds of a successful night's fishing. So they went out upon the sea in their boat, to pursue their old employment. But they toiled through the entire night with no success. Through the long, weary hours they talked of their absent Lord, and recalled the scenes and events of thrilling interest which had been enacted in that vicinity, and of which they had been witnesses. They speculated upon what their own future would be, and grew sad at the prospect before them. {6Red 45.1}

All the while a lone watcher upon the shore followed them with his eye, while he himself was unseen. At length the morning dawned. The boat was but a little distance from the shore, and the disciples saw a stranger standing upon the beach, who accosted them with the question, "Children, have ye any meat?" Not recognizing Jesus, they answered, "No." "And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." {6Red 45.2}

The disciples were filled with wonder at the result of their trial; but John now discerned who the stranger was, and exclaimed to Peter, "It is the Lord." Joy now took the place of disappointment. Peter immediately girt about

him his fisher's coat, and, throwing himself into the water, was soon standing by the side of his Lord. The other disciples came in their boat, dragging the net with fishes. "As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." {6Red 45.3}

They were too much amazed to question whence came the fire and the repast. "Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught." Peter, obeying the command, rushed for the net which he had so unceremoniously dropped, and helped his brethren drag it to the shore. After the work was all done, and the preparation made, Jesus bade the disciples come and dine. He broke the bread and the fish, and divided it among them, and in so doing he was known and acknowledged of all the seven. The miracle of feeding the five thousand upon the mountain-side was now brought distinctly to their minds; but a mysterious awe was upon them, and they kept silent as they looked upon their resurrected Saviour. {6Red 46.1}

They remembered that at the commencement of his ministry a similar scene had been enacted to that which had just taken place. Jesus had then bade them launch out into the deep, and let down their nets for a draught, and the net had broken because of the amount of fishes taken. Then he had bade them leave their nets and follow him, and he would make them fishers of men. This last miracle that Jesus had just wrought was for the purpose of making the former miracle more impressive; that the disciples might perceive that, notwithstanding they were to be deprived of the personal companionship of their Master, and of the means of sustenance by the

pursuit of their favorite employment, yet a resurrected Saviour had a care over them, and would provide for them while they were doing his work. Jesus also had a purpose in bidding them cast their net upon the right side of the ship. On that side stood Christ upon the shore. If they labored in connection with him--his divine power uniting with

their human effort--they would not fail of success. {6Red 46.2}

The repetition of the miraculous draught of fishes was a renewal of Christ's commission to his disciples. It showed them that the death of their Master did not remove their obligation to do the work which he had assigned them. To Peter, who had acted on many occasions as representative of the twelve, a special lesson was given. The part which he had acted on the night of his Lord's betrayal was so shameful and inconsistent with his former assertions of loyalty and devotion, that it was necessary for him to give evidence to all the disciples that he sincerely repented of his sin before he could resume his apostolic work. The Saviour designed to place him where he could regain the entire confidence of his brethren, lest, in the time of emergency, their distrust because of his former failure might cripple his usefulness. {6Red 47.1}

The disciples expected that Peter would no longer be allowed to occupy the prominent position in the work which he had hitherto held, and he himself had lost his customary self-confidence. But Jesus, while dining by the sea-side, singled out Peter, saying, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" referring to his brethren. Peter had once said, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never

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be offended," and had expressed himself ready to go to prison and to death with his Master. But now he puts a true estimate upon himself in the presence of the disciples: "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." In this response of Peter there is no vehement assurance that his affection is greater than that of his companions; he does not even express his own opinion of his devotion to his Saviour, but appeals to that Saviour, who can read all the motives of the human heart, to himself judge as to his sincerity,--"Thou knowest that I love thee." {6Red 47.2}

The reply of Jesus was positively favorable to the repentant disciple, and placed him in a position of trust. It was, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus applied the test to Peter, repeating his former words: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" This time he did not ask the disciple whether he loved him better than did his brethren. The second response of Peter was like the first, free from all extravagant assurance: "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus said unto him, "Feed my sheep." Once more the Saviour put the trying question: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Peter was grieved, for he thought the repetition of this question indicated that Jesus did not believe his statement. He knew that his Lord had cause to doubt him, and with an aching heart he answered, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep." {6Red 48.1}

Three times had Peter openly denied his Lord, and three times did Jesus draw from him the assurance of his love and loyalty, by pressing home that pointed question, like a barbed arrow, to his wounded heart. Jesus, before the assembled

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disciples, brought out the depth of Peter's penitence, and showed how thoroughly humbled was the once boasting disciple. He was now intrusted with the important commission of caring for the flock of Christ. Though every other qualification might be unexceptionable, yet without the love of Christ he could not be a faithful shepherd over

the Christian flock. Knowledge, eloquence, benevolence, gratitude, and zeal are all aids in the good work, but without an inflowing of the love of Jesus in the heart, the work of the Christian minister is a failure. {6Red 48.2}

Peter was naturally forward and impulsive, and Satan had taken advantage of these characteristics to lead him astray. When Jesus had opened before his disciples the fact that he must go to Jerusalem to suffer and die at the hands of the chief priests and scribes, Peter had presumptuously contradicted his Master, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." He could not conceive it possible that the Son of God should be put to death. Satan suggested to his mind that if Jesus was the Son of God he could not die. Just prior to the fall of Peter, Jesus had said to him, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." That period had now come, and the transformation wrought in Peter was evident. The close, testing questions of the Lord had not provoked one forward, self-sufficient reply; and because of his humiliation and repentance he was better prepared than ever before to fill the office of shepherd to the flock. {6Red 49.1}

The lesson which he had received from the chief

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Shepherd, in the treatment of his case, was a most important one to Peter, and also to the other disciples. It taught them to deal with the transgressor with patience, sympathy, and forgiving love. During the time in which Peter denied his Lord, the love which Jesus bore him never faltered. Just such love should the under-shepherd feel for the sheep and lambs committed to his care. Remembering his own weakness and failure, Peter was to deal with his flock as tenderly as Christ had dealt with him. {6Red 49.2}

Jesus walked alone with Peter, for there was something which he wished to communicate to him only. In that memorable upper chamber, previous to his death, Jesus had said to his disciple, "Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards;" Peter had replied to this: "Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake." Jesus now, in sympathy for him, and that he might be strengthened for the final test of his faith in Christ, opened before him his future. He told him that after living a life of usefulness, when age was telling upon his strength, he should indeed follow his Lord. Said Jesus, "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God." {6Red 50.1}

Jesus here explicitly stated to Peter the fact and manner of his death; he even referred to the stretching forth of his hands upon the cross; and after he had thus spoken he repeated his former injunction: "Follow me." The disciple was not

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disconcerted by the revelation of his Master. He felt willing to suffer any death for his Lord. Peter saw that John was following, and a desire came over him to know *his* future, and he "saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." Peter should have

considered that his Lord would reveal to him all that it was best for him to know, without inquiry on his part. It is the duty of every one to follow Christ, without undue anxiety as to the duty assigned to others. In saying of John, "If I will that he tarry till I come," Jesus gave no assurance that this disciple should live until the second coming of Christ; he merely asserted his own supreme power, and that even if he should will this to be so, it would in no way affect the work of Peter. The future of both John and Peter was in the hands of their Lord, and obedience in following him was the duty required of each. {6Red 50.2}

John lived to be very aged; he witnessed the fulfillment of the words of Christ in regard to the desolation of Jerusalem. He saw the stately temple of the Jews in ruins, and not one stone left upon another that was not thrown down. Peter was now an entirely converted man; but the honor and authority received from Christ did not give him supremacy over his brethren. He was venerated, and had much influence in the church because of the favor of God in forgiving him his apostasy, and intrusting to him the feeding of his flock, and because he ever remained one of the closest followers of Christ in his daily life.

{6Red 51.1}

Meeting of the Brethren.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted." There were others besides the eleven who assembled on the mountain-side. After he had revealed himself to them, certain followers of Jesus were only partially convinced of his identity with the crucified One. But none of the eleven had any doubt upon the subject. They had listened to his words, revealing the straight chain of prophecy in regard to himself. He had eaten with them, and shown them his wounded side and his pierced hands and feet, and they had handled him, so there was no room for unbelief in their minds. {6Red 52.1}

This meeting at Galilee had been appointed by the Saviour; the angel from Heaven had announced it to several of the disciples; and Jesus himself had given them special directions in regard to it, saying, "After I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." The place upon the mountain-side was selected by Jesus, because of its accommodation for a large company. This meeting was of the utmost importance to the church, which was soon to be left to carry on the work without the personal presence of the Saviour. Jesus here designed to manifest himself to all the brethren that should assemble, in order that all their doubt and unbelief might be swept away. {6Red 52.2}

The appointment of Jesus was repeated to those who believed on him, while they were yet lingering at Jerusalem, attending the festal

occasions which followed the passover. The tidings reached many lonely ones who were mourning the death of their Lord; and they made their way to the place of meeting by circuitous routes, coming in from every direction, that they might not excite the

suspicion of the jealous Jews. With the most intense interest they assembled together. Those who had been favored with a sight of the resurrected Saviour recounted to the doubting ones the messages of the angels, and their interviews with their Master. They reasoned from scripture, as Jesus had done with them, showing how every specification of prophecy relating to the first advent of Christ had been fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. {6Red 52.3}

Thus the favored disciples passed from group to group, encouraging and strengthening the faith of their brethren. Many of those assembled heard these communications with amazement. A new train of thought was started in their minds regarding the crucified One. If what they had just heard was true, then Jesus was more than a prophet. No one could triumph over death, and burst the fetters of the tomb, but Messiah. Their ideas of Messiah and his mission had been so confused by the false teachings of the priests that it was necessary for them to unlearn what had been taught them, in order to be able to accept the truth, that Christ, through ignominy, suffering, and death, should finally take his throne. {6Red 53.1}

With mingled anxiety, fear, and hope, they waited to see if Jesus would indeed appear to fulfill his appointment. Thomas recounted to an eager, listening crowd his former unbelief, and

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his refusal to believe unless he saw the wounded hands, feet, and side of his Lord, and put his finger in the prints of the nails. He told them how his doubts were swept away forever by the sight of his Saviour, bearing the cruel marks of the crucifixion, and that he wished for no farther evidence. {6Red 53.2}

While the people were watching and waiting, suddenly Jesus stood in their midst. No one could tell from whence or how he came. The disciples recognized him at once, and hastened to pay him homage. Many who were present had never before seen him, but when they looked upon his divine countenance, and then upon his wounded hands and feet, pierced by the nails of the crucifixion, they knew it was the Saviour, and worshiped him. {6Red 54.1}

But there were some who still doubted; they could not believe the joyous truth. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth." This assurance of Jesus exceeded all their expectations. They knew of his power, while he was one among them, over disease of every type, and over Satan and his angels; but they could not at first grasp the grand reality that all power in Heaven and on earth had been given to Him who had walked their streets, and sat at their tables, and taught in their midst. {6Red 54.2}

Jesus sought to draw their minds away from himself personally, to the importance of his position as the heir of all things, an equal with God himself; that through suffering and conflict he had gained his great inheritance, the kingdoms of Heaven and of earth. He wished them to understand at once how ample was his authority,

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and, as one above all powers and principalities, he issued the great commission to his chosen disciples:-- {6Red 54.3}

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." {6Red 55.1}

A wide door was thus thrown open before his amazed listeners, who had heretofore been taught the most rigid seclusion from all save their own nation. A new and fuller interpretation of the prophecies dawned upon their minds; they labored to comprehend the work that was assigned them. The world regarded Jesus as an impostor; only a few hundreds ranked under his banner, and the faith of these had been fearfully shaken by the fact of his death, and they had not been able to settle upon any definite plan of action. Now Christ had revealed himself to them in his resurrected form, and had given them a mission so extensive that, with their limited views, they could scarcely comprehend it. It was difficult for them to realize that the faith which had bound them to the side of Jesus should not only be the religion of the Jews, but of all nations. {6Red 55.2}

Superstition, tradition, bigotry, and idolatry ruled the world. The Jews alone claimed to have a certain knowledge of God, and they were so exclusive, both socially and religiously, that they were despised by every other people. The high wall of separation which they had raised made the Jews a little world to themselves, and they called all other classes heathen and dogs.

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But Jesus committed to his disciples the scheme of making known their religion to all nations, tongues, and people. It was the most sublime enterprise ever intrusted to man--to preach a crucified and risen Saviour, and a full and free salvation to all men, both rich and poor, learned and ignorant--to teach that Christ came to the world to pardon the repentant, and to offer them a love high as heaven, broad as the world, and enduring as eternity. {6Red 55.3}

They were to teach the observance of all things whatsoever Jesus had commanded them, and were to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Jesus was about to be removed from his disciples; but he assured them that although he should ascend to his Father, his Spirit and influence would be with them always, and with their successors even unto the end of the world. Christ could not have left his followers a more precious legacy than the assurance that his presence would be with them through all the dark and trying hours of life. When Satan seems ready to destroy the church of God, and bring his people to confusion, they should remember that One has promised to be with them who has said, "All power is given unto me in Heaven and on earth." {6Red 56.1}

Persecution and reproach have ever been the lot of the true followers of Christ. The world hated the Master, and it has ever hated his servants; but the Holy Spirit, the Comforter which Christ sent unto his disciples, cheers and strengthens them to do his work with fidelity during his personal absence. The Comforter, the Spirit of truth, was to abide with them forever, and Christ assured them that the union existing between

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himself and the Father, now also embraced them. {6Red 56.2}

The understanding of the disciples, which had been clouded by misinterpretation of

the prophecies, was now fully opened by Jesus, who shed a clear light upon those scriptures referring to himself. He showed them the true character of his kingdom; and they now began to see that it was not the mission of Christ to establish a temporal power, but that his kingdom of divine grace was to be manifested in the hearts of his people, and that only through his humiliation, suffering, and death, could the kingdom of his glory finally be established. {6Red 57.1}

The power of death was held by the devil; but Jesus had removed its stinging despair, by meeting the enemy upon his own territory and there conquering him. Henceforth death would be robbed of its terror for the Christian, since Christ himself had felt its pangs, and risen from the grave to sit at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, having all power in Heaven and on earth. The conflict between Christ and Satan was determined when the Lord arose from the dead, shaking the prison-house of his enemy to its foundations, and robbing him of his spoils by bringing up a company of the sleeping dead, as a fresh trophy of the victory achieved by the second Adam. This resurrection was a sample, and an assurance, of the final resurrection of the righteous dead at Christ's second coming. {6Red 57.2}

Jerusalem had been the scene of Christ's amazing condescension for the human race. There had he suffered, been rejected, and condemned. The land of Judea, of which Jerusalem was the metropolis, was his birthplace. There, clad in the garb of humanity, he had walked with men,

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and few had discerned how near Heaven came to earth when Jesus dwelt among them. It was, therefore, very appropriate that the work of the disciples should begin at Jerusalem. While all minds were agitated by the thrilling scenes of the past few weeks, it was a most fitting opportunity for the message to be borne to that city. {6Red 57.3}

As the instruction of Jesus to the apostles was drawing to a close, and as the hour of his separation from them approached, he directed their minds more definitely to the work of the Spirit of God in fitting them for their mission. Through the medium of a familiar intercourse, he illuminated their minds to understand the sublime truths which they were to reveal to the world. But their work was not to be entered upon till they should know of a surety, by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that they were connected with Heaven. They were promised new courage and joy from the heavenly illumination they should then experience, and which would enable them to comprehend the depth and breadth and fullness of God's love. {6Red 58.1}

After being fitted for their mission by the descent of the Holy Ghost, the disciples were to proclaim pardon for sin, and salvation through repentance, and the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, and to reveal the principles of the kingdom of Christ, beginning at Jerusalem, and from thence extending their labors throughout Judea, and into Samaria, and finally to the uttermost parts of the earth. Here is a lesson to all who have a message of truth to give to the world: Their own hearts must first be imbued with the Spirit of God, and their labors should commence at home; their families should have the benefit

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of their influence; and the transforming power of the Spirit of God should be

demonstrated in their own homes by a well-disciplined family. Then the circle should widen; the whole neighborhood should perceive the interest felt for their salvation, and the light of truth should be faithfully presented to them; for their salvation is of as much importance as that of persons at a distance. From the immediate neighborhood, and adjoining cities and towns, the circle of the labors of God's servants should widen, till the message of truth is given to the uttermost parts of the earth. {6Red 58.2}

This was the order which Christ instituted for the labors of his disciples; but it is frequently reversed by the evangelical workers of this time. They neglect the inner circle; it is not felt to be a necessity that the quickening influence of the Spirit of God should first operate upon their own hearts, and sanctify and ennoble their lives. The simplest duties, lying directly in their path, are neglected for some wider and more distant field, where their labors are frequently expended in vain. Whereas in a field easier of access they would have labored with success, and encountered fewer trials, gaining influence and new courage as the way opened and broadened before them. {6Red 59.1}

The apostles might have entreated the Lord that, in view of the unappreciated efforts which had been put forth in Jerusalem, and the insult and cruel death to which Christ had been subjected, they might be permitted to seek some more promising field, where they would find hearts more ready to hear and receive their message. But no such plea was made. Jesus was the sole director of the work. The very ground

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where the greatest of all teachers had scattered the seeds of truth, was to be thoroughly cultivated by the apostles until those seeds should spring up and yield an abundant harvest. In their labors the disciples were to endure the hatred, oppression, and jealousy of the Jews; but this had been experienced by their Master before them, and they were not to fly from it. {6Red 59.2}

Before his death, Jesus had said to his disciples, while comforting them in view of his approaching humiliation and death, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." Now, after the conflict and the victory, after triumphing over death, and receiving his reward, in a more emphatic manner he bestowed upon them that peace which passeth all understanding. He qualified them to enter upon the work which he had commenced. As he had been sent by his Father, so he sent forth the disciples. He breathed upon them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." {6Red 60.1}

The apostles were not sent forth to be witnesses for Christ until they had received that spiritual endowment necessary to fit them for the execution of their great commission. All professions of Christianity are but lifeless expressions of faith until Jesus imbues the believer with his spiritual life, which is the Holy Ghost. The evangelist is not prepared to teach the truth, and to be the representative of Christ, till he has received this heavenly gift. {6Red 60.2}

Men in responsible positions, who are proclaiming the truth of God in the name of Jesus without the spiritual energy given by the quickening power of God, are doing an unreal work, and cannot be certain whether success or defeat

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will attend their labors. Many forget that religion and duty are not dreary

sentimentalisms, but earnest action. It is not the great services and lofty aspirations which receive the approval of God, but the love and consecration through which the service is performed, be it great or little. Storms of opposition and rebuffs are God's providences to drive us under the shelter of his wing. When the cloud envelops us, his voice is heard: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." {6Red 60.3}

The act of Christ in breathing upon his disciples the Holy Ghost, and in imparting his peace to them, was as a few drops before the plentiful shower to be given on the day of Pentecost. Jesus impressed this fact upon his disciples, that as they should proceed in the work intrusted to them, they would the more fully comprehend the nature of that work, and the manner in which the kingdom of Christ was to be set up on earth. They were appointed to be witnesses for the Saviour; they were to testify what they had seen and heard of his resurrection; they were to repeat the gracious words which proceeded from his lips. They were acquainted with his holy character; he was as an angel standing in the sun, yet casting no shadow. It was the sacred work of the apostles to present the spotless character of Christ to men, as the standard for their lives. The disciples had been so intimately associated with this Pattern of holiness that they were in some degree assimilated to him in character, and were specially fitted to make known to the world his precepts and example. {6Red 61.1}

The more that the minister of Christ associates

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with his Master, through contemplation of his life and character, the more closely will he resemble him, and the better qualified will he be to teach his truths. Every feature in the life of the great Example should be studied with care, and close converse should be held with him through the prayer of living faith. Thus will the defective human character be transformed into the image of his glorious character. Thus will the teacher of the truth be prepared to lead souls to Christ. {6Red 61.2}

Jesus, in giving the disciples their first commission, had said, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou [referring to responsible men who should represent his church] shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." In renewing the commission of those to whom he had imparted the Holy Ghost, he said, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." These words conveyed to the disciples a sense of the sacredness of their work, and its tremendous results. Imbued with the Spirit of God, they were to go forth preaching the merits of a sin-pardoning Saviour; and they had the assurance that all Heaven was interested in their labors, and that what they did on earth, in the spirit and power of Christ, should be ratified in Heaven. {6Red 62.1}

Jesus did not, by this assurance, give the apostles or their successors power to forgive sins, as his representatives. The Roman Catholic Church directs its people to confess the secrets of their lives to the priest, and from him, acting in the place

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of Christ, to receive absolution from their sins. The Saviour taught that *his* is the only name given under Heaven whereby men shall be saved. Jesus, however, delegated to

his church upon earth, in her organized capacity, the power to censure and to remove censure according to the rules prescribed by inspiration; but these acts were only to be done by men of good repute, who were consecrated by the great Head of the church, and who showed by their lives that they were earnestly seeking to follow the guidance of the Spirit of God. {6Red 62.2}

No man was to exercise an arbitrary power over another man's conscience. Christ gave no ecclesiastical right to forgive sin, nor to sell indulgences, that men may sin without incurring the displeasure of God, nor did he give his servants liberty to accept a gift or bribe for cloaking sin, that it may escape merited censure. Jesus charged his disciples to preach the remission of sin *in his name* among all nations; but they themselves were not empowered to remove one stain of sin from the children of Adam. Nor were they to execute judgment against the guilty; the wrath of an offended God was to be proclaimed against the sinner; but the power which the Roman Church assumes to visit that wrath upon the offender is not established by any direction of Christ; he himself will execute the sentence pronounced against the impenitent. Whoever would attract the people to himself as one in whom is invested power to forgive sins, incurs the wrath of God, for he turns souls away from the heavenly Pardoner to a weak and erring mortal. {6Red 63.1}

Jesus showed his disciples that only as they

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should partake of his Spirit, and be assimilated to his merciful character, would they be endowed with spiritual discernment and miraculous power. All their strength and wisdom must come from him. When dealing with obstinately offending members, the holy men of the church were to follow the directions laid down by Christ; this, the only course of safety for the church, has been traced step by step by the apostles with the pen of inspiration. {6Red 63.2}

When the church takes up the case of an offender, the prayer of faith will bring Christ into the midst as an all-wise counselor. Men are in danger of being controlled by prejudice or the reports and opinions of others. Their own unsanctified judgment may balance their decisions. Therefore, where important decisions are to be made in reference to individuals in the church, the judgment of one man, however wise and experienced he may be, is not to be regarded as sufficient to act upon. {6Red 64.1}

Jesus has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." With Christ to preside over the council of the church, how cautiously should each man speak and act. Prayer should be offered for the erring, and every means be used to restore him to the favor of God and the church; but if the voice of the church is disregarded, and his individual will is set up above it, then the offender must be promptly dealt with, and the decision of the brethren, made with prayer and faith, and according to the wisdom given them of God, is ratified by Heaven. {6Red 64.2}

The repentance of the sinner is to be accepted by the church with grateful hearts. The church

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is empowered to absolve sins only in the sense of assuring the repenting sinner of the forgiving mercy of the Saviour, and in leading him out from the darkness of unbelief and

guilt, to the light of faith and righteousness. It may place his trembling hand in the loving hand of Jesus. Such a remission is ratified by Heaven. The directions of the apostles in regard to condemnation or acquittal in case of church trials are to remain valid till the end of time. And the promise of Christ's presence in answer to prayer should comfort and encourage his church today as much as it comforted and encouraged the apostles whom Christ directly addressed. Those who despise the authority of the church despise the authority of Christ himself. {6Red 64.3}

Notwithstanding the refusal of Heaven's best gift by Jerusalem, the work of the apostles was to commence there. The first overtures of mercy were to be made to the murderers of the Son of God. There were also many there who had secretly believed on Jesus, and many who had been deceived by the priests and rulers, but were ready to accept him, if it could be proven that he was indeed the Christ. The apostles, as eyewitnesses, were to testify of Jesus and his resurrection. They were to open to the people the prophecies relating to him, and to show how perfectly they had been fulfilled. They were to bring before the people the most convincing evidence of the truths which they taught, and they were to proclaim the joyful tidings of salvation to the world. {6Red 65.1}

As all minds were interested in the history and mission of Jesus, because of the events

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which had just transpired at Jerusalem, this was a time when the preaching of his gospel would make the most decided impression upon the public mind. At the commencement of their work the disciples were to receive a marvelous power. Their testimony of Christ was to be confirmed by signs and wonders, and the performance of miracles by the apostles, and those who received their message. Said Jesus, "They shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents [as in the case of Paul], and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." {6Red 65.2}

Ascension of Christ.

After the meeting of Jesus with the brethren, at Galilee, the disciples returned to Jerusalem; and while the eleven were gathered together in the city Jesus met with them, and again led their minds out into the prophecies concerning himself. He deeply impressed upon their understanding the necessity of thoroughly studying the ancient prophecies regarding Messiah, and of comparing them with the facts of his life, death, and resurrection, in order to establish their fulfillment in himself. They were to diligently trace link after link of sacred truth revealed by the prophets, in types and figures representing the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He lifted the vail from their understanding, concerning the typical system of the Jews, and they now saw clearly the meaning of the forms and symbols which were virtually abolished by the death of Christ.

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{6Red 66.1}

The Saviour of the world, as a divine Conqueror, was about to ascend to his Father's throne. He selected the Mount of Olives as the scene of this last display of his glory. Accompanied by the eleven, he made his way to the mountain. The disciples were not aware that this was to be their last season with their Master. He employed the time in sacred converse with them, reiterating his former instructions. As they passed through the gates of Jerusalem, many wondering eyes looked upon the little company, led by one whom a few weeks before the priests and rulers had condemned and crucified. {6Red 67.1}

They crossed the Kedron, and approached Gethsemane. Here Jesus paused, that his disciples might call to mind the lessons he had given them while on his way to the garden on the night of his great agony. He looked again upon the vine which he had then used as a symbol to represent the union of his church with himself and his Father; and he refreshed the memory of his followers by repeating the impressive truths which he had then illustrated to them. Reminders of the unrequited love of Jesus were all around him; even the disciples walking by his side, who were so dear to his heart, had, in the hour of his humiliation, when he most needed their sympathy and comfort, reproached and forsaken him. {6Red 67.2}

Christ had sojourned in the world for thirty- three years; he had endured its scorn, insult, and mockery; he had been rejected and crucified. Now, when about to ascend to his throne of glory--as he reviews the ingratitude of the people he came to save--will he not withdraw his

sympathy and love from them? Will not his affections be centered on that world where he is appreciated, and where sinless angels adore him, and wait to do his bidding? No; his promise to those loved ones whom he leaves on earth is "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Before his conflict, he had prayed the Father that they might not be taken out of the world, but should be kept from the evil which is in the world. {6Red 67.3}

At length the little company reach the Mount of Olives. This place had been peculiarly hallowed by the presence of Jesus while he bore the nature of man. It was consecrated by his prayers and tears. When he had ridden into Jerusalem, just prior to his trial, the steeps of Olivet had echoed the joyous shouts of the triumphant multitude. On its sloping descent was Bethany, where he had often found repose at the house of Lazarus. At the foot of the mount was the garden of Gethsemane, where he had agonized alone, and moistened the sod with his blood. {6Red 68.1}

Jesus led the way across the summit, to the vicinity of Bethany. He then paused, and they all gathered about him. Beams of light seemed to radiate from his countenance, as he looked with deep love upon his disciples. He upbraided them not for their faults and failures; but words of unutterable tenderness were the last which fell upon their ears from the lips of their Lord. With hands outstretched in blessing them, and as if in assurance of his protecting care, he slowly ascended from among them, drawn heavenward by a power stronger than any earthly attraction. As he passed upward, the awe-struck disciples looked with straining eyes for the last glimpse of

their ascending Lord. A cloud of glory received him out of their sight, and at the same moment there floated down to their charmed senses the sweetest and most joyous music from the angel choir. {6Red 68.2}

While their gaze was still riveted upward, voices addressed them which sounded like the music which had just charmed them. They turned, and saw two beings in the form of men; yet their heavenly character was immediately discerned by the disciples, whom they addressed in comforting accents, saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven." These angels were of the company that had been waiting in a shining cloud to escort Jesus to his throne; and in sympathy and love for those whom the Saviour had left, they came to remove all uncertainty from their minds, and to give them the assurance that he would come to earth again. {6Red 69.1}

All Heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As he ascended he led the way, and the multitude of captives whom he had raised from the dead at the time when he came forth from the tomb, followed him. The heavenly host, with songs of joy and triumph, escorted him upward. At the portals of the city of God an innumerable company of angels awaited his coming. As they approached the gates of the city, the angels who were escorting the Majesty of Heaven, in triumphant tones addressed the company at the portals: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!"

{6Red 69.2}

The waiting angels at the gates of the city inquire in rapturous strains, "Who is this King of Glory? The escorting angels joyously reply in songs of triumph, "The Lord, strong and mighty! The Lord, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!" Again the waiting angels ask, "Who is this King of Glory?" and the escorting angels respond in melodious strains, "The Lord of hosts! He is the King of Glory!" Then the portals of the city of God are widely opened, and the heavenly train pass in amid a burst of angelic music. All the heavenly host surround their majestic Commander as he takes his position upon the throne of the Father. {6Red 70.1}

With the deepest adoration and joy, the hosts of angels bow before him, while the glad shout rings through the courts of Heaven: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!" Songs of triumph mingle with music from angelic harps, till Heaven seems to overflow with delightful harmony, and inconceivable joy and praise. The Son of God has triumphed over the prince of darkness, and conquered death and the grave. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever!" {6Red 70.2}

He is seated by the side of his Father on his throne. The Saviour presents the captives he has rescued from the bonds of death, at the price of his own life. His hands place immortal crowns upon their brows; for they are the representatives,

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and samples, of those who shall be redeemed, by the blood of Christ, from all nations, tongues, and people, and come forth from the dead, when he shall call the just from their graves at his second coming. Then shall they see the marks of Calvary in the glorified body of the Son of God. Their greatest joy will be found in the presence of Him who sitteth on the throne; and the enraptured saints will exclaim, My Beloved is mine, and I am his! He is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely! {6Red 70.3}

The disciples returned to Jerusalem, not mourning, but full of joy. When last they looked upon their Lord, his countenance shone with heavenly brightness, and he smiled lovingly upon them. Those hands that had so often been stretched forth in the act of blessing the sick and the afflicted, and in rebuking demons--those hands which had been bruised by the cruel nails, were mercifully extended, as though in the disciples they embraced the whole world, and called down a blessing upon all the followers of Christ. Beams of light seemed to emanate from those dear hands and to fall upon the watching, waiting ones. {6Red 71.1}

The most precious fact to the disciples in the ascension of Jesus was that he went from them into Heaven in the tangible form of their divine Teacher. The very same Jesus, who had walked, and talked, and prayed with them; who had broken bread with them; who had been with them in their boats on the lake; who had sought retirement with them in the groves; and who had that very day toiled with them up the steep ascent of Olivet,--had ascended to Heaven in the form of humanity. And the heavenly messengers

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had assured them that the very same Jesus whom they had seen go up into Heaven, should come again in like manner as he had ascended. This assurance has ever been, and will be till the close of time, the hope and joy of all true lovers of Christ. {6Red 71.2}

The disciples not only saw the Lord ascend, but they had the testimony of the angels that he had gone to occupy his Father's throne in Heaven. The last remembrance that the disciples were to have of their Lord was as the sympathizing Friend, the glorified Redeemer. Moses veiled his face to hide the glory of the law which was reflected upon it, and the glory of Christ's ascension was veiled from human sight. The brightness of the heavenly escort, and the opening of the glorious gates of God to welcome him, were not to be discerned by mortal eyes. {6Red 72.1}

Had the track of Christ to Heaven been revealed to the disciples in all its inexpressible glory, they could not have endured the sight. Had they beheld the myriads of angels, and heard the bursts of triumph from the battlements of Heaven, as the everlasting doors were lifted up, the contrast between that glory and their own lives in a world of trial, would have been so great that they would hardly have been able to again take up the burden of their earthly lives, prepared to execute with courage and faithfulness the commission given them by the Saviour. Even the Comforter, the Holy Ghost which was sent to them, would not have been properly appreciated, nor would it have strengthened their hearts sufficiently to bear reproach, contumely, imprisonment, and death if need be. {6Red 72.2}

Their senses were not to become so infatuated

with the glories of Heaven that they would lose sight of the character of Christ on earth, which they were to copy in themselves. They were to keep distinctly before their minds the beauty and majesty of his life, the perfect harmony of all his attributes, and the mysterious union of the divine and human in his nature. It was better that the earthly acquaintance of the disciples with their Saviour should end in the solemn, quiet, and sublime manner in which it did. His visible ascent from the world was in harmony with the meekness and quiet of his life. {6Red 72.3}

The disciples returned to Jerusalem rejoicing, not that they were deprived of their Master and Teacher, for this was to them a cause for personal mourning rather than joy. But Jesus had assured them that he would send the Comforter, as an equivalent for his visible presence. He had said, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father." They rejoiced because Jesus had wrought out salvation for man; he had answered the claims of the law, and had become a perfect offering for man; he had ascended to Heaven to carry forward the work of atonement begun on earth. He was the Advocate of man, his Intercessor with the Father. {6Red 73.1}

Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem; who worked with his earthly father at the carpenter's trade; who sat in weariness by Jacob's well; who slept in weariness in Peter's fishing-boat; who hungered and thirsted; who took little children in his arms and blessed them; who was rejected, scourged, and crucified,--ascended in the form of a man to Heaven, and took his place at the right hand of God. Having felt our infirmities, our sorrows, and temptations, he is amply fitted to

plead for man as his representative. Jesus, when upon earth, was the most perfect type of man; and it is the Christian's joy and comfort that this patient, loving Saviour is to be his King and Judge; for "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." {6Red 73.2}

We are not inclined to associate kingly glory and judicial authority with the self-denial, patience, love, and forgiveness shown in the life of Christ; yet these attributes qualified the Saviour for his exalted position. The qualities of character which he developed on earth constitute his exaltation in glory. His triumphs were gained by love, not by force. In coming to Christ the sinner consents to be elevated to the noblest ideal of man. {6Red 74.1}

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" The attributes which exalted Christ, if obtained by his followers, will place the scepter in their hands, and they shall be kings and priests with God. Christ pledged himself to keep the law which Adam transgressed, and to magnify that law and make it honorable by demonstrating that it was not arbitrary, and could be kept inviolate by man. Christ showed by his life that the law of God is faultless, and that man, by disobeying it, brings upon himself the evils which its restrictions seek to avert from him. {6Red 74.2}

When the disciples returned to Jerusalem alone, people looked at them, expecting to see in their faces expressions of sorrow, confusion, and defeat; but they saw there gladness and triumph. They did not wail over disappointed hopes, but were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. The priests and rulers were at a

loss to understand this mystery. After the discouraging events connected with the trial, condemnation, and ignominious death of their Master, the disciples were supposed to be defeated and ashamed; but they now came forth with buoyant spirits, and countenances beaming with a joy not born of earth. {6Red 74.3}

They told the wonderful story of Christ's glorious resurrection, and ascension to Heaven, and many believed their testimony. The disciples had no longer a vague distrust of the future; they knew that Jesus was in Heaven; that his sympathies were unchanged; that he was identifying himself with suffering humanity, receiving the prayers of his people; that he was pleading with God the merits of his own precious blood, showing his wounded hands and feet, as a remembrance of the price he had paid for his redeemed. They knew that he would come again escorted by the heavenly host, and they looked upon this event, not as a dreaded calamity, but as an occasion for great joy and longing anticipation. They knew that he would stand again upon the Mount of Olives, while the Hebrew hallelujahs should mingle with Gentile hosannas, and myriads of voices should unite in the glad acclamation of "Crown him Lord of all!" They knew that he had ascended to Heaven to prepare mansions for his obedient children, and that he would return and take them unto himself. {6Red 75.1}

With joy the disciples related to their brethren the news of their Lord's ascension. They now felt that they had a Friend at the throne of God, and were eager to prefer their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus. They gathered

together in solemn awe and bowed in prayer, repeating to each other the assurance of the Saviour, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." During the ten days following the ascension, they, with one accord, devoted the time to prayer and praise, waiting for the descent of the Holy Ghost. They extended the hand of faith higher and higher, with the mighty argument, "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." {6Red 75.2}

"Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The Saviour came into the world, outwardly the son of David, not manifesting the full significance of his character. His spirit was subject to that discipline and experience through which humanity must in some measure pass. His divinity was veiled beneath humanity. He hid within himself those all-powerful attributes which belonged to him as one equal with God. At times his divine character flashed forth with such wonderful power that all who were capable of discerning spiritual things pronounced him the Son of God. {6Red 76.1}

Christ exiled himself to the world that he might bring heavenly light within the reach of humanity. The Jews did not comprehend the twofold character of Christ; and as he did not assume temporal, kingly power, and establish his reign on David's throne, bringing into subjection

every foreign authority, the Jewish dignitaries refused to accept him. They could not connect man's suffering, grief, and poverty with their idea of the Messiah. Yet this was the only Saviour the word of God through his prophets had ever predicted. {6Red 76.2}

The Jews utterly failed to understand the spiritual connection which identified Christ with both the human and the divine, and gave fallen man a presentation of what he should strive to become. Christ was God in the flesh. As the son of David, he stood forth a perfect type of true manhood, bold in doing his duty, and of the strictest integrity, yet full of love, compassion, and tender sympathy. In his miracles he revealed himself as Lord. When he was asked by Philip to show him the Father, he answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." {6Red 77.1}

The Jews were continually seeking for and expecting a Divinity among them that would be revealed in outward show, and by one flash of over-mastering will would change the current of all minds, force from them an acknowledgment of his superiority, elevate himself, and gratify the ambition of his people. This being the case, when Christ was treated with contempt, there was a powerful temptation before him to reveal his heavenly character, and to compel his persecutors to admit that he was Lord above kings and potentates, priests and temple. But it was his difficult task to maintain the level of humanity. {6Red 77.2}

In the intercessory prayer of Jesus with his Father, he claimed that he had fulfilled the

conditions which made it obligatory upon the Father to fulfill his part of the contract made in Heaven, with regard to fallen man. He prayed: "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. [That is, he had wrought out a righteous character on earth as an example for men to follow.] And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." In this prayer he farther goes on to state what is comprehended by the work which he has accomplished, and which has given him all those who believe on his name. {6Red 77.3}

He values this recompense so highly that he forgets the anguish it has cost him to redeem fallen man. He declares himself glorified in those who believe on him. The church, in his name, is to carry to glorious perfection the work which he has commenced; and when that church shall be finally ransomed in the Paradise of God, he will look upon the travail of his soul and be satisfied. Through all eternity the ransomed host will be his chief glory. {6Red 78.1}

Jesus, the Majesty of Heaven, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; "wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." This mighty Saviour has promised to come again, and to take his church to the mansions he has prepared for them. While he is in Heaven carrying on the work of intercession and atonement commenced on earth, his life and character are to be exemplified by his church upon earth. He has promised that, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my

Father." And again, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name." "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." {6Red 78.2}

He who considered it not robbery to be equal with God, once trod the earth, bearing our suffering and sorrowing nature, and tempted in all points like as we are; and now he appears in the presence of God as our great High Priest, ready to accept the repentance, and to answer the prayers of his people, and, through the merits of his own righteousness, to present them to the Father. He raises his wounded hands to God, and claims their blood-bought pardon. I have graven them on the palms of my hands, he pleads. Those memorial wounds of my humiliation and anguish secure to my church the best gifts of Omnipotence. {6Red 79.1}

What a source of joy to the disciples, to know that they had such a Friend in Heaven to plead in their behalf! Through the visible ascension of Christ all their views and contemplation of Heaven are changed. Their minds had formerly dwelt upon it as a region of unlimited space, tenanted by spirits without substance. Now Heaven was connected with the thought of Jesus, whom they had loved and reverenced above all others, with whom they had conversed and journeyed, whom they had handled, even in his resurrected body, who had spoken hope and comfort to their hearts, and who, while the words were upon his lips, had been taken up before their eyes, the tones of his voice coming back to them as the cloudy chariot of angels received him: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

{6Red 79.2}

Heaven could no longer appear to them as an indefinite, incomprehensible space, filled with intangible spirits. They now looked upon it as their future home, where mansions were being prepared for them by their loving Redeemer. Prayer was clothed with a new interest, since it was a communion with their Saviour. With new and thrilling emotions and a firm confidence that their prayer would be answered, they gathered in the upper chamber to offer their petitions, and to claim the promise of the Saviour, who had said "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." They prayed in the name of Jesus. {6Red 80.1}

They had a gospel to preach--Christ in human form, a man of sorrows; Christ in humiliation, taken by wicked hands and crucified; Christ resurrected, and ascended to Heaven, into the presence of God, to be man's Advocate; Christ to come again with power and great glory in the clouds of heaven, and to receive the obedient and loyal to himself. {6Red 80.2}

The apostles went forth with courage and hope, to do their Master's work with fidelity. They knew that the most acceptable way of waiting for Christ was to work for him. It was theirs to direct others to the coming Lord, and to teach them to wait patiently for his appearing. This work was given to every disciple of Christ. {6Red 80.3}

PAMPHLETS / 7Red - Redemption: or the Ministry of Peter and the Conversion of Saul (1877)

7Red - Redemption: or the Ministry of Peter and the Conversion of Saul (1877)

TO THE READER

TO ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE SERVICE OF GOD, AND THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH ON EARTH, THE HISTORY OF THE WORK OF THE APOSTLES FURNISHES A CHAPTER OF PECULIAR ATTRACTIONS. HISTORY, IT IS SAID, REPEATS ITSELF. SO THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CHURCH REPEATS ITSELF; AND IN THE EXPERIENCES OF THE APOSTLES WE READ, IN MANY PARTICULARS, OUR OWN. TO THOSE WHO HAVE READ THE SERIES OF PAMPHLETS ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST, BY THE SAME AUTHOR, WE NEED SAY NOTHING ABOUT THE CHASTE AND IMPRESSIVE STYLE IN WHICH THE MATTER IS PRESENTED, NOR THE NEW AND STRIKING THOUGHTS WHICH BY THE CASUAL THINKER WOULD BE UNPERCEIVED. WE COMMEND THIS TO THE READER AS A VALUABLE HELP IN UNDERSTANDING THE LESSONS THE SCRIPTURES WOULD TEACH US IN WHAT THEY HAVE RECORDED OF THE LIVES AND EXPERIENCES OF THESE SERVANTS OF GOD.

PUBLISHERS

The Apostles of Christ

The Pentecost.

When Jesus opened the understanding of the disciples to the meaning of the prophecies concerning himself, he assured them that all power was given him in Heaven and on earth, and bade them go preach the gospel to every creature. The disciples, with a sudden revival of their old hope that Jesus would take his place upon the throne of David at Jerusalem, inquired, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" The Saviour threw an uncertainty over their minds in regard to the subject, by replying that it was not for them "to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." {7Red 3.1}

The disciples began to hope that the wonderful descent of the Holy Ghost would influence the Jewish people to accept Jesus. The Saviour forbore to farther explain, for he knew that when the Holy Spirit should come upon them in full measure their minds would be illuminated and they would fully understand the work before them, and take it

up just where he had left it. {7Red 3.2}

The disciples assembled in the upper chamber, uniting in supplications with the believing women,

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with Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. These brethren, who had been unbelieving, were now fully established in their faith by the scenes attending the crucifixion, and by the resurrection and ascension of the Lord. The number assembled was about one hundred and twenty. While they were awaiting the descent of the Holy Ghost, they supplied the office left vacant by Judas. Two men were selected, who, in the careful judgment of the believers, were best qualified for the place. But the disciples, distrusting their ability to decide the question farther, referred it to One that knew all hearts. They sought the Lord in prayer to ascertain which of the two men was more suitable for the important position of trust, as an apostle of Christ. The Spirit of God selected Matthias for the office. {7Red 3.3}

Both men who had been selected were considered to be persons of stern integrity, and in every way worthy of the vacant position; but notwithstanding the disciples were intimately acquainted with them, they felt that their own judgment was imperfect, and trusted the selection only to the Lord, whose eyes could read the hidden secrets of the heart. There is a lesson for our time in this occurrence. Many who are apparently well qualified to labor for God, are urged into the ministry, without a proper consideration of their case, and at length become a grievous burden to the church instead of burden-bearers. If the church of the present time would act as cautiously and wisely as did the apostles in filling the vacancy among them, much perplexity and serious injury, might be saved the cause of God. The work has often suffered much by

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putting persons forward to do that which they were not capable of doing. {7Red 4.1}

After filling the vacancy in the apostolic number, the disciples gave their time to meditation and prayer, being often in the temple, testifying of Christ, and praising God. The Pentecost was a feast celebrated seven weeks after the passover. Upon these occasions the Jews were required to repair to the temple and to present the first-fruits of all the harvest, thus acknowledging their dependence on the great Giver of all good, and their obligation to render back to God, in gifts and offerings to sustain his cause, that which he had intrusted to them. On this day of divine appointment, the Lord graciously poured out his Spirit on the little company of believers, who were the first-fruits of the Christian church. {7Red 5.1}

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The Holy Ghost assuming the form of tongues of fire divided at the tips, and resting upon those assembled, was an emblem of the gift which was bestowed upon them of speaking with fluency several different languages, with which they had formerly been unacquainted; and the appearance of fire signified the fervent zeal with which they

would labor, and the power which would attend their words.

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{7Red 5.2}

Under this heavenly illumination, the scriptures which Christ had explained to them, stood forth in their minds with the vivid luster and loveliness of clear and powerful truth. The vail which had prevented them from seeing the end of that which was abolished was now removed, and the object of Christ's mission and the nature of his kingdom were comprehended with perfect clearness. {7Red 6.1}

The Jews had been scattered to almost every nation, and spoke various languages. They had come long distances to Jerusalem, and had temporarily taken up their abode there, to remain through the religious festivals then in progress, and to observe their requirements. When assembled, they were of every known tongue. This diversity of languages was a great obstacle to the labors of God's servants in publishing the doctrine of Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth. That God should supply the deficiency of the apostles in a miraculous manner was to the people the most perfect confirmation of the testimony of these witnesses for Christ. The Holy Spirit had done for them that which they could not have accomplished for themselves in a lifetime; they could now spread the truth of the gospel abroad, speaking with accuracy the language of those for whom they were laboring. This miraculous gift was the highest evidence they could present to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven. {7Red 6.2}

"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own

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language. And they were all amazed, and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" {7Red 6.3}

The priests and rulers were greatly enraged at this wonderful manifestation, which was reported throughout all Jerusalem and its vicinity; but they dared not give way to their malice, for fear of exposing themselves to the hatred of the people. They had put the Master to death, but here were his servants, unlearned men of Galilee, tracing out the wonderful fulfillment of prophecy, and teaching the doctrine of Jesus in all the languages then spoken. They spoke with power of the wonderful works of the Saviour, and unfolded to their hearers the plan of salvation in the mercy and sacrifice of the Son of God. Their words convicted and converted thousands who listened. The traditions and superstitions inculcated by the priests were swept away from their minds, and they accepted the pure teachings of the Word of God. {7Red 7.1}

The priests and rulers, determined to account for the miraculous power of the disciples in some natural way, declared that they were simply drunken from partaking largely of the new wine prepared for the feast. Some of the most ignorant seized this suggestion as the truth; but the more intelligent knew that it was false; and those speaking the different languages testified to the accuracy with which they were used by the disciples. And Peter, in answer to the vile accusation of the priests, addressed the

assembly in these words:-- {7Red 7.2}

"Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at

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Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words; for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." {7Red 7.3}

The effect of Peter's words was very marked; and many who had ridiculed the religion of Jesus were now convinced of its truth. It was certainly unreasonable to suppose that more than one hundred persons should become intoxicated at that unseasonable hour of the day, and on the occasion of a solemn religious festival. This wonderful demonstration was before the customary meal at which wine was taken. Peter showed them that this manifestation was the direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, wherein he foretold that such power would come upon men of God to fit them for a special work. {7Red 8.1}

Peter traced back the lineage of Christ in a direct line to the honorable house of David. He did not use any of the teachings of Jesus to prove his true position, because he knew their prejudices were so great that it would be of no effect. But he referred them to David, whom the Jews regarded as a venerable patriarch of their nation. {7Red 8.2}

On that memorable occasion, large numbers who had heretofore ridiculed the idea of so unpretending a person as Jesus being the Son of God, became thoroughly convinced of the truth, and acknowledged him as their Saviour. Three

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thousand souls were added to the church. The apostles spoke by the power of the Holy Ghost; and their words could not be controverted, for they were confirmed by mighty miracles, wrought by them through the outpouring of the Spirit of God. The disciples were themselves astonished at the results of this visitation, and the quick and abundant harvest of souls. All the people were filled with amazement. Those who did not yield their prejudice and bigotry were so over-awed that they dared not by voice or violence attempt to stay the mighty work, and, for the time being, their opposition ceased. {7Red 8.3}

This testimony in regard to the establishment of the Christian church is given us, not only as an important portion of sacred history, but also as a lesson. All who profess the name of Christ should be waiting, watching, and praying with one heart. All differences should be put away, and unity and tender love one for another pervade the whole. Then our prayers may go up together to our Heavenly Father with strong, earnest faith. Then we may wait with patience and hope the fulfillment of the promise. {7Red 9.1}

The answer may come with sudden velocity and overpowering might; or it may be delayed for days and weeks, and our faith receive a trial. But God knows how and when to answer our prayer. It is *our* part of the work to put ourselves in connection with the divine channel. God is responsible for *his* part of the work. He is faithful who hath

promised. The great and important matter with us is to be of one heart and mind, putting aside all envy and malice, and, as humble supplicants, to watch and wait. Jesus, our Representative and Head, is ready to

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do for us what he did for the praying, watching ones on the day of Pentecost. {7Red 9.2}

Jesus is as willing to impart courage and grace to his followers today as he was to the disciples of the early church. None should rashly invite an opportunity to battle with the principalities and powers of darkness. When God bids them engage in the conflict it will be time enough; he will then give the weak and hesitating boldness and utterance beyond their hope or expectation. {7Red 10.1}

The same scorn and hatred that was manifested against Christ may be seen now to exist against those whom he has evidently chosen to be his co-workers. Those whose spirits rise up against the doctrines of truth make hard work for the servants of Christ. But God will make their wrath to praise him; they accomplish his purpose by stirring up minds to investigate the truth. God may allow men to follow their own wicked inclinations for a time, in opposing him; but when he sees it is for his glory, and the good of his people, he will arrest the scorners, expose their presumptive course, and give triumph to his truth. {7Red 10.2}

The arguments of the apostles alone, although clear and convincing, would not have removed the prejudice of the Jews which had withstood so much evidence. But the Holy Ghost sent those arguments home with divine power to their hearts. They were as sharp arrows of the Almighty, convicting them of their terrible guilt in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus

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Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." {7Red 10.3}

The disciples and apostles of Christ had a deep sense of their own inefficiency, and with humiliation and prayer they joined their weakness to his strength, their ignorance to his wisdom, their unworthiness to his righteousness, their poverty to his inexhaustible wealth. Thus strengthened and equipped they hesitated not in the service of their Master. {7Red 11.1}

Peter urged home upon the convicted people the fact that they had rejected Christ because they had been deceived by the priests and rulers; and if they continued to look to them for counsel, and waited for those leaders to acknowledge Christ before they dared to do so, they would never accept him. Those powerful men, although they made a profession of sanctity, were ambitious, and zealous for riches and earthly glory. They would never come to Christ to receive light. Jesus had foretold a terrible retribution to come upon that people for their obstinate unbelief, notwithstanding the most powerful evidences given them that Jesus was the Son of God. {7Red 11.2}

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in

the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles." {7Red 11.3}

From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate in word and accent, whether they spoke their native tongue or a foreign language. These humble men, who

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had never learned in the school of the prophets, presented truths so elevated and pure as to astonish those who heard them. They could not go personally to the uttermost parts of the earth; but there were men at the feast from every quarter of the world, and the truths received by them were carried to their various homes, and published among their people, winning souls to Christ. {7Red 11.4}

The Cripple Healed.

A short time after the descent of the Holy Spirit, and immediately after a season of fervent prayer, Peter and John, going up to the temple to worship, saw a distressed and poverty-stricken cripple, forty years of age, who had known no other life than one of pain and infirmity. This unfortunate man had long desired to go to Jesus and be healed; but he was almost helpless, and was removed far from the scene of the great Physician's labors. Finally his earnest pleadings induced some kind persons to bear him to the gate of the temple. But upon arriving there he discovered that the Healer, upon whom his hopes were centered, had been put to a cruel death. {7Red 12.1}

His disappointment excited the pity of those who knew how long he had eagerly hoped and expected to be healed by Jesus, and they daily brought him to the temple, that the passers-by might be moved to give him a trifle to relieve his present wants. As Peter and John passed, he begged charity from them. The disciples regarded him with compassion. "And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us." "Silver and gold have I none; but such

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as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." {7Red 12.2}

The poor man's countenance had fallen when Peter declared his own poverty, but grew bright with hope and faith as the disciple continued. "And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him." {7Red 13.1}

The Jews were astonished that the disciples could perform miracles similar to those of Jesus. He, they supposed, was dead, and they had expected all such wonderful manifestations to cease with him. Yet here was this man who had been a helpless cripple for forty years, now rejoicing in the full use of his limbs, free from pain, and

happy in believing upon Jesus. {7Red 13.2}

The apostles saw the amazement of the people, and questioned them why they should be astonished at the miracle which they had witnessed, and regard them with awe as though it were through their own power they had done this thing. Peter assured them it was done through the merits of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had rejected and crucified, but whom God had raised from the dead the third day. "And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect

soundness in the presence of you all. And now brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." {7Red 13.3}

The manner of Jesus in working his miracles was very different from that of his apostles. His language was that of one who possessed power in himself: "Be thou clean." "Peace, be still." Neither did he hesitate to accept the honor offered him on these occasions, nor seek to divert the minds of the people from himself, as though his miracles were not wrought by his own power, for his own glory. But the apostles wrought miracles only in the name of Jesus, and refused to receive the least honor to themselves. They claimed to be only instruments of that Jesus whom the Jews had crucified, but whom God had raised and elevated to his right hand. He was to receive all the honor and praise. {7Red 14.1}

After the performance of this miracle, the people flocked together in the temple, and Peter addressed them in one part of the temple, while John spoke to them in another part. The apostles, having spoken plainly of the great crime of the Jews, in rejecting and putting to death the Prince of Life, were careful not to drive them to madness or despair. Peter was willing to lessen the atrocity of their guilt as much as possible, by presuming that they did the deed ignorantly. He declared to them that the Holy Ghost was calling for them to repent of their sins and to be converted; that there was no hope for them except through the mercy of that Christ whom

they had crucified; through faith in him only could their sins be canceled by his blood. {7Red 14.2}

This preaching the resurrection of Christ, and that through his death and resurrection he would finally bring up all the dead from their graves, deeply stirred the Sadducees. They felt that their favorite doctrine was in danger, and their reputation at stake. Some of the officials of the temple, and the captain of the temple, were Sadducees. The captain, with the help of a number of Sadducees, arrested the two apostles, and put them in prison, as it was too late for their cases to be examined that night. {7Red 15.1}

These opponents of Christ and of the doctrines of the apostles, could but believe, although they refused to acknowledge, that Jesus had risen from the dead and remained on the earth for forty days afterward; the evidence was too convincing for them to doubt it. Yet, nevertheless, their hearts did not soften, nor their consciences smite them for the terrible deed they had committed in putting him to death. When the

power from Heaven came upon the apostles in so remarkable a manner, fear held them from violence, but their bitterness and malice were unchanged. Five thousand had already embraced the new doctrine taught by the apostles, and both Pharisees and Sadducees decided among themselves that if those teachers were suffered to go unchecked, their own influence would be in greater danger than when Jesus was upon earth. If one or two discourses from the disciples could accomplish such marvelous results, the world would soon believe on Christ if they were left free, and the influence of priests and potentates would be lost. {7Red 15.2}

The following day Annas and Caiaphas, with

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the other dignitaries of the temple, met together for the trial of the prisoners, who were then brought before them. In that very room, and before those very men, Peter had shamefully denied his Lord. All this came distinctly before the mind of the disciple, as he now appeared for his own trial. He had now an opportunity of redeeming his former wicked cowardice. {7Red 15.3}

The company present remembered the part Peter had acted at the trial of his Master, and they flattered themselves that he could be intimidated by the threat of imprisonment and death. But the Peter who denied Christ in the hour of his greatest need, was the impulsive, self-confident disciple, differing widely from the Peter who was before the Sanhedrim for examination that day. He had been converted; he was distrustful of self, and no longer a proud boaster. He was filled with the Holy Spirit, and through its power he had become firm as a rock, courageous, yet modest, in magnifying Christ. He was ready to remove the stain of his apostasy by honoring the name he had once disowned. {7Red 16.1}

Hitherto the priests had avoided having the crucifixion or resurrection of Jesus mentioned; but now, in fulfillment of their purpose, they were forced to inquire of the accused by what power they had accomplished the remarkable cure of the impotent man. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, addressed the priests and elders respectfully, and declared: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you

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builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." {7Red 16.2}

The seal of Christ was on the words of Peter, and his countenance was illuminated by the Holy Spirit. Close beside him, as a convincing witness, stood the man who had been so miraculously cured. The appearance of this man, who but a few hours before was a helpless cripple, now restored to soundness of body, and being enlightened concerning Jesus of Nazareth, added a weight of testimony to the words of Peter. Priests, rulers, and people were silent. The rulers had no power to refute his statement. They had been obliged to hear that which they most desired not to hear,--the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and his power in Heaven to perform miracles through the

medium of his apostles on earth. {7Red 17.1}

The crowning miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead had sealed the determination of the priests to rid the world of Jesus and his wonderful works, which were fast destroying their own influence with the people. But here was a convincing proof that the death of Jesus had not put a stop to the working of miracles in his name, nor to the promulgation of the doctrine he had taught. Already the news of the miracle, and the preaching of the apostles, had filled all Jerusalem with excitement. {7Red 17.2}

The defense of Peter, in which he boldly avowed from whence his strength was obtained, appalled them. He had referred to the stone set at naught by the builders which had become the head of the corner. These builders were the

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authorities of the Jewish church, who should have perceived the value of Him whom they rejected. In those words he directly referred to Christ, who was the foundation-stone of the church. {7Red 17.3}

The people were amazed at the boldness of the disciples. They supposed, because they were ignorant fishermen, they would be overcome with embarrassment when confronted by the priests, scribes, and elders. But they took knowledge that they had been with Jesus. The apostles spoke as he had spoken, with a convincing power that silenced their adversaries. In order to conceal their perplexity, the priests and rulers ordered the apostles to be taken away, that they might counsel among themselves. {7Red 18.1}

They all agreed that it would be useless to deny that the man had been healed through power given the apostles in the name of the crucified Jesus. They would gladly have covered up the miracle by falsehoods; but the work was done in the full light of day and before a crowd of people, and had already come to the knowledge of thousands. They felt that the work must be immediately stopped, or Jesus would gain many believers, their own disgrace would follow, and they would be held guilty of the murder of the Son of God. {7Red 18.2}

But notwithstanding their disposition to destroy the disciples, they dared not do worse than threaten them with the severest punishment if they continued to teach or work in the name of Jesus. Thereupon Peter and John boldly declared that their work had been given them of God, and they could not but speak the things which they had seen and heard. The priests would gladly have punished these noble men for

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their unswerving fidelity to their sacred calling, but they feared the people, "for all men glorified God for that which was done." So, with repeated threats and injunctions, the apostles were set at liberty. {7Red 18.3}

While Peter and John were prisoners, the other disciples, knowing the malignity of the Jews, had prayed for them unceasingly, fearing that the cruelty exercised upon Christ would be repeated upon their brethren. As soon as the apostles were released they sought their anxious brethren and reported to them the result of the examination. Great was the joy of the believers, and they again betook themselves to prayer, that greater strength might be imparted to them in the work of the ministry, which they saw would meet the same determined opposition which Christ encountered when upon

earth. The disciples had no desire to glorify themselves, but sought to exalt Jesus, and to rescue souls through his saving message. {7Red 19.1}

While their united prayers were ascending in faith to Heaven, the answer came. The place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. They went forth to their work, speaking the Word of God with convincing power, and there were daily large additions to the church. Great numbers had collected at Jerusalem to observe the sacred feast. The exciting scenes of the crucifixion and resurrection had called out a much larger number than usual. When the truth taught by the apostles was brought suddenly and with convincing power before them, thousands were converted in a day. {7Red 19.2}

These early believers were most of them

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immediately cut off from family and friends by the zealous bigotry of the Jews. Many of the converts were thrown out of business, and exiled from their homes because they followed the convictions of their consciences, and espoused the cause of Christ. It was necessary to provide this large number, congregated at Jerusalem, with homes and sustenance. Those having money and possessions cheerfully sacrificed them to the existing emergency. Their means were laid at the feet of the apostles, who made distribution to every man according as he had need; and there were none among them who lacked. {7Red 19.3}

One example of noble benevolence is particularly mentioned in the Scriptures: "And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, the son of consolation), a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet." This was the effect of the pouring out of the Spirit of God upon the believers. It made them of one heart and soul. They had one common interest,--the success of the mission intrusted to them. Their love for their brethren, and the cause which they had espoused, was far greater than their love for money and possessions. They acted out their faith, and by their works testified that they accounted the souls of men of far greater value than any earthly heritage. {7Red 20.1}

When selfish love of the world enters the heart, spirituality dies. The very best antidote for love of the world is the outpouring of the Spirit of God. When the love of Christ takes full possession of the heart, we shall strive to follow the example of Him who for our sakes became

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poor, that through his poverty we might be made rich. When it becomes apparent that the Spirit of truth weakens the affections of its disciples from the world, and renders them self-sacrificing and benevolent, in order to save their fellow-men, the advocates of the truth will have a powerful influence upon their hearers. {7Red 20.2}

As a contrast to the example which has been cited, another case has been recorded by the inspired pen which leaves a dark stain upon the first church: "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet." This couple had noted the fact that those who had parted with their

possessions to supply the wants of their poorer brethren were held in high esteem among the believers. They therefore, upon consulting together, decided to sell their property, and affect to give all the proceeds into the general fund, but really to retain a large share for themselves. They thus designed to receive their living, which they intended to estimate much higher than it really was, from the common stock, and to secure the high esteem of their brethren. {7Red 21.1}

But a holy God hates hypocrisy and falsehood. The apostles were impressed by a sense of the true state of the case, and when Ananias presented himself with his offering, representing it as the entire proceeds of the sale of his property, Peter said to him, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?

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Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias, hearing these words, fell down, and gave up the ghost; and great fear came on all them that heard these things." {7Red 21.2}

Peter asked, "Was it not thine own?" thus showing that no undue influence had been brought to bear upon Ananias and Sapphira to compel them to sacrifice their possessions to the general good. They had acted from choice. But in pretending to be wrought upon by the Holy Ghost, and attempting to deceive the apostles, they had lied to the Almighty. {7Red 22.1}

"And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost; and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things." {7Red 22.2}

This signal manifestation of the wrath of God upon the dissemblers was a check which Infinite Wisdom knew was needed. The church would have been disgraced; if, in the rapid increase of professed Christians, there were persons professing to serve God, but worshiping mammon. There are many Ananiases and Sapphiras in our day, whom Satan tempts to dissemble, because of their love of money. By various plans and

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excuses they withhold from the treasury of God the means intrusted to them for the advancement of the cause of God. Should the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira be visited upon this class, there would be many dead bodies in our churches requiring burial. {7Red 22.3}

This marked judgment upon two avaricious hypocrites, whose sin had been detected by the evidence of the Spirit of God to the apostles, excited the reverential awe of all the new converts. From that time there was greater caution manifested by them, and a more thorough self-examination, testing the motives of their actions. In any great religious movement there is always a class who are carried away by the current of

feeling, but who soon reveal selfishness and vain-glory. Such persons can never be an honor to the cause they advocate. {7Red 23.1}

The discernment of the apostles in detecting hidden sin added to the confidence of their brethren in them and the message which they preached. The apostles continued their work of mercy, in healing the afflicted and in proclaiming a crucified and risen Saviour, with great power. Numbers were continually added to the church by baptism, but none dared join them who were not united heart and mind with the believers in Christ. Multitudes flocked to Jerusalem, bringing their sick, and those who were vexed by unclean spirits. Many sufferers were laid in the streets as Peter and John passed by, that their shadows might fall upon and heal them. The power of the risen Saviour had indeed fallen upon the apostles, and they worked signs and miracles that daily increased the number of believers. {7Red 23.2}

These things greatly perplexed the priests and

rulers, especially those among them who were Sadducees. They saw that if the apostles were allowed to preach a resurrected Saviour, and to do miracles in his name, their doctrine that there was no resurrection of the dead would be rejected by all, and their sect would soon become extinct. The Pharisees saw that the tendency of their preaching would be to undermine the Jewish ceremonies, and make the sacrificial offerings of none effect. Their former efforts to suppress these preachers had been in vain; but they now felt determined to put down the excitement. {7Red 23.3}

The apostles were accordingly arrested and imprisoned, and the Sanhedrim was called to try their case. A large number of learned men, in addition to the council, were summoned, and they counseled together what should be done with these disturbers of the peace. "But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught." {7Red 24.1}

When the apostles appeared among the believers, and recounted how the angel had led them directly through the band of soldiers guarding the prisons, and bade them resume the work which had been interrupted by the priests and rulers, the brethren were filled with joy and amazement. {7Red 24.2}

The priests and rulers in council had decided to fix upon them the charge of insurrection, and accuse them of murdering Ananias and Sapphira, and of conspiring to deprive the priests of their authority and put them to death. They trusted

that the mob would then be excited to take the matter in hand, and to deal by the apostles as they had dealt by Jesus. They were aware that many who did not accept the doctrine of Christ were weary of the arbitrary rule of the Jewish authorities, and were anxious for some decided change. If these persons became interested in and embraced the belief of the apostles, acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah, they feared the anger of the entire people would be raised against the priests, who would be made to answer for the murder of Christ. They decided to take strong measures to prevent this. They finally sent for the supposed prisoners to be brought before them. Great was

their amazement when the report was brought back that the prison doors were found securely bolted, and the guard stationed before them, but that the prisoners were nowhere to be found. {7Red 24.3}

Soon the report was brought: "Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people." Although the apostles were miraculously delivered from prison, they were not saved from examination and punishment. Christ has said when he was with them, "Take heed to yourselves, for they shall deliver you up to councils." God had given them a token of his care, and an assurance of his presence, by sending the angel to them; it was now their part to suffer for the sake of that Jesus whom they preached. The people were so wrought upon by what they had seen and heard that the priests and rulers knew it would be impossible to excite them against the apostles. {7Red 25.1}

"Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence; for they feared

the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council; and the high priest asked them, saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." They were not as willing to bear the blame of slaying Jesus as when they swelled the cry with the debased mob: "His blood be on us and on our children!" {7Red 25.2}

Peter, with the other apostles, took up the same line of defense he had followed at his former trial: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." It was the angel sent by God who delivered them from prison, and who commanded them to teach in the temple. In following his directions they were obeying the divine command, which they must continue to do at any cost to themselves. Peter continued: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." {7Red 26.1}

The spirit of inspiration was upon the apostles, and the accused became the accusers, charging the murder of Christ upon the priests and rulers who composed the council. The Jews were so enraged at this that they decided, without any further trial, and without authority from the Roman officers, to take the law into their own hands, and put the prisoners to death. Already guilty

of the blood of Christ, they were now eager to imbrue their hands in the blood of his apostles. But there was one man of learning and high position whose clear intellect saw that this violent step would lead to terrible consequences. God raised up a man of their own council to stay the violence of the priests and rulers. {7Red 26.2}

Gamaliel, the learned Pharisee and doctor, a man of great reputation, was a person of extreme caution, who, before speaking in behalf of the prisoners, requested them to be removed. He then spoke with great deliberation and calmness: "Ye men of Israel,

take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him; he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." {7Red 27.1}

The priests could not but see the reasonableness of his views; they were obliged to agree with him, and very reluctantly released the prisoners, after beating them with rods, and charging them again and again to preach no more in the name of Jesus, or their lives would pay the penalty of their boldness. "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that

they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." {7Red 27.2}

The Seven Deacons.

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." These Grecians were residents of other countries, where the Greek language was spoken. By far the larger number of converts were Jews who spoke Hebrew; but these had lived in the Roman Empire, and spoke only Greek. Murmurings began to rise among them that the Grecian widows were not so liberally supplied as the needy among the Hebrews. Any partiality of this kind would have been grievous to God; and prompt measures were taken to restore peace and harmony to the believers. {7Red 28.1}

The Holy Spirit suggested a method whereby the apostles might be relieved from the task of apportioning to the poor, and similar burdens, so that they could be left free to preach Christ. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." {7Red 28.2}

The church accordingly selected seven men full

of faith and the wisdom of the Spirit of God, to attend to the business pertaining to the cause. Stephen was chosen first; he was a Jew by birth and religion, but spoke the Greek language, and was conversant with the customs and manners of the Greeks. He was therefore considered the most proper person to stand at the head, and have supervision of the disbursement of the funds appropriated to the widows, orphans, and the worthy poor. This selection met the minds of all, and the dissatisfaction and

murmuring were quieted. {7Red 28.3}

The seven chosen men were solemnly set apart for their duties by prayer and the laying on of hands. Those who were thus ordained, were not thereby excluded from teaching the faith. On the contrary, it is recorded that "Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." They were fully qualified to instruct in the truth. They were also men of calm judgment and discretion, well calculated to deal with difficult cases of trial, of murmuring or jealousy. {7Red 29.1}

This choosing of men to transact the business of the church, so that the apostles could be left free for their special work of teaching the truth, was greatly blessed of God. The church advanced in numbers and strength. "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." {7Red 29.2}

It is necessary that the same order and system should be maintained in the church now as in the days of the apostles. The prosperity of the cause depends very largely upon its various

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departments being conducted by men of ability, who are qualified for their positions. Those who are chosen of God to be leaders in the cause of truth, having the general oversight of the spiritual interest of the church, should be relieved, as far as possible, from cares and perplexities of a temporal nature. Those whom God has called to minister in word and doctrine should have time for meditation, prayer, and study of the Scriptures. Their clear spiritual discernment is dimmed by entering into the lesser details of business, and dealing with the various temperaments of those who meet together in church capacity. It is proper for all matters of a temporal nature to come before the proper officers, and be by them adjusted. But if they are of so difficult a character as to baffle their wisdom, they should be carried into the council of those who have the oversight of the entire church. {7Red 29.3}

Stephen was very active in the cause of God, and declared his faith boldly. "Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." These students of the great Rabbis had felt confident that in a public discussion they could obtain a complete victory over Stephen, because of his supposed ignorance. But he not only spoke with the power of the Holy Ghost, but it was plain to all the vast assembly that he was also a student of the prophecies, and learned in all matters of the law. He ably defended the truths he advocated, and utterly defeated his opponents.

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{7Red 30.1}

The priests and rulers who witnessed the wonderful manifestation of the power that attended the ministration of Stephen, were filled with bitter hatred. Instead of yielding to the weight of evidence he presented, they determined to silence his voice by putting him to death. They had on several occasions bribed the Roman authorities to pass over without comment instances where the Jews had taken the law into their own hands, and tried, condemned, and executed prisoners according to their national custom. The

enemies of Stephen did not doubt that they could pursue such a course without danger to themselves. They determined to risk the consequences at all events, and therefore seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrim council for trial. {7Red 31.1}

Learned Jews from the surrounding countries were summoned for the purpose of refuting the arguments of the accused. Saul, who had distinguished himself as a zealous opponent of the doctrine of Christ, and a persecutor of all who believed on him, was also present. This learned man took a leading part against Stephen. He brought the weight of eloquence and the logic of the Rabbis to bear upon the case, to convince the people that Stephen was preaching delusive and dangerous doctrines. {7Red 31.2}

But Saul met in Stephen one as highly educated as himself, and one who had a full understanding of the purpose of God in the spreading of the gospel to other nations. He believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and was fully established in regard to the privileges of the Jews; but his faith was broad, and he knew the time had come when the true believers should

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worship not alone in temples made with hands; but, throughout the world, they might worship God in Spirit and in truth. The vail had dropped from the eyes of Stephen, and he discerned to the end of that which was abolished by the death of Christ. {7Red 31.3}

The priests and rulers prevailed nothing against his clear, calm wisdom, though they were vehement in their opposition. They determined to make an example of Stephen, and, while they thus satisfied their revengeful hatred, prevent others, through fear, from adopting his belief. Charges were preferred against him in a most imposing manner. False witnesses were hired to testify that they had heard him speak blasphemous words against the temple and the law. Said they, "For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us." {7Red 32.1}

As Stephen stood face to face with his judges, to answer to the crime of blasphemy, a holy radiance shone upon his countenance. "And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Those who exalted Moses might have seen in the face of the prisoner the same holy light which radiated the face of that ancient prophet. The shekinah was a spectacle which they would never again witness in the temple whose glory had departed forever. Many who beheld the lighted countenance of Stephen trembled and veiled their faces; but stubborn unbelief and prejudice never faltered. {7Red 32.2}

Stephen was questioned as to the truth of the charges against him, and took up his defense in a

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clear, thrilling voice that rang through the council hall. He proceeded to rehearse the history of the chosen people of God, in words that held the assembly spell-bound. He showed a thorough knowledge of the Jewish economy, and the spiritual interpretation of it now made manifest through Christ. He began with Abraham, and traced down through history from generation to generation, going through all the national records of Israel to Solomon, and taking up the most impressive points to vindicate his cause. {7Red 32.3}

He showed that God commended the faith of Abraham, which claimed the land of promise, though he owned no foot of land. He dwelt especially upon Moses, who received the law by the dispensation of angels. He repeated the words of Moses which foretold of Christ: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear." He presented distinctly before them that the sin of Israel was in not heeding the voice of the angel, who was Christ himself. Said he, "This is He that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers, who received the lively oracles to give unto us." {7Red 33.1}

He made plain his own loyalty to God and to the Jewish faith, while he showed that the law in which they trusted for salvation had not been able to preserve Israel from idolatry. He connected Jesus Christ with all the Jewish history. He referred to the building of the temple by Solomon, and to the words of both Solomon and Isaiah: "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool. What house

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will ye build me? saith the Lord; or what is the place of my rest. Hath not my hand made all these things?" The place of God's highest worship was in Heaven. {7Red 33.2}

When Stephen had reached this point there was a tumult among the people. The prisoner read his fate in the countenances before him. He perceived the resistance that met his words, which were spoken at the dictation of the Holy Ghost. He knew that he was giving his last testimony. Few who read this address of Stephen properly appreciate it. The occasion, the time and place should be borne in mind to make his words convey their full significance. {7Red 34.1}

When he connected Jesus Christ with the prophecies, and spoke of the temple as he did, the priest, affecting to be horror-stricken, rent his robe. This act was to Stephen a signal that his voice would soon be silenced forever. Although he was just in the midst of his sermon, he abruptly concluded it by suddenly breaking away from the chain of history, and, turning upon his infuriated judges, said, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers; who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." {7Red 34.2}

At this the priests and rulers were beside themselves with anger. They were more like wild beasts of prey than like human beings. They rushed upon Stephen, gnashing their teeth. But he was not intimidated; he had expected this.

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His face was calm, and shone with an angelic light. The infuriated priests and the excited mob had no terrors for him. "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." {7Red 34.3}

The scene about him faded from his vision; the gates of Heaven were ajar, and

Stephen, looking in, saw the glory of the courts of God, and Christ, as if just risen from his throne, standing ready to sustain his servant, who was about to suffer martyrdom for his name. When Stephen proclaimed the glorious scene opened before him, it was more than his persecutors could endure. They stopped their ears, that they might not hear his words, and uttering loud cries ran furiously upon him with one accord. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep." {7Red 35.1}

Amid the agonies of this most cruel death, the faithful martyr, like his divine Master, prayed for his murderers. The witnesses who had accused Stephen were required to cast the first stones. These persons laid down their clothes at the feet of Saul, who had taken an active part in the disputation, and had consented to the prisoner's death. {7Red 35.2}

The martyrdom of Stephen made a deep impression upon all who witnessed it. It was a sore trial to the church, but resulted in the conversion of Saul. The faith, constancy, and glorification of the martyr could not be effaced from

his memory. The signet of God upon his face, his words, that reached to the very soul of all who heard them, except those who were hardened by resisting the light, remained in the memory of the beholders, and testified to the truth of that which he had proclaimed. {7Red 35.3}

There had been no legal sentence passed upon Stephen; but the Roman authorities were bribed by large sums of money to make no investigation of the case. Saul seemed to be imbued with a frenzied zeal at the scene of Stephen's trial and death. He seemed to be angered at his own secret convictions that Stephen was honored of God, at the very period when he was dishonored of men. He continued to persecute the church of God, hunting them down, seizing them in their houses, and delivering them up to the priests and rulers for imprisonment and death. His zeal in carrying forward the persecution was a terror to the Christians in Jerusalem. The Roman authorities made no special effort to stay the cruel work, and secretly aided the Jews, in order to conciliate them, and to secure their favor. {7Red 36.1}

After the death of Stephen the disciples were restrained in their active ministry, and many of the believers who had temporarily resided in Jerusalem now retired to their distant homes because of the violent persecution against them. But the apostles dared not leave Jerusalem till the Spirit of God indicated it to be their duty to do so; for Christ had bidden them to first work in that field. Although the priests and rulers bitterly persecuted the new converts, they did not venture for a time to arrest the apostles, being overawed by the dying testimony of Stephen, and realizing that their course with him had injured

their own cause in the minds of the people. {7Red 36.2}

Christ had commanded his disciples to go and teach all nations; but the previous teachings which they had received from the Jews made it difficult for them to fully comprehend the words of their Master, and therefore they were slow to act upon them.

They called themselves the children of Abraham, and regarded themselves as the heirs of divine promise. It was not until several years after the Lord's ascension that their minds were sufficiently expanded to clearly understand the intent of Christ's words, that they were to labor for the conversion of the Gentiles as well as that of the Jews. {7Red 37.1}

Conversion of Saul.

The mind of Saul was greatly stirred by the triumphant death of Stephen. He was shaken in his prejudice; but the opinions and arguments of the priests and rulers finally convinced him that Stephen was a blasphemer; that Jesus Christ whom he preached was an impostor, and that those ministering in holy offices must be right. Being a man of decided mind, and strong purpose, he became very bitter in his opposition to Christianity, after having once entirely settled in his mind that the views of the priests and scribes were right. His zeal led him to voluntarily engage in persecuting the believers. He caused holy men to be dragged before the councils, and to be imprisoned or condemned to death without evidence of any offense, save their faith in Jesus. Of a similar character, though in a different direction, was the zeal of James and John, when they would have called

down fire from heaven to consume those who slighted and scorned their Master. {7Red 37.2}

Saul was about to journey to Damascus upon his own business; but he was determined to accomplish a double purpose, by searching out, as he went, all the believers in Christ. For this purpose he obtained letters from the high priest to read in the synagogues, which authorized him to seize all those who were suspected of being believers in Jesus, and to send them by messengers to Jerusalem, there to be tried and punished. He set out upon his way, full of the strength and vigor of manhood, and the fire of a mistaken zeal. {7Red 38.1}

As the weary travelers neared Damascus, the eyes of Saul rested with pleasure upon the fertile land, the beautiful gardens, the fruitful orchards, and the cool streams that ran murmuring amid the fresh green shrubbery. It was very refreshing to look upon such a scene after a long, wearisome journey over a desolate waste. While Saul, with his companions, was gazing and admiring, suddenly a light above the brightness of the sun shone round about him, "and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." {7Red 38.2}

The scene was one of the greatest confusion. The companions of Saul were stricken with terror, and almost blinded by the intensity of the light. They heard the voice, but saw no one, and to them all was unintelligible and mysterious. But Saul, lying prostrate upon the ground, understood the words that were spoken, and saw

clearly before him the Son of God. One look upon that glorious Being, imprinted his

image forever upon the soul of the stricken Jew. The words struck home to his heart with appalling force. A flood of light poured in upon the darkened chambers of his mind, revealing his ignorance and error. He saw that, while imagining himself to be zealously serving God in persecuting the followers of Christ, he had in reality been doing the work of Satan. {7Red 38.3}

He saw his folly in resting his faith upon the assurances of the priests and rulers, whose sacred office had given them great influence over his mind, and caused him to believe that the story of the resurrection was an artful fabrication of the disciples of Jesus. Now that Christ was revealed to Saul, the sermon of Stephen was brought forcibly to his mind. Those words which the priests had pronounced blasphemy, now appeared to him as truth and verity. In that time of wonderful illumination, his mind acted with remarkable rapidity. He traced down through prophetic history, and saw that the rejection of Jesus by the Jews, his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension had been foretold by the prophets, and proved him to be the promised Messiah. He remembered the words of Stephen: "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God;" and he knew that the dying saint had looked upon the kingdom of glory. {7Red 39.1}

What a revelation was all this to the persecutor of the believers. Clear, but terrible light had broken in upon his soul. Christ was revealed to him as having come to earth in fulfillment of his mission, having been rejected,

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condemned, and crucified by those whom he came to save, and as having risen from the dead, and ascended into the heavens. In that terrible moment he remembered that the holy Stephen had been sacrificed by his consent; and that through his instrumentality many worthy saints had met their death by cruel persecution. {7Red 39.2}

"And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." No doubt entered the mind of Saul that this was the veritable Jesus of Nazareth who spoke to him, and that he was indeed the long-looked-for Messiah, the Consolation and Redeemer of Israel. And now this Jesus, who had, while teaching upon earth, spoken in parables to his hearers, using familiar objects to illustrate his meaning, likened the work of Saul, in persecuting the followers of Christ, to kicking against the pricks. Those forcible words illustrated the fact that it would be impossible for any man to stay the onward progress of the truth of Christ. It would march on to triumph and victory, while every effort to stay it would result in injury to the opposer. The persecutor, in the end, would suffer a thousand-fold more than those whom he had persecuted. Sooner or later his own mind and heart would condemn him; he would find that he had indeed been kicking against the pricks. {7Red 40.1}

The Saviour had spoken to Saul through Stephen, whose clear reasoning from the Scriptures could not be controverted. The learned Jew had seen the face of the martyr reflecting the light of Christ's glory, and looking like the face of an angel. He had witnessed his forbearance

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toward his enemies, and his forgiveness of them. He had further witnessed the fortitude

and cheerful resignation of other believers in Jesus while tormented and afflicted, some of whom had yielded up their lives with rejoicing for their faith's sake. {7Red 40.2}

All this testimony had appealed loudly to Saul, and thrust conviction upon his mind; but his education and prejudices, his respect for priests and rulers, and his pride of popularity, braced him to rebel against the voice of conscience, and the grace of God. He had struggled entire nights against conviction, and had always ended the matter by avowing his belief that Jesus was not the Messiah, that he was an impostor, and his followers were deluded fanatics. {7Red 41.1}

Now Christ had spoken to Saul with his own voice: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And the question, "Who art thou, Lord?" was answered by the same voice, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." Here Christ identifies himself with his suffering people, Saul, in persecuting the followers of Jesus, had struck directly against the Lord of Heaven. Jesus declares that in afflicting his brethren upon earth, Saul had struck against their Head and Representative in Heaven. In falsely accusing and testifying against them, he had falsely accused and testified against the Saviour of the world. Here it is plainly seen that Christ suffers in the person of his saints. {7Red 41.2}

When the effulgent glory was withdrawn, and Saul arose from the earth, he found himself totally deprived of sight. The brightness of Christ's glory had been too intense for his mortal

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sight, and when it was removed the blackness of night settled upon his vision. He believed that this blindness was the punishment of God for his cruel persecution of the followers of Jesus. He groped about in terrible darkness, and his companions, in fear and amazement, led him by the hand into Damascus. {7Red 41.3}

How different from what he had anticipated was his entrance into that city! In proud satisfaction he had neared Damascus, expecting on his arrival to be greeted with ostentation and applause because of the honor conferred upon him by the high priest, and the great zeal and penetration he had manifested in searching out the believers, to carry them as captives to Jerusalem, there to be condemned, and punished without mercy. He had determined that his journey should be crowned with success; and his courageous and persevering spirit quailed at no difficulties nor dangers in the pursuance of his object. He had determined that no Christian should escape his vigilance; he would inquire of men, women, and children concerning their faith, and that of those with whom they were connected; he would enter houses, with power to seize their inmates, and to send them as prisoners to Jerusalem. {7Red 42.1}

But how changed was the scene from that which he had anticipated! Instead of wielding power, and receiving honor, he was himself virtually a prisoner, being deprived of sight, and dependent upon the guidance of his companions. Helpless, and tortured by remorse, he felt himself to be under sentence of death, and knew not what farther disposition the Lord would make of him.

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{7Red 42.2}

He was taken to the house of the disciple Judas, and there he remained, solitary and alone, studying upon the strange revelation that had broken up all his plans, and

changed the entire current of his life. He passed three days in perfect blindness, occupying that terrible time with reflection, repentance, and earnest prayer, neither eating nor drinking during the entire period. With bitterness he remembered Stephen, and the evidence he had given of being sustained in his martyrdom, by a power higher than that of earth. He thought with horror of his own guilt in being carried away by the malice and prejudice of the priests and rulers, closing his eyes and ears against the most striking evidence, and relentlessly leading the van in the persecution of the believers in Christ. {7Red 43.1}

He was in lonely seclusion; he had no communication with the church, for they had been warned of the purpose of his journey to Damascus by the believers in Jerusalem; and they believed that he was acting a part, the better to carry out his design of persecuting them. He had no desire to appeal to the unconverted Jews; for he knew they would not listen to or heed his statements. He seemed to be utterly shut out from human sympathy; and he reflected, and prayed with a thoroughly broken and repentant spirit. {7Red 43.2}

Those three days were like three years to the blind and conscience-smitten Jew. He was no novice in the Scriptures, and in his darkness and solitude he recalled the passages which referred to the Messiah, and traced down the prophecies, with a memory sharpened by the conviction

that had taken possession of his mind. He became astonished at his former blindness of understanding, and at the blindness of the Jews in general, in rejecting Jesus as the promised Messiah. All now seemed plain to him, and he knew that it was prejudice and unbelief which had clouded his perceptions, and prevented him from discerning in Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of prophecy. {7Red 43.3}

This wonderful conversion of Saul demonstrates in a startling manner the miraculous power of Christ in convicting the mind and heart of man. Saul had verily believed that to have faith in Jesus was virtually to repudiate the law of God, and the service of sacrificial offerings. He had believed that Jesus had himself disregarded the law, and had taught his disciples that it was now of no effect. He believed it to be his duty to strive with his utmost power to exterminate the alarming doctrine that Jesus was the Prince of life; and with conscientious zeal he had become a persevering persecutor of the church of Christ. {7Red 44.1}

But Jesus, whose name of all others he most hated and despised, had revealed himself to Saul, for the purpose of arresting him in his mad career, and of making, from this most unpromising subject, an instrument by which to bear the gospel to the Gentiles. Saul was overwhelmed by this revelation, and perceived that in opposing Jesus of Nazareth, he had arrayed himself against the Redeemer of the world. Overcome by a sense of his guilt he cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Jesus did not then and there inform him of the work he had assigned him,

but sent him for instruction to the very disciples whom he had so bitterly persecuted. {7Red 44.2}

The marvelous light that illuminated the darkness of Saul was the work of the Lord;

but there was also a work that was to be done for him by the disciples of Christ. The answer to Saul's question is, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Jesus sends the inquiring Jew to his church, to obtain from them the knowledge of his duty. Christ performed the work of revelation and conviction; and now the penitent was in a condition to learn of those whom God had ordained to teach his truth. Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of his organized church, and placed Saul in connection with his representatives on earth. The light of heavenly illumination deprived Saul of sight; but Jesus, the great Healer, did not at once restore it. All blessings flow from Christ, but he had now established a church as his representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life. The very men whom Saul had purposed to destroy were to be his instructors in the religion which he had despised and persecuted. {7Red 45.1}

The faith of Saul was severely tested during his three days of fasting and prayer at the house of Judas, in Damascus. He was totally blind, and in utter darkness of mind as to what was required of him. He had been directed to go to Damascus, where it would be told him what he was to do. In his uncertainty and distress he cried earnestly to God. "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And

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he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus; for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight." {7Red 45.2}

Ananias could hardly credit the words of the angel messenger, for Saul's bitter persecution of the saints at Jerusalem had spread far and near. He presumed to expostulate, and said, "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem. And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name." But the command to Ananias was imperative: "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." {7Red 46.1}

The disciple, obedient to the direction of the angel, sought out the man who had but recently breathed out threatenings against all who believed on the name of Jesus. He addressed him: "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost; and immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized." {7Red 46.2}

Christ here gives an example of his manner of working for the salvation of men. He might have done all this work directly for Saul; but this was not in accordance with his plan. His

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blessings were to come through the agencies which he had ordained. Saul had something to do in the line of confession to those whose destruction he had meditated; and God had a responsible work for the men to do whom he had authorized to act in his stead. {7Red 46.3}

Saul becomes a learner of the disciples. In the light of the law he sees himself a sinner. He sees that Jesus, whom in his ignorance he had considered an impostor, is the author and foundation of the religion of God's people from the days of Adam, and the finisher of the faith now so clear to his enlightened vision, the vindicator of the truth, and the fulfiller of the prophecies. He had regarded Jesus as making of none effect the law of God; but when his spiritual vision was touched by the finger of God, he learned that Christ was the originator of the entire Jewish system of sacrifices; that he came into the world for the express purpose of vindicating his Father's law; and that in his death the typical law had met its antitype. By the light of the moral law, which he had believed himself to be zealously keeping, Saul saw himself a sinner of sinners. He repented, that is died to sin, became obedient to the law of God, had faith in Jesus Christ as his Saviour, was baptized, and preached Jesus as earnestly and zealously as he had once denounced him. {7Red 47.1}

The Redeemer of the world does not sanction experience and exercise in religious matters independent of his organized and acknowledged church. Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of his recognized followers

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on earth. But in the history of the conversion of Saul, important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. Saul was brought directly into the presence of Christ. He was one whom Christ intended for a most important work, one who was to be "a chosen vessel" unto him; yet he does not personally impart to him the lessons of truth. He arrests his course and convicts him; but when asked by him, "What wilt thou have me to do?" the Saviour places him in connection with his church, and lets them direct him what to do. {7Red 47.2}

Jesus is the Friend of sinners; his heart is touched by their woe; he has all power, both in Heaven and upon earth; but he respects the means which he has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; he directs sinners to the church, which he has made a channel of light to the world. {7Red 48.1}

Saul was a learned teacher in Israel; but, while in the midst of his blind error and prejudice, Christ reveals himself to him, and then places him in communication with his church, which is the light of the world. In this case Ananias represents Christ, and also represents Christ's ministers upon earth, who are appointed to act in his stead. In Christ's stead, Ananias touches the eyes of Saul that they may receive sight. In Christ's stead, he places his hands upon him, and, praying in Christ's name, Saul receives the Holy Ghost. All is done in the name and by the authority of Christ; but the church is the channel of communication.

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{7Red 48.2}

Paul Commences His Ministry.

Paul was baptized by Ananias in the river of Damascus. He was then strengthened by food, and immediately began to preach Jesus to the believers in the city, the very

ones whom he had set out from Jerusalem with the purpose of destroying. He also taught in the synagogues that Jesus who had been put to death was indeed the Son of God. His arguments from prophecy were so conclusive, and his efforts were so attended by the power of God, that the opposing Jews were confounded and unable to answer him. Paul's Rabbinical and Pharisaic education was now to be used to good account in preaching the gospel, and in sustaining the cause he had once used every effort to destroy. {7Red 49.1}

The Jews were thoroughly surprised and confounded by the conversion of Paul. They were aware of his position at Jerusalem, and knew what was his principal errand to Damascus, and that he was armed with a commission from the high priest that authorized him to take the believers in Jesus, and to send them as prisoners to Jerusalem; yet now they beheld him preaching the gospel of Jesus, strengthening those who were already its disciples, and continually making new converts to the faith he had once so zealously opposed. Paul demonstrated to all who heard him that his change of faith was not from impulse nor fanaticism, but was brought about by overwhelming evidence. {7Red 49.2}

As he labored in the synagogues his faith grew stronger; his zeal in maintaining that Jesus was

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the Son of God increased in the face of the fierce opposition of the Jews. He could not remain long in Damascus, for after the Jews had recovered from their surprise at his wonderful conversion, and subsequent labors, they turned resolutely from the overwhelming evidence thus brought to bear in favor of the doctrine of Christ. Their astonishment at the conversion of Paul was changed into an intense hatred of him like unto that which they had manifested against Jesus. {7Red 49.3}

Paul's life was in peril, and he received a commission from God to leave Damascus for a time. He went into Arabia, and there, in comparative solitude, he had ample opportunity for communion with God, and for contemplation. He wished to be alone with God, to search his own heart, to deepen his repentance, and to prepare himself by prayer and study to engage in a work which appeared to him too great and too important for him to undertake. He was an apostle, not chosen of men, but chosen of God, and his work was plainly stated to be among the Gentiles. {7Red 50.1}

While in Arabia he did not communicate with the apostles; he sought God earnestly with all his heart, determining not to rest till he knew for a certainty that his repentance was accepted, and his great sin pardoned. He would not give up the conflict until he had the assurance that Jesus would be with him in his coming ministry. He was ever to carry about with him in the body the marks of Christ's glory, in his eyes, which had been blinded by the heavenly light, and he desired also to bear with him constantly

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the assurance of Christ's sustaining grace. Paul came in close connection with Heaven, and Jesus communed with him, and established him in his faith, bestowing upon him his wisdom and grace. {7Red 50.2}

Paul now returned to Damascus, and preached boldly in the name of Jesus. The Jews could not withstand the wisdom of his arguments, and they therefore counseled

together to silence his voice by force--the only argument left to a sinking cause. They decided to assassinate him. The apostle was made acquainted with their purpose. The gates of the city were vigilantly guarded, day and night, to cut off his escape. The anxiety of the disciples drew them to God in prayer; there was little sleeping among them, as they were busy in devising ways and means for the escape of the chosen apostle. Finally they conceived a plan by which he was let down from a window, and lowered over the wall in a basket at night. In this humiliating manner Paul made his escape from Damascus. {7Red 51.1}

He now proceeded to Jerusalem, wishing to become acquainted with the apostles there, and especially with Peter. He was very anxious to meet the Galilean fishermen who had lived, and prayed, and conversed with Christ upon earth. It was with a yearning heart that he desired to meet the chief of apostles. As Paul entered Jerusalem, he regarded with changed views the city and the temple. He now knew that the retributive judgment of God was hanging over them. {7Red 51.2}

The grief and anger of the Jews because of the conversion of Paul knew no bounds. But he was

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firm as a rock, and flattered himself that when he related his wonderful experience to his friends, they would change their faith as he had done, and believe on Jesus. He had been strictly conscientious in his opposition to Christ and his followers, therefore when arrested and convicted of his sin, he immediately forsook his evil ways, and professed the faith of Jesus. He now fully believed that when his friends and former associates heard the circumstances of his marvelous conversion, and saw how changed he was from the proud Pharisee who persecuted and delivered unto death those who believed in Jesus as the Son of God, they would also become convicted of their error, and join the ranks of the believers. {7Red 51.3}

He attempted to join himself to his brethren, the disciples; but great was his grief and disappointment when he found that they would not receive him as one of their number. They remembered his former persecutions, and suspected him of acting a part to deceive and destroy them. True, they had heard of his wonderful conversion, but as he had immediately retired into Arabia, and they had heard nothing definite of him farther, they had not credited the rumor of his great change. {7Red 52.1}

Barnabas, who had liberally contributed his money to sustain the cause of Christ, and to relieve the necessities of the poor, had been acquainted with Paul when he opposed the believers. He now came forward and renewed that acquaintance, heard the testimony of Paul in regard to his miraculous conversion, and his experience from that time. He fully believed and

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received Paul, took him by the hand and led him into the presence of the apostles. He related his experience which he had just heard-- that Jesus had personally appeared to Paul while on his way to Damascus; that he had talked with him; that Paul had recovered his sight in answer to the prayers of Ananias, and had afterward maintained that Jesus was the Son of God in the synagogues of the city. {7Red 52.2}

The apostles no longer hesitated; they could not withstand God. Peter and James,

who at that time were the only apostles in Jerusalem, gave the right hand of fellowship to the once fierce persecutor of their faith; and he was now as much beloved and respected as he had formerly been feared and avoided. Here the two grand characters of the new faith met--Peter, one of the chosen companions of Christ while he was upon earth, and Paul, a Pharisee, who, since the ascension of Jesus, had met him face to face, and had talked with him, and had also seen him in vision, and the nature of his work in Heaven. {7Red 53.1}

This first interview was of great consequence to both these apostles, but it was of short duration, for Paul was eager to get about his Master's business. Soon the voice which had so earnestly disputed with Stephen was heard in the same synagogue fearlessly proclaiming that Jesus was the Son of God--advocating the same cause that Stephen had died to vindicate. He related his own wonderful experience, and with a heart filled with yearning for his brethren and former associates, presented the evidences from prophecy, as Stephen had done, that Jesus, who had been crucified, was the Son of God.

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{7Red 53.2}

But Paul had miscalculated the spirit of his Jewish brethren. The same fury that had burst forth upon Stephen was visited upon himself. He saw that he must separate from his brethren, and sorrow filled his heart. He would willingly have yielded up his life, if by that means they might have been brought to a knowledge of the truth. The Jews began to lay plans to take his life, and the disciples urged him to leave Jerusalem; but he lingered, unwilling to leave the place, and anxious to labor a little longer for his Jewish brethren. He had taken so active a part in the martyrdom of Stephen that he was deeply anxious to wipe out the stain by boldly vindicating the truth which had cost Stephen his life. It looked to him like cowardice to flee from Jerusalem. {7Red 54.1}

While Paul, braving all the consequences of such a step, was praying earnestly to God in the temple, the Saviour appeared to him in vision, saying, "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." Paul even then hesitated to leave Jerusalem without convincing the obstinate Jews of the truth of his faith; he thought that, even if his life should be sacrificed for the truth, it would not more than settle the fearful account which he held against himself for the death of Stephen. He answered, "Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee. And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." But the reply was more decided than before: "Depart;

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for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." {7Red 54.2}

When the brethren learned of the vision of Paul, and the care which God had over him, their anxiety on his behalf was increased; for they realized that he was indeed a chosen vessel of the Lord, to bear the truth to the Gentiles. They hastened his secret escape from Jerusalem, for fear of his assassination by the Jews. The departure of Paul suspended for a time the violent opposition of the Jews, and the church had a period of rest, in which many were added to the number of believers. {7Red 55.1}

The Ministry of Peter.

Peter, in pursuance of his work, visited the saints at Lydda. There he healed Aeneas, who had been confined to his bed for eight years with the palsy. "And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole; arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord." {7Red 55.2}

Joppa was near Lydda, and at that time Tabitha--called Dorcas by interpretation--lay there dead. She had been a worthy disciple of Jesus Christ, and her life had been characterized by deeds of charity and kindness to the poor and sorrowful, and by zeal in the cause of truth. Her death was a great loss; the infant church could not well spare her noble efforts. When the believers heard of the marvelous cures which Peter had performed in Lydda, they greatly desired him to come to Joppa. Messengers were sent to him to solicit his presence there.

{7Red 55.3}

"Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber; and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them." Peter had the weeping and wailing friends sent from the room. He then kneeled down, and prayed fervently to God to restore life and health to the pulseless body of Dorcas; "and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive." This great work of raising the dead to life was the means of converting many in Joppa to the faith of Jesus. {7Red 56.1}

"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." Though Cornelius was a Roman, he had become acquainted with the true God, and had renounced idolatry. He was obedient to the will of God, and worshiped him with a true heart. He had not connected himself with the Jews, but was acquainted with, and obedient to, the moral law. He had not been circumcised, nor did he take part in the sacrificial offerings; he was therefore accounted by the Jews as unclean. He, however, sustained the Jewish cause by liberal donations, and was known far and near for his deeds of charity and benevolence. His righteous life made him of good repute, among both Jews and Gentiles.

{7Red 56.2}

Cornelius had not an understanding faith in Christ, although he believed the prophecies, and was looking for Messiah to come. Through his love and obedience to God, he was brought nigh unto him, and was prepared to receive the Saviour when he should be revealed to him. Condemnation comes by rejecting the light given. The centurion was a man of noble family, and held a position of high trust and honor; but

these circumstances had not tended to subvert the noble attributes of his character. True goodness and greatness united to make him a man of moral worth. His influence was beneficial to all with whom he was brought in contact. {7Red 57.1}

He believed in the one God, the Creator of Heaven and earth. He revered him, acknowledged his authority, and sought counsel of him in all the business of his life. He was faithful in his home duties as well as in his official responsibilities, and had erected the altar of God in his family. He dared not venture to carry out his plans, and bear the burden of his weighty responsibilities, without the help of God; therefore he prayed much and earnestly for that help. Faith marked all his works, and God regarded him for the purity of his actions, and his liberalities, and came near to him in word and Spirit. {7Red 57.2}

While Cornelius was praying, God sent a celestial messenger to him, and "he saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius." He was afraid, yet knew that the angel was sent of God to instruct him, and said, "What is it, Lord? And he said

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unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter. He lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side. He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." {7Red 57.3}

Here again God showed his regard for the gospel ministry, and for his organized church. His angel was not the one to tell the story of the cross to Cornelius. A man, subject as himself to human frailties and temptations, was to instruct him concerning the crucified, risen, and ascended Saviour. The heavenly messenger was sent for the express purpose of putting Cornelius in connection with the minister of God, who would teach him how he and his house could be saved. {7Red 58.1}

Cornelius was gladly obedient to the message. "And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; and when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa." The explicitness of these directions, in which was even named the occupation of the man with whom Peter was then making his home, evidences that Heaven is well acquainted with the history and business of men in every grade of life. God is cognizant of the daily employment of the humble laborer, as well as of that of the king upon his throne. And the avarice, cruelty, secret crimes, and selfishness of men are known to him, as well as their good deeds, charity, liberality, and kindness. Nothing is hidden from God.

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{7Red 58.2}

Immediately after this interview with Cornelius, the angel went to Peter, who was praying upon the housetop. While praying he was shown a vision, "and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I

have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice; and the vessel was received up again into heaven." {7Red 59.1}

Here we may perceive the workings of God's plan to set the machinery in motion, whereby his will may be done on earth as it is done in Heaven. Peter had not yet preached the gospel to the Gentiles. Many of them had been interested listeners to the truths which he taught; but the middle wall of partition, which the death of Christ had broken down, still existed in the minds of the apostles, and excluded the Gentiles from the privileges of the gospel. The Greek Jews had received the labors of the apostles, and many of them had responded to those efforts by embracing the faith of Jesus; but the conversion of Cornelius was to be the first one of importance among the Gentiles. {7Red 59.2}

By the vision of the sheet and its contents, let down from heaven, Peter was to be divested of his settled prejudices against the Gentiles; to understand that, through Christ, heathen nations

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were made partakers of the blessings and privileges of the Jews, and were to be thus benefited equally with them. Some have urged that this vision was to signify that God had removed his prohibition from the use of the flesh of animals which he had formerly pronounced unclean; and that therefore swines' flesh was fit for food. This is a very narrow, and altogether erroneous interpretation, and is plainly contradicted in the scriptural account of the vision and its consequences. {7Red 59.3}

The vision of all manner of live beasts, which the sheet contained, and of which Peter was commanded to kill and eat, being assured that what God had cleansed should not be called common or unclean by him, was simply an illustration presenting to his mind the true position of the Gentiles; that by the death of Christ they were made fellow-heirs with the Israel of God. It conveyed to Peter both reproof and instruction. His labors had heretofore been confined entirely to the Jews; and he had looked upon the Gentiles as an unclean race, and excluded from the promises of God. His mind was now being led to comprehend the world-wide extent of the plan of God. {7Red 60.1}

Even while he pondered over the vision, it was explained to him. "Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, and called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him,

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Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them." {7Red 60.2}

It was a trying command to Peter; but he dared not act according to his own feelings, and therefore "went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek; what is the cause wherefore ye are come? And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. Then called he them in, and lodged

them." Thus they communicated their singular errand to the apostle, and, according to the direction he had just received from God, he at once agreed to accompany them on the morrow. He courteously entertained them that night, and in the morning set out with them for Caesarea, accompanied by six of his brethren, who were to be witnesses of all he should say or do while visiting the Gentiles; for he knew that he should be called to account for so direct an opposition to the Jewish faith and teachings. {7Red 61.1}

It was nearly two days before the journey was ended and Cornelius had the glad privilege of opening his doors to a gospel minister, who, according to the assurance of God, should teach him and his house how they might be saved. While the messengers were upon their errand, the centurion had gathered together as many of his relatives as were accessible, that they, as well as he, might be instructed in the truth. When

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Peter arrived, a large company were gathered, eagerly waiting to listen to his words. {7Red 61.2}

As Peter entered the house of the Gentile, Cornelius did not salute him as an ordinary visitor, but as one honored of Heaven, and sent to him by God. It is an Eastern custom to bow before a prince or other high dignitary, and for children to bow before their parents who are honored with positions of trust. But Cornelius, overwhelmed with reverence for the apostle who had been delegated by God, fell at his feet and worshiped him. Peter shrank with horror from this act of the centurion, and lifted him to his feet, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man." He then commenced to converse with him familiarly, in order to remove the sense of awe and extreme reverence with which the centurion regarded him. {7Red 62.1}

Had Peter been invested with the authority and position accorded to him by the Roman Catholic Church, he would have encouraged, rather than have checked, the veneration of Cornelius. The so-called successors of Peter require kings and emperors to bow at their feet; but Peter himself claimed to be only an erring and fallible man. {7Red 62.2}

Peter spoke with Cornelius and those assembled in his house, concerning the custom of the Jews; that it was considered unlawful for them to mingle socially with Gentiles, and involved ceremonial defilement. It was not prohibited by the law of God, but the tradition of men had made it a binding custom. Said he, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another

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nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for; I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me." {7Red 62.3}

Cornelius thereupon related his experience, and the words of the angel that had appeared to him in vision: "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon, a tanner, by the sea-side; who, when he cometh,

shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Although God had favored the Jews above all other nations, yet if they rejected light, and did not live up to their profession, they were no more exalted in his esteem than other nations. Those among the Gentiles who, like Cornelius, feared God, and worked righteousness, living up to what light they had, were kindly regarded by God, and their sincere service was accepted. {7Red 63.1}

But the faith and righteousness of Cornelius could not be perfect without a knowledge of

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Christ; therefore God sent that light and knowledge to him for the farther development of his righteous character. Many refuse to receive the light which the providence of God sends, them, and, as an excuse for so doing, quote the words of Peter to Cornelius and his friends: "But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." They maintain that it is of no consequence what men believe, so long as their works are good. Such ones are wrong; faith must unite with their works. They should advance with the light that is given them. If God brings them in connection with his servants who have received new truth, substantiated by the Word of God, they should accept it with joy. Truth is onward. Truth is upward. On the other hand, those who claim that their faith alone will save them, are trusting to a rope of sand; for faith is strengthened and made perfect by works only. {7Red 63.2}

Peter preached Jesus to that company of attentive hearers; his life, ministry, miracles, betrayal, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, and his work in Heaven, as man's Representative and Advocate, to plead in the sinner's behalf. As the apostle spoke, his heart glowed with the Spirit of God's truth which he was presenting to the people. His hearers were charmed by the doctrine they heard, for their hearts had been prepared to receive the truth. The apostle was interrupted by the descent of the Holy Ghost, as was manifested on the day of Pentecost. "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy

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Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days." {7Red 64.1}

The descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Gentiles was not an equivalent for baptism. The requisite steps in conversion, in all cases, are faith, repentance, and baptism. Thus the true Christian church are united in one Lord, one faith, one baptism. Diverse temperaments are modified by sanctifying grace, and the same distinguishing principles regulate the lives of all. Peter yielded to the entreaties of the believing Gentiles, and remained with them for a time, preaching Jesus to all the Gentiles thereabout. {7Red 65.1}

When the brethren in Judea heard that Peter had preached to the Gentiles, and had met with them, and eaten with them in their houses, they were surprised and offended by such strange movements on his part. They feared that such a course, which looked presumptuous to them, would tend to contradict his own teachings. As soon as Peter visited them, they met him with severe censure, saying, "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." {7Red 65.2}

Then "Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me. Upon the which when I had

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fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. But I said, Not so, Lord; for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. And this was done three times; and all were drawn up again into heaven. And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover, these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house. And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." He pleaded that the vision admonished him no longer to keep up the ceremonial distinction of circumcision and uncircumcision, nor to look upon the Gentiles as unclean, for God was not a respecter of persons. His caution was made manifest to his brethren from the fact that, although commanded by God to go to the Gentile's house, he had taken with him six of the disciples then present, as witnesses of all he should say or do while there. {7Red 65.3}

He recounted the events of this first meeting with the Gentiles, saying, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of

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the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?" {7Red 66.1}

The disciples, upon hearing this account, were silenced, and convinced that Peter's course was in direct fulfillment of the plan of God, and that their old prejudices and exclusiveness were to be utterly destroyed by the gospel of Christ. "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." {7Red 67.1}

Deliverance of Peter.

Herod was professedly a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and apparently very zealous in perpetuating the ceremonies of the law. The government of Judea was in his hands, subject to Claudius, the Roman emperor; he also held the position of tetrarch of Galilee. Herod was anxious to obtain the favor of the Jews, hoping thus to make secure his offices and honors. He therefore proceeded to carry out the desires of the Jews in persecuting the church of Christ. He began his work by spoiling the houses and goods of the believers; he then began to imprison the leading ones. He seized upon James and cast him into prison, and there sent an executioner to kill him with a sword, as another Herod had caused the prophet John to be beheaded. He then became bolder, seeing that the Jews were well pleased with his acts, and imprisoned Peter. These

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cruelties were performed during the sacred occasion of the passover. {7Red 67.2}

James was one of the three favored disciples who had been brought into the closest relationship with Christ. James, John, and Peter were his chief witnesses after his death. They saw the transfiguration of the Saviour, and beheld him glorified. They were in the garden with him during the night of his agony. James and John were the sons of Zebedee, the ones whom Jesus had asked, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" When James was rudely thrust into prison, and unceremoniously summoned to execution, he understood more fully than ever before, the words of his Lord upon that occasion. {7Red 68.1}

There was great grief and consternation at the death of James. When Peter was also imprisoned, the entire church engaged in fasting and prayer. While the Jews were celebrating the memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, and pretending great zeal for the law, they were at the same time persecuting and murdering the believers in Christ, thus transgressing every principle of that law. At these great religious gatherings they stirred one another up against the Christians, till they were united in a bitter hatred of them. {7Red 68.2}

The people applauded the act of Herod in causing the death of James, though some of them complained of the private manner in which it was accomplished, maintaining that a public execution would have had the effect to more thoroughly intimidate all believers and

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sympathizers. Herod therefore held Peter in custody for the purpose of gratifying the Jews by the public spectacle of his death. But it was suggested to the ruler that it would not be safe to bring the veteran apostle out for execution before all the people who were assembled in Jerusalem for the passover. It was feared that his venerable appearance might excite their pity and respect; they also dreaded lest he should make one of those powerful appeals which had frequently roused the people to investigate the life and character of Jesus Christ, and which they, with all their artifice, were totally unable to controvert. In such a case, the Jews apprehended that his release would be demanded at the hands of the king. {7Red 68.3}

Peter's ardent zeal in vindicating himself, and in advocating the cause of Christ, had lost to the Jews many of their brethren, and they stood in great dread of his having an

opportunity to lift up his voice in the presence of all the nations and people that had come to the city to worship. Therefore the apostle was placed under charge of sixteen soldiers, who alternated in guarding him day and night. But it was in vain that the puny arm of man was lifted against the Lord. He, by the putting forth of his might, was about to stay the precious blood which the Jews would have been emboldened to shed, had not divine power interposed. {7Red 69.1}

While the execution of Peter was being delayed, upon various pretexts, until after the passover, the church of Christ had time for deep searching of heart, and earnest prayer. Strong petitions, tears, and fasting were mingled

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together. They prayed without ceasing for Peter; they felt that he could not be spared from the Christian work; and they felt that they had arrived at a point, where, without the special help of God, the church of Christ would become extinct. {7Red 69.2}

Meanwhile worshipers of every nation sought the temple which had been dedicated to the service of God, and which remained, to all appearance, the same as when the shekinah had glorified it, with the exception of additional embellishment. But God was no longer to be found in that palace of loveliness, glittering with gold and precious stones, and presenting a spectacle of grandeur and beauty to all beholders. {7Red 70.1}

The day of Peter's execution was at last appointed; but still the prayers of the believers ascended to Heaven. And while all their energies and sympathies were called out in fervent appeals, angels of God were guarding the imprisoned apostle. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. Peter was placed between two soldiers, and was bound by two chains, each chain being fastened to the wrist of one of his guard. He was therefore unable to move without their knowledge. The prison doors were securely fastened, and a strong guard was placed before them. All chance of rescue or escape, by human means, was thus cut off. {7Red 70.2}

The apostle was not intimidated by his situation. Since his re-instatement after his denial of Christ, he had unflinchingly braved danger, and manifested a noble courage and boldness in preaching a crucified, risen and ascended Saviour. He now called to mind the words of Jesus

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addressed to him: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." He believed the time had now come when he was to yield up his life for Christ's sake. {7Red 70.3}

The night before his appointed execution, Peter, bound with chains, slept between the two soldiers, as usual. Herod, remembering the escape of Peter and John from prison, where they had been confined because of their faith, took double precautions on this occasion. The soldiers on guard, in order to secure their extra vigilance, were made answerable for the safe-keeping of the prisoner. He was bound, as has been described, in a cell of massive rock, the doors of which were bolted and barred. Sixteen men were detailed to guard this cell, relieving each other at regular intervals. Four comprised the watch at one time. But the bolts and bars, and Roman guard, which

effectually cut off from the prisoner a possibility of human aid, were only to result in making the triumph of God more complete in Peter's deliverance from prison. Herod was lifting his hand against Omnipotence, and he was to be utterly humiliated and defeated in his attempt upon the life of the servant of God. {7Red 71.1}

On this last night before the execution, a mighty angel, commissioned from Heaven, descended to rescue him. The strong gates which shut in the saint of God, open without the aid of human hands; the angel of the Most High enters,

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and they close again noiselessly behind him. He enters the cell, hewn from the solid rock, and there lies Peter, sleeping the blessed peaceful sleep of innocence and perfect trust in God while chained to a powerful guard on either side of him. The light which enveloped the angel illuminated the prison, but did not waken the sleeping apostle. His was the sound repose that invigorates and renews, and that comes of a good conscience. {7Red 71.2}

Peter is not awakened until he feels the stroke of the angel's hand, and hears his voice saying, "Arise up quickly." He sees his cell, which had never been blessed by a ray of sunshine, illuminated by the light of Heaven, and an angel of great glory standing before him. He mechanically obeys the voice of the angel; and in rising lifts his hands, and finds that the chains have been broken from his wrists. Again the voice of the angel is heard: "Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals." {7Red 72.1}

Again Peter mechanically obeys, keeping his wondering gaze riveted upon his heavenly visitant, and believing himself to be dreaming, or in a vision. The armed soldiers are passive as if chiseled from marble, as the angel again commands, "Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me." Thereupon the heavenly being moves toward the door, and the usually talkative Peter follows, dumb from amazement. They step over the motionless guard, and reach the heavily bolted and barred door, which swings open of its own accord, and closes again immediately, while the guard within and outside the door are motionless at their posts.

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{7Red 72.2}

The second gate, which is also guarded within and without, is reached; it opens as did the first, with no creaking of hinges, or rattling of iron bolts; they pass without, and it closes again as noiselessly. They pass through the third gateway in the same manner, and at last find themselves in the open street. No word is spoken; there is no sound of footstep; the angel glides on before, encircled by a light of dazzling brightness, and Peter follows his deliverer, bewildered, and believing himself to be in a dream. Street after street is threaded thus, and then, the mission of the angel being completed, he suddenly disappears. {7Red 73.1}

As the heavenly light faded away, Peter felt himself to be in profound darkness; but gradually the darkness seemed to decrease, as he became accustomed to it, and he found himself alone in the silent street, with the cool night air upon his brow. He now realized that it was no dream or vision that had visited him. He was free, in a familiar part of the city; he recognized the place as one which he had often frequented, and had expected to pass for the last time on the morrow, when upon the way to the scene of

his prospective death. He tried to recall the events of the last few moments. He remembered falling asleep, bound between the two soldiers, with his sandals and outer garment removed. He examined his person, and found himself fully dressed, and girded. {7Red 73.2}

His wrists, swollen from wearing the cruel irons, were now free from the manacles, and he realized that his freedom was no delusion, but a blessed reality. On the morrow he was to have

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been led forth to die; but lo, an angel had delivered him from prison and from death. "And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." {7Red 73.3}

The apostle made his way direct to the house where his brethren were assembled together for prayer; he found them engaged in earnest prayer for him at that moment. "And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished. But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go show these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place." {7Red 74.1}

Joy and praise filled the hearts of the fasting praying believers, that God had heard and answered their prayers, and delivered Peter from the hand of Herod. In the morning the people gathered together to witness the execution of the apostle. Herod sent officers to bring Peter from prison with great display of arms and guard, in order to insure against his escape, to intimidate all sympathizers, and to exhibit his own power.

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{7Red 74.2}

Meanwhile terror and mortification had seized the Roman guard at the prison, when they found that the prisoner was gone. It had been expressly stated to them that their lives would be answerable for the life of their charge, and for that reason they had been specially vigilant. But the God of Heaven had thwarted the purpose of wicked Herod. There was the guard at the door of the prison, the bolts and bars of the door still fast and strong, the guard inside, the chains attached to the wrists of the two soldiers; but the prisoner was gone. {7Red 75.1}

When the report of these things was brought to Herod, he was exasperated, and charged the keepers of the prison with unfaithfulness. They were accordingly put to death for the alleged crime of sleeping at their post. At the same time, Herod knew that no human power had rescued Peter. But he was determined not to acknowledge that a divine power had been at work to thwart his base designs. He would not humiliate himself thus, but set himself boldly in defiance of God. {7Red 75.2}

Herod, not long after Peter's deliverance from prison, went down from Judea to

Caesarea, and there abode. He there made a grand festival, designed to excite the admiration and applause of the people. Pleasure-lovers from all quarters were assembled together, and there was much feasting and wine-drinking. Herod made a most gorgeous appearance before the people. He was clad in a robe, sparkling with silver and gold, that caught the rays of the sun in its glittering folds, and dazzled the eyes of the beholders. With great pomp and ceremony he stood

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before the multitude, and addressed them in an eloquent oration. {7Red 75.3}

The majesty of his appearance, and the power of his well-chosen language, swayed the assembly with a mighty influence. Their senses were already perverted by feasting and wine; they were dazzled by his glittering decorations, and charmed by his grand deportment and eloquent words; and, wild with enthusiasm, they showered upon him adulation, and proclaimed him a god, declaring that mortal man could not present such an appearance, or command such startling eloquence of language. They farther declared that they had ever respected him as a ruler, but from henceforth they should worship him as a god. {7Red 76.1}

These people had refused to acknowledge Christ, whose coarse and often travel-stained garments were worn over a heart of divine love, rich with that inward adorning, a meek and gentle spirit. Their eyes, blinded by sin, refused to see, beneath that humble exterior, the Lord of life and glory, though his mercy and divine power were revealed before them in works that no man could do. But they were ready to bow down and worship, as a god, the haughty king, whose splendid garments of silver and gold were worn over a corrupt and cruel heart. They did not attempt to penetrate his vain display, and read the depravity and deceit of his character, and wickedness of his daily life. {7Red 76.2}

Herod knew that he deserved none of this praise and homage; yet he did not rebuke the idolatry of the people, but accepted it as his due. The glow of gratified pride was on his countenance as he heard the shout ascend: It is the

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voice of a god, and not of man! The same voices which now glorified a vile sinner, had, but a few years before, raised the frenzied cry of, Away with Jesus! Crucify him, crucify him! Herod received this flattery and homage with great pleasure, and his heart bounded with triumph; but suddenly a swift and terrible change came over him. His countenance became pallid as death, and distorted with agony; great drops of sweat started from his pores. He stood a moment as if transfixed with pain and terror, then, turning his blanched and livid face to his horror-stricken friends, he cried in hollow, despairing tones. He whom you have exalted as a god is struck with death! {7Red 76.3}

He was borne in a state of the most excruciating anguish from the scene of wicked revelry, the mirth, and pomp, and display of which he now loathed in his soul. A moment before, he had been the proud recipient of the praise and worship of that vast throng--now he felt himself in the hands of a Ruler mightier than himself. Remorse seized him; he remembered his cruel command to slay the innocent James; he remembered his relentless persecution of the followers of Christ, and his design to put to death the apostle Peter, whom God had delivered out of his hand; he remembered

how, in his mortification and disappointed rage, he had wreaked his unreasoning revenge upon the keepers of the prisoner, and executed them without mercy. He felt that God, who had rescued the apostle from death, was now dealing with him, the relentless persecutor. He found no relief from pain of body or anguish of mind, and he expected none. Herod

was acquainted with the law of God, which says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and he knew that in accepting the worship of the people he had filled up the measure of his iniquity, and had brought upon him the just wrath of God. {7Red 77.1}

The same angel who had left the royal courts of Heaven to rescue Peter from the power of his persecutor, had been the messenger of wrath and judgment to Herod. The angel smote Peter to arouse him from slumber; but it was with a different stroke that he smote the wicked king, bringing mortal disease upon him. God poured contempt upon Herod's pride, and his person, which he had exhibited decked in shining apparel before the admiring gaze of the people, was eaten by worms, and putrefied while yet alive. Herod died in great agony of mind and body, under the retributive justice of God. {7Red 78.1}

This demonstration of divine judgment had a mighty influence upon the people. While the apostle of Christ had been miraculously delivered from prison and death, his persecutor had been stricken down by the curse of God. The news was borne to all lands, and was the means of bringing many to believe on Christ. {7Red 78.2}

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TO THE READER

NEXT TO THE TWO CHIEF CHARACTERS OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, MOSES AND JESUS CHRIST, THE APOSTLE PAUL, THROUGH HIS LABORS AND WRITINGS, HAS HAD MORE INFLUENCE UPON THE WORLD THAN ANY OTHER PERSON. THE CALL OF THIS REMARKABLE MAN, AND HIS BEING COMMISSIONED TO GO TO THE GENTILES, MARKED AN ERA IN THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL. THE READER WILL BE PLEASED TO READ THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS UPON THIS SUBJECT, FROM ONE SO WELL QUALIFIED TO WRITE UPON IT, AS THE AUTHOR OF THIS WORK.

PUBLISHERS

The Teachings of Paul

Ordination of Paul and Barnabas.

The apostles and disciples who left Jerusalem during the fierce persecution that raged there after the martyrdom of Stephen, preached Christ in the cities round about, confining their labors to the Hebrew and Greek Jews. "And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." When the believers in Jerusalem heard the good tidings they rejoiced; and Barnabas, "a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," was sent to Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, to help the church there. He labored there with great success. As the work increased, he solicited and obtained the help of Paul; and the two disciples labored together in that city for a year, teaching the people, and adding to the numbers of the church of Christ. {8Red 3.1}

Antioch had both a large Jewish and Gentile population; it was a great resort for lovers of ease and pleasure, because of the healthfulness of its situation, its beautiful scenery, and the wealth, culture, and refinement that centered there. Its extensive commerce made it a place of great importance, where people of all nationalities were

found. It was therefore a city of luxury and vice. The retribution of God finally came upon Antioch, because of the wickedness of its inhabitants. {8Red 3.2}

It was here that the disciples were first called Christians. This name was given them because Christ was the main theme of their preaching, teaching, and conversation. They were continually recounting the incidents of his life, during the time in which his disciples were blessed with his personal company. They dwelt untiringly upon his teachings, his miracles of healing the sick, casting out devils, and raising the dead to life. With quivering lips and tearful eyes they spoke of his agony in the garden, his betrayal, trial, and execution, the forbearance and humility with which he endured the contumely and torture imposed upon him by his enemies, and the Godlike pity with which he prayed for those who persecuted him. His resurrection and ascension, and his work in Heaven as a Mediator for fallen man, were joyful topics with them. The heathen might well call them Christians, since they preached of Christ, and addressed their prayers to God through him. {8Red 4.1}

Paul found, in the populous city of Antioch, an excellent field of labor, where his great learning, wisdom and zeal, combined, wielded a powerful influence over the inhabitants and frequenters of that city of culture. {8Red 4.2}

Meanwhile the work of the apostles was centered at Jerusalem, where Jews of all tongues and countries came to worship at the temple during the stated festivals. At such times the apostles preached Christ with unflinching courage, though they knew that in so doing their lives

were in constant jeopardy. Many converts to the faith were made, and these, scattering to their homes in different parts of the country, dispersed the seeds of truth throughout

all nations, and among all classes of society. {8Red 4.3}

Peter, James, and John felt confident that God had appointed them to preach Christ among their own countrymen at home. But Paul had received his commission from God, while praying in the temple, and his broad missionary field had been presented before him with remarkable distinctness. To prepare him for his extensive and important work, God had brought him into close connection with himself, and had opened before his enraptured vision a glimpse of the beauty and glory of Heaven. {8Red 5.1}

God communicated with the devout prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." These apostles were therefore dedicated to God in a most solemn manner by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands; and they were sent forth to their field of labor among the Gentiles. {8Red 5.2}

Both Paul and Barnabas had been laboring as ministers of Christ, and God had abundantly blessed their efforts; but neither of them had previously been formally ordained to the gospel ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands. They were now authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to baptize, and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority. This was an important era for the church. Though the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile had been broken

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down by the death of Christ, letting the Gentiles into the full privileges of the Gospel, yet the vail had not yet been torn away from the eyes of many of the believing Jews, and they could not clearly discern to the end of that which was abolished by the Son of God. The work was now to be prosecuted with vigor among the Gentiles, and was to result in strengthening the church by a great ingathering of souls. {8Red 5.3}

The apostles, in this, their special work, were to be exposed to suspicion, prejudice, and jealousy. As a natural consequence of their departure from the exclusiveness of the Jews, their doctrine and views would be subject to the charge of heresy; and their credentials as ministers of the gospel would be questioned by many zealous, believing Jews. God foresaw all these difficulties which his servants would undergo, and, in his wise providence, caused them to be invested with unquestionable authority from the established church of God, that their work should be above challenge. {8Red 6.1}

The brethren in Jerusalem and in Antioch were made thoroughly acquainted with all the particulars of this divine appointment, and the specific work of teaching the Gentiles, which the Lord had given to these apostles. Their ordination was an open recognition of their divine mission, as messengers specially chosen by the Holy Ghost for a special work. Paul witnesses, in his Epistle to the Romans, that he considered this sacred appointment as a new and important epoch in his life; he names himself, "a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." {8Red 6.2}

The ordination by the laying on of hands, was,

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at a later date, greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act, as

though a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work, as though virtue lay in the act of laying on of hands. We have, in the history of these two apostles, only a simple record of the laying on of hands, and its bearing upon their work. Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God himself; and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was merely setting the seal of the church upon the work of God--an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office. {8Red 6.3}

This form was a significant one to the Jews. When a Jewish father blessed his children, he laid his hands reverently upon their heads. When an animal was devoted to sacrifice, the hand of the one invested with priestly authority was laid upon the head of the victim. Therefore, when the ministers of Antioch laid their hands upon the apostles, they, by that action, asked God to bestow his blessing upon them, in their devotion to the specific work which God had chosen them to do. {8Red 7.1}

The apostles started out upon their mission, taking with them Mark. They went into Seleucia, and from thence sailed to Cyprus. At Salamis they preached in the synagogues of the Jews. "And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus; which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the

word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith." {8Red 7.2}

The deputy being a man of repute and influence, the sorcerer Elymas, who was under the control of Satan, sought by false reports, and various specious deceptions, to turn him against the apostles and destroy their influence over him. As the magicians in Pharaoh's court withstood Moses and Aaron, so did this sorcerer withstand the apostles. When the deputy sent for the apostles, that he might be instructed in the truth, Satan was on hand with his servant, seeking to thwart the purpose of God, and prevent this influential man from embracing the faith of Christ. This agent of Satan greatly hindered the work of the apostles. Thus does the fallen foe ever work in a special manner to prevent persons of influence, who could be of great service to the cause, from embracing the truth of God. {8Red 8.1}

But Paul, in the Spirit and power of the Holy Ghost, rebuked the wicked deceiver. He "set his eyes upon him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." {8Red 8.2}

The sorcerer had closed his eyes to the evidences of truth, and the light of the gospel, therefore the Lord, in his righteous anger, caused his

natural eyes to be closed, shutting out from him the light of day. This blindness was not permanent, but only for a season, to warn him to repent, and to seek pardon of God whom he had so offended. The confusion into which this man was brought, with all his boasted power, made all his subtle arts against the doctrine of Christ of none effect. The fact of his being obliged to grope about in blindness, proved to all beholders that the miracles which the apostles had performed, and which Elymas had denounced as being produced by sleight of hand, were in truth wrought by the power of God. The deputy was convinced of the truth of the doctrine taught by the apostles, and embraced the gospel of Christ. {8Red 8.3}

Elymas was not a man of education, yet he was peculiarly fitted to do the work of Satan. Those who preach the truth of God will be obliged to meet the wily foe in many different shapes. Sometimes it is in the person of learned, and often in the person of ignorant, men, whom Satan has educated to be his successful instruments in deceiving souls, and in working iniquity. It is the duty of the minister of Christ to stand faithfully at his post, in the fear of God, and in the power of his strength. Thus he may put to confusion the hosts of Satan, and triumph in the name of the Lord. {8Red 9.1}

Paul and his company now continued their journey, going into Perga, in Pamphylia. Their way was toilsome, they encountered hardships and privations, and were beset by dangers on every side, which intimidated Mark, who was unused to hardships. As still greater difficulties were apprehended, he became disheartened, and refused to go farther, just at the time when his

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services were most needed. He accordingly returned to Jerusalem, and to the peace and comfort of his home. {8Red 9.2}

Mark did not apostatize from the faith of Christianity; but, like many young ministers, he shrank from hardships, and preferred the comfort and safety of home to the travels, labors, and dangers of the missionary field. This desertion caused Paul to judge him unfavorably and severely for a long time. He distrusted his steadiness of character, and his devotion to the cause of Christ. The mother of Mark was a convert to the Christian religion; and her home was an asylum for the disciples. There they were always sure of a welcome, and a season of rest, in which they could rally from the effect of the fierce persecutions that everywhere assailed them in their labors. {8Red 10.1}

It was during one of these visits of the apostles to his mother's that Mark proposed to Paul and Barnabas that he should accompany them on their missionary tour. He had witnessed the wonderful power attending their ministry; he had felt the favor of God in his own heart; he had seen the faith of his mother tested and tried without wavering; he had witnessed the miracles performed by the apostles, and which set the seal of God upon their work; he had himself preached the Christian faith, and had longed to enter more fully into the work, and entirely devote himself to it. He had, as the companion of the apostles, rejoiced in the success of their mission; but fear and discouragement overwhelmed him in the face of privation, persecution, and danger; and he sought the attractions of home at

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a time when his services where most needful to the apostles. {8Red 10.2}

At a future period there was a sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas concerning Mark, who was still anxious to devote himself to the work of the ministry. Paul could not, at that time, excuse in any degree the weakness of Mark in deserting them and the work upon which they had entered, for the ease and quiet of home; and he urged that one with so little stamina was unfit for the gospel ministry, which required patience, self-denial, bravery, and faith, with a willingness to sacrifice even life if need be. {8Red 11.1}

Barnabas, on the other hand, was inclined to excuse Mark, who was his nephew, because of his inexperience. He felt anxious that he should not abandon the ministry, for he saw in him qualifications for a useful laborer in the field of Christ. This contention caused Paul and Barnabas to separate, the latter following out his convictions, and taking Mark with him in his work. {8Red 11.2}

Mark, therefore, accompanied Barnabas to Cyprus, and assisted him there. Paul was afterward reconciled to Mark, and received him as a fellow-laborer. He also recommended him to the Colossians as one who was a "fellow-worker unto the kingdom of God," and a personal comfort to him, Paul. Again, not long prior to his death, he spoke of him as profitable to him in the ministry. {8Red 11.3}

Paul and Barnabas next visited Antioch in Pisidia, and on the Sabbath went into the synagogue, and sat down; "and after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the

people, say on." Being thus invited to speak, "Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience." He then proceeded to give a history of the manner in which the Lord had dealt with the Jews from the time of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and how a Saviour had been promised of the seed of David. He then preached Jesus as the Saviour of men, the Messiah of prophecy. {8Red 11.4}

When he had finished, and the Jews had left the synagogue, the Gentiles still lingered, and entreated that the same words might be spoken unto them the next Sabbath day. The apostles created a great interest in the place, among both Jews and Gentiles. They encouraged the believers and converts to stand fast in their faith, and to continue in the grace of God. The interest to hear the words of the apostles was so great that the whole city came together on the next Sabbath day. But now, as in the days of Christ, when the Jewish priests and rulers saw the multitudes that had assembled to hear the new doctrine, they were moved by envy and jealousy, and contradicted the words of the apostles with blasphemy. Their old bigotry and prejudice were also aroused, when they perceived great numbers of Gentiles mingling with the Jews in the congregation. They could not endure that the Gentiles should enjoy religious privileges on an equality with themselves, but clung tenaciously to the idea that the blessing of God was reserved exclusively for them. This had ever been the great sin of the Jews, which Christ, on several occasions, had rebuked. {8Red 12.1}

They listened, on one Sabbath day, with

intense interest to the teachings of Paul and Barnabas, who preached Jesus as the promised Messiah; and upon the next Sabbath day, because of the multitude of Gentiles who assembled also to hear them, they were excited to a frenzy of indignation, the words of the apostles were distorted in their minds, and they were unfitted to weigh the evidence presented by them. When they learned that the Messiah preached by the apostles was to be a light to the Gentiles, as well as the glory of his people Israel, they were beside themselves with rage, and used the most insulting language to the apostles. {8Red 12.2}

The Gentiles, on the other hand, rejoiced exceedingly that Christ recognized them as the children of God, and with grateful hearts they listened to the word preached. The apostles now clearly discerned their duty, and the work which God would have them do. They turned without hesitation to the Gentiles, preaching Christ to them, and leaving the Jews to their bigotry, blindness of mind, and hardness of heart. The mind of Paul had been well prepared to make this decision, by the circumstances attending his conversion, his vision in the temple at Jerusalem, his appointment by God to preach to the Gentiles, and the success which had already crowned his efforts among them. {8Red 13.1}

When Paul and Barnabas turned from the Jews who derided them, they addressed them boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the

Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." {8Red 13.2}

This gathering in of the Gentiles to the church of God had been traced by the pen of inspiration, but had been but faintly understood. Hosea had said, "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God." And again, "I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God." {8Red 14.1}

During the life of Christ on earth he had sought to lead the Jews out of their exclusiveness. The conversion of the centurion, and that of the Syrophenician woman, were instances of his direct work outside of the acknowledged people of Israel. The time had now come for active and continued work among the Gentiles, of whom whole communities received the gospel gladly, and glorified God for the light of an intelligent faith. The unbelief and malice of the Jews did not turn aside the purpose of God; for a new Israel was being grafted into the old olive-tree. The synagogues were closed against the apostles; but private houses were thrown open for their use, and public buildings of the Gentiles were also used in which to preach the Word of God. {8Red 14.2}

The Jews, however, were not satisfied with closing their synagogues against the apostles, but desired to banish them from that region. To effect this purpose they

sought to prejudice

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certain devout and honorable women, who had great influence with the government, and also men of influence. This they accomplished by subtle arts, and false reports. These persons of good repute complained to the authorities against the apostles, and they were accordingly expelled from those coasts. {8Red 14.3}

On this occasion the apostles followed the instruction of Christ: "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment than for that city." The apostles were not discouraged by this expulsion: they remembered the words of their Master: "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." {8Red 15.1}

Preaching Among the Heathen.

The apostles next visited Iconium. This place was a great resort for pleasure-seekers, and persons who had no particular object in life. The population was composed of Romans, Greeks, and Jews. The apostles here, as at Antioch, first commenced their labors in the synagogues for their own people, the Jews. They met with marked success; numbers of both Jews and Greeks accepted the gospel of Christ. But here, as in former places where the apostles had labored, the unbelieving Jews commenced an unreasonable

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opposition of those who accepted the true faith, and, as far as lay in their power, influenced the Gentiles against them. {8Red 15.2}

The apostles, however, were not easily turned from their work, for many were daily embracing the doctrine of Christ. They went on faithfully in the face of opposition, envy, and prejudice. Miracles were daily wrought by the disciples through the power of God; and all whose minds were open to evidence were affected by the convincing power of these things. {8Red 16.1}

This increasing popularity of the doctrine of Christ stirred the unbelieving Jews to fresh opposition. They were filled with envy and hatred, and determined to stop the labors of the apostles at once. They went to the authorities, and represented their work in the most false and exaggerated light, leading the officers to fear that the entire city was in danger of being incited to insurrection. They stated that great numbers were attaching themselves to the apostles, and suggested that it was for secret and dangerous designs. {8Red 16.2}

In consequence of these charges, the disciples were repeatedly brought before the authorities; but in every case they so ably defended themselves before the people, that, although the magistrates were prejudiced against them by the false statements they had heard, they dared not condemn them. They could but acknowledge that the

teachings of the apostles were calculated to make men virtuous, law-abiding citizens. {8Red 16.3}

The unprejudiced Jews and Greeks took the position that the morals and good order of the city would be improved, if the apostles were allowed to remain and work there. Upon the

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occasions when the apostles were brought before the authorities, their defense was so clear and sensible, and the statement which they gave of their doctrine was so calm and comprehensive, that a considerable influence was raised in their favor. The doctrine they preached gained great publicity, and was brought before a much larger number of unprejudiced hearers than ever before in that place. {8Red 16.4}

The Jews perceived that their efforts to thwart the work of the apostles were unavailing, and only resulted in adding greater numbers to the new faith. The rage of the Jews was worked up to such a pitch on this account that they determined to compass their ends in some manner. They stirred up the worst passions of the ignorant, noisy mob, creating a tumult which they attributed to the efforts of the apostles. They then prepared to make a false charge of telling force, and to gain the help of the magistrates in carrying out their purpose. They determined that the apostles should have no opportunity to vindicate themselves; but that mob power should interfere, and put a stop to their labors by stoning them to death. {8Red 17.1}

Friends of the apostles, although unbelievers, warned them of the designs of the malicious Jews, and urged them not uselessly to expose themselves to their fury, but to escape for their lives. They accordingly departed from Iconium in secret, and left the faithful and opposing parties to battle for themselves, trusting God to give victory to the doctrine of Christ. But they by no means took a final leave of Iconium; they purposed to return, after the excitement then

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raging had abated, and complete the work they had begun. {8Red 17.2}

Those who observe and teach the binding claims of God's law frequently receive, in a degree, similar treatment to that of the apostles at Iconium. They often meet a bitter opposition from ministers and people who persistently refuse the light of God, and, by misrepresentation and falsehood, close every door by which the messenger of truth might have access to the people. {8Red 18.1}

The apostles next went to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. These were populated by a heathen, superstitious people; but among them were souls that would hear and accept the doctrine of Christ. The apostles chose to labor in those cities because they would not there meet Jewish prejudice and persecution. They now came in contact with an entirely new element,-- heathen superstition and idolatry. {8Red 18.2}

The apostles, in their work, met all grades of people, and all kinds of faith and religions. They were brought in opposition with Jewish bigotry and intolerance, sorcery, blasphemy, unjust magistrates who loved to exercise their power, false shepherds, superstition, and idolatry. While persecution and opposition met them on every hand, victory still crowned their efforts, and converts were daily added to the faith. {8Red 18.3}

In Lystra there was no Jewish synagogue, though there were a few Jews in the

place. The temple of Jupiter occupied a conspicuous position there. Paul and Barnabas appeared in the city together, teaching the doctrine of Christ with great power and eloquence. The credulous people believed them to be gods come down from Heaven. As the apostles gathered the people

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about them, and explained their strange belief, the worshipers of Jupiter sought to connect these doctrines, as far as they were able, with their own superstitious faith. {8Red 18.4}

Paul addressed them in the Greek language, presenting for their consideration such subjects as would lead them to a correct knowledge of Him who should be the object of their adoration. He directed their attention to the firmament of the heavens--the sun, moon, and stars--the beautiful order of the recurring seasons, the mighty mountains whose peaks were capped with snow, the lofty trees, and the varied wonders of nature, which showed a skill and exactitude almost beyond finite comprehension. Through these visible works of the Almighty, the apostle led the minds of the heathen to the contemplation of the great Mind of the universe. {8Red 19.1}

He then told them of the Son of God, who came from Heaven to our world because he loved the children of men. His life and ministry were presented before them; his rejection by those whom he came to save; his trial and crucifixion by wicked men; his resurrection from the dead to finish his work on earth; and his ascension to Heaven to be man's Advocate in the presence of the Maker of the world. With the Spirit and power of God, Paul and Barnabas declared the gospel of Christ. {8Red 19.2}

As Paul recounted the works of Christ in healing the afflicted, he perceived a cripple whose eyes were fastened upon him, and who received and believed his words. Paul's heart went out in sympathy toward the afflicted man, whose faith he discerned; and he eagerly grasped the hope that he might be healed by that Saviour,

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who, although he had ascended to Heaven, was still man's Friend and Physician, having more power even than when he was upon earth. {8Red 19.3}

In the presence of that idolatrous assembly, Paul commanded the cripple to stand upright upon his feet. Hitherto he had only been able to take a sitting posture; but he now grasped with faith the words of Paul, and instantly obeyed his command, and stood on his feet for the first time in his life. Strength came with this effort of faith; and he who had been a cripple walked and leaped as though he had never experienced an infirmity. {8Red 20.1}

This work performed on the cripple was a marvel to all beholders. The subject was so well known, and the cure was so complete, that there was no room for skepticism on their part. The Lycaonians were all convinced that supernatural power attended the labors of the apostles, and cried out with great enthusiasm that the gods had come down to them from Heaven in the likeness of men. This belief was in harmony with their traditions that gods visited the earth. They conceived the idea that the great heathen deities, Jupiter and Mercury, were in their midst in the persons of Paul and Barnabas. The former they believed to be Mercury; for Paul was active, earnest, quick, and eloquent with words of warning and exhortation. Barnabas was believed to be Jupiter,

the father of gods, because of his venerable appearance, his dignified bearing, and the mildness and benevolence which was expressed in his countenance. {8Red 20.2}

The news of the miraculous cure of the cripple was soon noised throughout all that region, until a general excitement was aroused, and priests

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from the temple of the gods prepared to do the apostles honor, as visitants from the courts of Heaven, to sacrifice beasts to them, and to bring offerings of garlands and precious things. The apostles had sought retirement and rest in a private dwelling, when their attention was attracted by the sound of music, and the enthusiastic shouting of a vast assembly, who had come to the gate of the house where they were abiding. {8Red 20.3}

When these ministers of God ascertained the cause of this visit and its attendant excitement, they were filled with indignation and horror. They rent their clothing, and rushed in among the multitude to prevent farther proceedings. Paul, in a loud, ringing voice that rose above the noise of the multitude, demanded their attention; and, as the tumult was suddenly quelled, he inquired,-- {8Red 21.1}

"Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." {8Red 21.2}

The people listened to the words of Paul with manifest impatience. Their superstition and enthusiasm had been so great in regard to the apostles that they were loth to acknowledge their error, and have their expectations and purposes thwarted. Notwithstanding the apostles positively denied the divinity attributed to them by the heathen, and Paul made a masterly effort to

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direct their minds to the true God as the only object worthy of worship, it was still most difficult to turn them from their purpose. {8Red 21.3}

They reasoned that they had with their own eyes beheld the miraculous power exercised by the apostles; that they had seen a cripple who had never before used his limbs, made to leap and rejoice in perfect health and strength through the exercise of the marvelous power possessed by these strangers. But, after much persuasion on the part of Paul, and explanation as to the true mission of the apostles, the people were reluctantly led to give up their purpose. They were not satisfied, however, and led the sacrificial beasts away in great disappointment, that their traditions of divine beings visiting the earth could not be strengthened by this example of their favor in coming to confer special blessings upon them, which would exalt them and their religion in the estimation of the world. {8Red 22.1}

And now a strange change came upon the fickle, excitable people, because their faith was not anchored in the true God. The opposing Jews of Antioch, through whose influence the apostles were driven from that coast, united with certain Jews of Iconium, and followed upon the track of the apostles. The miracle wrought upon the cripple, and

its effect upon those who witnessed it, stirred up their envy and led them to go to the scene of the apostles' labor, and put their false version upon the work. They denied that God had any part in it, and claimed that it was accomplished through the demons whom these men served. {8Red 22.2}

The same class had formerly accused the Saviour of casting out devils through the power of

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the prince of devils; they had denounced him as a deceiver; and they now visited the same unreasoning wrath upon his apostles. By means of falsehoods they inspired the people of Lystra with the bitterness of spirit by which they were themselves actuated. They claimed to be thoroughly acquainted with the history and faith of Paul and Barnabas, and so misrepresented their characters and work that the heathen idolaters, who had been ready to worship the apostles as divine beings, now considered them as worse than murderers, and that whoever should put them out of the world would do God and mankind good service. {8Red 22.3}

Those who believe and teach the truths of God's Word in these days meet with similar opposition from unprincipled persons who will not accept the truth, and who do not hesitate to prevaricate, and even to circulate the most glaring falsehoods in order to destroy the influence and hedge up the way of those whom God has sent with a message of warning to the world. While one class make the falsehoods and circulate them, another class are so blinded by the delusions of Satan as to receive them as the words of truth. They are in the toils of the arch-enemy, while they flatter themselves that they are the children of God. "For this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." {8Red 23.1}

The disappointment experienced by the idolaters in being refused the privilege of offering sacrifices to the apostles, prepared them to turn against these ministers of God with a zeal which approached that of the enthusiasm with which they had hailed them as gods. The malicious

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Jews did not hesitate to take full advantage of the superstition and credulity of this heathen people to carry out their cruel designs. They incited them to attack the apostles by force; and they charged them not to allow Paul an opportunity to speak, alleging that if they did so he would bewitch the people. {8Red 23.2}

The Lystrians rushed upon the apostles with great rage and fury. They hurled stones violently; and Paul, bruised, battered, and fainting, felt that his end had come. The martyrdom of Stephen was brought vividly to his mind, and the cruel part he had acted on that occasion. He fell to the ground apparently dead, and the infuriated mob dragged his insensible body through the gates of the city, and threw it beneath the walls. The apostle mentions this occurrence in the subsequent enumeration of his sufferings for the truth's sake: "Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often; in perils of waters; in perils of robbers; in perils by mine own countrymen; in perils by the heathen; in perils in the city; in perils in the wilderness; in perils in the sea; in perils among false

brethren." {8Red 24.1}

The disciples stood around the body of Paul, lamenting over him whom they supposed was dead, when he suddenly lifted his head, and arose to his feet with the praise of God upon his lips. To the disciples this seemed like a resurrection from the dead, a miracle of God to preserve the life of his faithful servant. They rejoiced with inexpressible gladness over his restoration, and praised God with renewed faith in the doctrine preached by the apostles.

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{8Red 24.2}

These disciples had been newly converted to the faith through the teachings of Paul, and had stood steadfast notwithstanding the misrepresentation and malignant persecution of the Jews. In fact, the unreasoning opposition of those wicked men had only confirmed these devoted brethren in the faith of Christ; and the restoration to life of Paul seemed to set the signet of God upon their belief. {8Red 25.1}

Timothy had been converted through the ministration of Paul, and was an eye-witness of the sufferings of the apostle upon this occasion. He stood by his apparently dead body, and saw him arise, bruised and covered with blood, not with groans nor murmurings upon his lips, but with praises to Jesus Christ, that he was permitted to suffer for his name. In one of the epistles of Paul to Timothy he refers to his personal knowledge of this occurrence. Timothy became the most important help to Paul and to the church. He was the faithful companion of the apostle in his trials and in his joys. The father of Timothy was a Greek; but his mother was a Jewess, and he had been thoroughly educated in the Jewish religion. {8Red 25.2}

Jew and Gentile.

The next day after the stoning of Paul, the apostles left the city, according to the direction of Christ: "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another." They departed for Derbe, where their labors were blessed by leading many souls to embrace the truth. But both Paul and Barnabas returned again to visit Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, the fields of labor where they

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had met such opposition and persecution. In all those places were many souls that believed the truth; and the apostles felt it their duty to strengthen and encourage their brethren who were exposed to reproach and bitter opposition. They were determined to securely bind off the work which they had done, that it might not ravel out. {8Red 25.3}

Churches were duly organized in the places before mentioned, elders appointed in each church, and the proper order and system established there. Paul and Barnabas labored in Antioch some time; and many Gentiles there embraced the doctrine of Christ. But certain Jews from Judea raised a general consternation among the believing Gentiles by agitating the question of circumcision. They asserted, with great assurance, that none could be saved without being circumcised, and keeping the entire ceremonial law. {8Red 26.1}

This was an important question, and one which affected the church in a very great

degree. Paul and Barnabas met it with promptness, and opposed introducing the subject to the Gentiles. They were opposed in this by the believing Jews of Antioch, who favored the position of those from Judea. The matter resulted in much discussion and want of harmony in the church, until finally the church at Antioch, apprehending that a division among them would occur from any further discussion of the question, decided to send Paul and Barnabas, together with some responsible men of Antioch, to Jerusalem, and lay the matter before the apostles and elders. There they were to meet delegates from the different churches, and those who had come to attend the approaching annual festivals. Meanwhile all

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controversy was to cease, until a final decision should be made by the responsible men of the church. This decision was then to be universally accepted by the various churches throughout the country. {8Red 26.2}

The apostles, in making their way to Jerusalem, called upon the brethren of the cities through which they passed, and encouraged them by relating their experience in the work of God, and the conversion of the Gentiles to the faith. Upon arriving at Jerusalem, the delegates from Antioch related before the assembly of the churches the success that had attended the ministry with them, and the confusion that had resulted from the fact that certain converted Pharisees declared that the Gentile converts must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. {8Red 27.1}

The Jews were not generally prepared to move as fast as the providence of God opened the way. It was evident to them from the result of the apostles' labors among the Gentiles that the converts among the latter people would far exceed the Jewish converts; and that if the restrictions and ceremonies of the Jewish law were not made obligatory upon their accepting the faith of Christ, the national peculiarities of the Jews, which kept them distinct from all other people, would finally disappear from among those who embraced the gospel truths. {8Red 27.2}

The Jews had prided themselves upon their divinely appointed services; and they concluded that as God once specified the Hebrew manner of worship, it was impossible that he should ever authorize a change in any of its specifications. They decided that Christianity must connect

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itself with the Jewish laws and ceremonies. They were slow to discern to the end of that which had been abolished by the death of Christ, and to perceive that all their sacrificial offerings had but prefigured the death of the Son of God, in which type had met its antitype, rendering valueless the divinely appointed ceremonies and sacrifices of the Jewish religion. {8Red 27.3}

Paul had prided himself upon his Pharisaical strictness; but after the revelation of Christ to him on the road to Damascus, the mission of the Saviour, and his own work in the conversion of the Gentiles, were plain to his mind; and he fully comprehended the difference between a living faith and a dead formalism. Paul still claimed to be one of the children of Abraham, and kept the ten commandments in letter and in spirit as faithfully as he had ever done before his conversion to Christianity. But he knew that the typical ceremonies must soon altogether cease, since that which they had

shadowed forth had come to pass, and the light of the gospel was shedding its glory upon the Jewish religion, giving a new significance to its ancient rites. {8Red 28.1}

The question of circumcision was warmly discussed in the assembly. The Gentile converts lived in a community of idolaters. Sacrifices and offerings were made to senseless idols by these ignorant and superstitious people. The priests of these gods carried on an extensive merchandise with the offerings brought to them; and the Jews feared that the Gentile converts would bring Christianity into disrepute by purchasing those things which had been offered to idols, and thereby sanctioning, in some measure, an idolatrous worship.

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{8Red 28.2}

Also the Gentiles were accustomed to eat the flesh of animals that had been strangled; while the Jews had been divinely instructed with regard to the food they should use. They were particular, in killing beasts, that the blood should flow from the body, else it was not regarded as healthful meat. God had given these injunctions to the Jews for the purpose of preserving their health and strength. The Jews considered it sinful to use blood as an article of diet. They considered that the blood was the life; that the shedding of blood was in consequence of sin, and was a sacred emblem of the Son of God. {8Red 29.1}

The Gentiles, on the contrary, practiced catching the blood which flowed from the victim of sacrifice, and drinking it, or using it in the preparation of their food. The Jews could not change the customs which they had so long observed, and which they had adopted under the special direction of God. Therefore, as things then stood, if Jew and Gentile came to eat at the same table, the former would be shocked and outraged by the habits and manners of the latter. {8Red 29.2}

The Gentiles, and especially the Greeks, were extremely licentious; and many, in accepting Christianity, had united the truth to their unsanctified natures, and continued to practice fornication. The Jewish Christians could not tolerate such immorality, which was not even regarded as criminal by the Greeks. The Jews, therefore, held it highly proper that circumcision, and the observance of the ceremonial law, should be brought to the Gentile converts as a test of their sincerity and devotion. This they believed would prevent the accession to the church of those who were carried away by mere feeling, or who adopted

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the faith without a true conversion of heart, and who might afterward disgrace the cause by immorality and excesses. {8Red 29.3}

The questions thus brought under the consideration of the council seemed to present insurmountable difficulties, viewed in whatever light. But the Holy Ghost had, in reality, already settled this problem, upon the decision of which depended the prosperity, and even the existence, of the Christian church. Grace, wisdom, and sanctified judgment were given to the apostles to decide the vexed question. {8Red 30.1}

Peter reasoned that the Holy Ghost had decided the matter by descending with equal power upon the uncircumcised Gentiles and the circumcised Jews. He recounted his vision, in which God had presented before him a sheet filled with all manner of

four-footed beasts, and had bidden him kill and eat; that when he had refused, affirming that he had never eaten that which was common or unclean, God had said, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." {8Red 30.2}

He related the plain interpretation of these words, which was given to him almost immediately in his summons to go to the Gentile centurion, and instruct him in the faith of Christ. This message showed that God was no respecter of persons, but accepted and acknowledged those who feared him, and worked righteousness. Peter told of his astonishment, when, in speaking the words of truth to the Gentiles, he witnessed the Holy Spirit take possession of his hearers, both Jews and Gentiles. The same light and glory that was reflected upon the circumcised Jews, shone also upon the countenances of the uncircumcised Gentiles. This was the warning

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of God that he should not regard the one as inferior to the other; for the blood of Jesus Christ could cleanse from all uncleanness. {8Red 30.3}

Peter had reasoned once before, in like manner, with his brethren, concerning the conversion of Cornelius and his friends, and his fellowship with them. On that occasion he had related how the Holy Ghost fell on them, and had said, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could resist God?" Now, with equal fervor and force, he said, "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" {8Red 31.1}

This yoke was not the law of the ten commandments, as those who oppose the binding claim of the law assert; but Peter referred to the law of ceremonies, which was made null and void by the crucifixion of Christ. This address of Peter brought the assembly to a point where they could listen with reason to Paul and Barnabas, who related their experience in working among the Gentiles. "Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." {8Red 31.2}

James bore his testimony with decision--that God designed to bring in the Gentiles to enjoy all the privileges of the Jews. The Holy Ghost saw good not to impose the ceremonial law on the Gentile converts; and the apostles and elders,

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after careful investigation of the subject, saw the matter in the same light, and their mind was as the mind of the Spirit of God. James presided at the council, and his final decision was, "Wherefore my sentence is that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God." {8Red 31.3}

This ended the discussion. In this instance we have a refutation of the doctrine held by the Roman Catholic Church--that Peter was the head of the church. Those who, as popes, have claimed to be his successors, have no foundation for their pretensions. Nothing in the life of Peter gives sanction to those pretended claims. If the professed successors of Peter had imitated his example, they would have taken no authoritative position, but one on an equality with that of their brethren. {8Red 32.1}

James, in this instance, seems to have been chosen to decide the matter which was brought before the council. It was his sentence that the ceremonial law, and especially the ordinance of circumcision, be not in any wise urged upon the Gentiles, or even recommended to them. James sought to impress the fact upon his brethren that the Gentiles, in turning to God from idolatry, made a great change in their faith; and that much caution should be used not to trouble their minds with perplexing and doubtful questions, lest they be discouraged in following Christ. {8Red 32.2}

The Gentiles, however, were to take no course which should materially conflict with the views of their Jewish brethren, or which would create prejudice in their minds against them. The apostles and elders therefore agreed to instruct the Gentiles by letter to abstain from meats offered to idols, from fornication, from things strangled,

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and from blood. They were required to keep the commandments, and to lead holy lives. The Gentiles were assured that the men who had urged circumcision upon them were not authorized to do so by the apostles. {8Red 32.3}

Paul and Barnabas were recommended to them as men who had hazarded their lives for the Lord. Judas and Silas were sent with these apostles to declare to the Gentiles, by word of mouth, the decision of the council: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication, from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well." The four servants of God were sent to Antioch with the epistle and message, which put an end to all controversy; for it was the voice of the highest authority upon earth. {8Red 33.1}

The council which decided this case was composed of the founders of the Jewish and Gentile Christian churches. Elders from Jerusalem, and deputies from Antioch, were present; and the most influential churches were represented. The council did not claim infallibility in their deliberations, but moved from the dictates of enlightened judgment, and with the dignity of a church established by the divine will. They saw that God himself had decided this question by favoring the Gentiles with the Holy Ghost; and it was left for them to follow the guidance of the Spirit. {8Red 33.2}

The entire body of Christians were not called to vote upon the question. The apostles and elders--men of influence and judgment--framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon

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generally accepted by the Christian churches. All were not pleased, however, with this decision; there was a faction of false brethren who assumed to engage in a work on their own responsibility. They indulged in murmuring and fault-finding, proposing new plans, and seeking to pull down the work of the experienced men whom God had ordained to teach the doctrine of Christ. The church has had such obstacles to meet from the first, and will ever have them to the close of time. {8Red 33.3}

Jerusalem was the metropolis of the Jews, and there were found the greatest exclusiveness and bigotry. The Jewish Christians who lived in sight of the temple would naturally allow their minds to revert to the peculiar privileges of the Jews as a nation. As they saw Christianity departing from the ceremonies and traditions of Judaism, and

perceived that the peculiar sacredness with which the Jewish customs had been invested would soon be lost sight of in the light of the new faith, many grew indignant against Paul, as one who had, in a great measure, caused this change. Even the disciples were not all prepared to willingly accept the decision of the council. Some were zealous for the ceremonial law, and regarded Paul with jealousy, because they thought his principles were lax in regard to the obligation of the Jewish law. {8Red 34.1}

When Peter, at a later date, visited Antioch, he acted in accordance with the light given him from Heaven, and the decision of the council. He overcame his natural prejudice so far as to sit at table with the Gentile converts. But when certain Jews who were most zealous for the ceremonial law came from Jerusalem, he changed his

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deportment toward the converts from paganism in so marked a degree that it left a most painful impression upon their minds. Quite a number followed Peter's example. Even Barnabas was influenced by the injudicious course of the apostle; and a division was threatened in the church. But Paul, who saw the wrong done the church through the double part acted by Peter, openly rebuked him for thus disguising his true sentiments. {8Red 34.2}

Peter saw the error into which he had fallen, and immediately set about repairing it as far as possible. God, who knoweth the end from the beginning, permitted Peter to exhibit this weakness of character, in order that he might see that there was nothing in himself whereof he might boast. God also saw that, in time to come, some would be so deluded as to claim for Peter and his pretended successors, exalted prerogatives which belong only to God; and this history of the apostle's weakness was to remain as a proof of his human fallibility, and of the fact that he stood in no way above the level of the other apostles. {8Red 35.1}

Imprisonment of Paul and Silas.

After a time Paul again visited Lystra, where he had been greeted as a god by the heathen; where the opposing Jews had followed on his track, and by falsehood and misrepresentation had turned the reverence of the people into insult, abuse, and a determination to kill him. Yet we find him again on the scene of his former danger, looking after the fruit of his labors there. {8Red 35.2}

He found that the converts to Christ had not been intimidated by the violent persecution of the apostles; but, on the contrary, were confirmed

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in the faith, believing that through trial and suffering, the kingdom of Christ would be reached. {8Red 35.3}

Paul found that Timothy was closely bound to him by the ties of Christian union. This man had been instructed in the Holy Scriptures from his childhood, and educated for a strictly religious life. He had witnessed the sufferings of Paul upon his former visit to Lystra, and the bonds of Christian sympathy had knit his heart firmly to that of the apostle. Paul accordingly thought best to take Timothy with him to assist in his labors. {8Red 36.1}

The extreme caution of Paul is manifested in this act. He had refused the companionship of Mark, because he dared not trust him in an emergency. But in Timothy he saw one who fully appreciated the ministerial work, who respected his position, and was not appalled at the prospect of suffering and persecution. Yet he did not venture to accept Timothy, an untried youth, without diligent inquiry with regard to his life and character. After fully satisfying himself on those points, Paul received Timothy as his fellow-laborer and son in the gospel. {8Red 36.2}

Paul, with his usual good judgment, caused Timothy to be circumcised; not that God required it, but in order to remove from the minds of the Jews an obstacle to Timothy's ministration. Paul was to labor from place to place in the synagogues, and there to preach Christ. If his companion should be known as an uncircumcised heathen, the work of both would be greatly hindered by the prejudice and bigotry of the people. The apostle everywhere met a storm of persecution. He desired to bring the Jews to Christianity, and sought, as far as was consistent with the faith, to remove every pretext for opposition.

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Yet while he conceded this much to Jewish prejudice, his faith and teachings declared that circumcision or uncircumcision was nothing, but the gospel of Christ was everything. {8Red 36.3}

At Philippi, Lydia, of the city of Thyatira, heard the apostles, and her heart was open to receive the truth. She and her household were converted and baptized, and she entreated the apostles to make her house their home. {8Red 37.1}

Day after day, as they went to their devotions, a woman with the spirit of divination followed them, crying, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." This woman was a special agent of Satan; and, as the devils were troubled by the presence of Christ, so the evil spirit which possessed her was ill at ease in the presence of the apostles. Satan knew that his kingdom was invaded, and took this way of opposing the work of the ministers of God. The words of recommendation uttered by this woman were an injury to the cause, distracting the minds of the people from the truths presented to them, and throwing disrepute upon the work by causing people to believe that the men who spoke with the Spirit and power of God were actuated by the same spirit as this emissary of Satan. {8Red 37.2}

The apostles endured this opposition for several days; then Paul, under inspiration of the Spirit of God, commanded the evil spirit to leave the woman. Satan was thus met and rebuked. The immediate and continued silence of the woman testified that the apostles were the servants of God, and that the demon had acknowledged them to be such, and had obeyed their command. When the woman was dispossessed of the spirit

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of the devil, and restored to herself, her masters were alarmed for their craft. They saw that all hope of receiving money from her divinations and soothsayings was at an end, and perceived that, if the apostles were allowed to continue their work, their own source of income would soon be entirely cut off. {8Red 37.3}

A mighty cry was therefore raised against the servants of God, for many were interested in gaining money by Satanic delusions. They brought the apostles before the

magistrates with the charge that "these men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, being Romans." {8Red 38.1}

Satan stirred up a frenzy among the people. Mob spirit prevailed, and was sanctioned by the authorities, who, with their official hands, tore the clothes from the apostles, and commanded them to be scourged. "And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely; who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." {8Red 38.2}

The apostles were left in a very painful condition. Their lacerated and bleeding backs were in contact with the rough stone floor, while their feet were elevated and bound fast in the stocks. In this unnatural position they suffered extreme torture; yet they did not groan nor complain, but conversed with and encouraged each other, and praised God with grateful hearts that they were found worthy to suffer shame for his dear name. Paul was reminded of the persecution he had been instrumental in heaping upon the

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disciples of Christ, and he was devoutly thankful that his eyes had been opened to see, and his heart to feel, the glorious truths of the gospel of the Son of God, and that he had been privileged to preach the doctrine which he had once despised. {8Red 38.3}

There, in the pitchy darkness and desolation of the dungeon, Paul and Silas prayed, and sung songs of praise to God. The other prisoners heard with astonishment the voice of prayer and praise issuing from the inner prison. They had been accustomed to hear shrieks and moans, cursing and swearing, breaking at night upon the silence of the prison; but they had never before heard the words of prayer and praise ascending from that gloomy cell. The guards and prisoners marveled who were these men, who, cold, hungry, and tortured, could still rejoice and converse cheerfully with each other. {8Red 39.1}

Meanwhile the magistrates had returned to their homes congratulating themselves upon having quelled a tumult, by their prompt and decisive measure. But upon their way home they heard more fully concerning the character and work of the men whom they had sentenced to scourging and imprisonment. They also saw the woman who had been freed from Satanic influence, and who had been a very troublesome subject to them. They were sensibly struck by the change in her countenance and demeanor. She had become quiet, peaceful, and possessed of her right mind. They were indignant with themselves when they discovered that, in all probability, they had visited upon two innocent men the rigorous penalty of the Roman law against the worst criminals. They decided that in the morning they would command them to be

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privately released, and escorted in safety from the city beyond the danger of violence from the mob. {8Red 39.2}

But while men were cruel and vindictive, or criminally negligent of the solemn responsibilities devolving upon them, God had not forgotten to be gracious to his suffering servants. An angel was sent from Heaven to release the apostles. As he

neared the Roman prison, the earth trembled beneath his feet, the whole city was shaken by the earthquake, and the prison walls reeled like a reed in the wind. The heavily bolted doors flew open; the chains and fetters fell from the hands and feet of every prisoner. {8Red 40.1}

The keeper of the jail had heard with amazement the prayers and singing of the imprisoned apostles. When they were led in, he had seen their swollen and bleeding wounds, and he had himself caused their feet to be fastened in the instruments of torture. He had expected to hear bitter wailing, groans, and imprecations; but lo! his ears were greeted with joyful praise. He fell asleep with these sounds in his ears; but was awakened by the earthquake, and the shaking of the prison walls. {8Red 40.2}

Upon awakening he saw all the prison doors open, and his first thought was that the prisoners had escaped. He remembered with what an explicit charge the prisoners of the night before had been intrusted to his care, and he felt sure that death would be the penalty of his apparent unfaithfulness. He cried out in the bitterness of his spirit that it was better for him to die by his own hand than to submit to a disgraceful execution. He was about to kill himself, when Paul cried out with a loud voice, "Do thyself no harm; for we are all here."

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{8Red 40.3}

The severity with which the jailer had treated the apostles had not roused their resentment, or they would have allowed him to commit suicide. But their hearts were filled with the love of Christ, and they held no malice against their persecutors. The jailer dropped his sword, and called for a light. He hastened into the inner dungeon, and fell down before Paul and Silas, begging their forgiveness. He then brought them up into the open court, and inquired of them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" {8Red 41.1}

He had trembled because of the wrath of God expressed in the earthquake; he had been ready to die by his own hand for fear of the penalty of the Roman law, when he thought the prisoners had escaped; but now all these things were of little consequence to him compared with the new and strange dread that agitated his mind, and his desire to possess that tranquility and cheerfulness manifested by the apostles under their extreme suffering and abuse. He saw the light of Heaven mirrored in their countenances; he knew that God had interposed in a miraculous manner to save their lives; and the words of the woman possessed by the power of divination came to his mind with peculiar force: "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." {8Red 41.2}

He saw his own deplorable condition in contrast with that of the disciples, and with deep humility and reverence asked them to show him the way of life. "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." The jailer then washed the wounds of the apostles,

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and ministered unto them; and was baptized by them. A sanctifying influence spread among the inmates of the prison, and the hearts of all were opened to receive the truths

uttered by the apostles. They were convinced also that the living God, whom these men served, had miraculously released them from bondage. {8Red 41.3}

The citizens had been greatly terrified by the earthquake. When the officers informed the magistrates in the morning of what had occurred at the prison, they were alarmed, and sent the sergeants to liberate the apostles from prison. "But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out." {8Red 42.1}

Paul and Silas felt that to maintain the dignity of Christ's church, they must not submit to the illegal course proposed by the Roman magistrates. The apostles were Roman citizens, and it was unlawful to scourge a Roman, save for the most flagrant crime, or to deprive him of his liberty without a fair trial and condemnation. They had been publicly thrust into prison, and now refused to be privately released, without proper acknowledgments on the part of the magistrates. {8Red 42.2}

When this word was brought to the authorities they were alarmed for fear the apostles would make complaint of their unlawful treatment to the emperor, and cause the magistrates to lose their positions. They accordingly visited the prison, apologized to the apostles for their injustice and cruelty, and themselves conducted them out of the prison, and entreated them to depart

out of the city. Thus the Lord wrought for his servants in their extremity. {8Red 42.3}

The magistrates entreated them to depart, because they feared their influence over the people, and the power of Heaven that had interposed in behalf of those innocent men who had been unlawfully scourged and imprisoned. Acting upon the principles given them by Christ, the apostles would not urge their presence where it was not desired. They complied with the request of the magistrates, but did not hasten their departure precipitously. They went rejoicing from the prison to the house of Lydia, where they met the new converts to the faith of Christ, and related all the wonderful dealings of God with them. They related their night's experience, and the conversion of the keeper of the prison, and of the prisoners. {8Red 43.1}

The apostles viewed their labors in Philippi as not in vain. They there met much opposition and persecution; but the intervention of Providence in their behalf, and the conversion of the jailer and all his house, more than atoned for the disgrace and suffering they had endured. The Philippians saw represented in the deportment and presence of mind of the apostles the spirit of the religion of Jesus Christ. The apostles might have fled when the earthquake opened their prison doors, and loosened their fetters; but that would have been an acknowledgment that they were criminals, which would have been a disgrace to the gospel of Christ; the jailer would have been exposed to the penalty of death, and the general influence would have been bad. As it was, Paul controlled the liberated prisoners so perfectly that not one attempted to escape. {8Red 43.2}

The Philippians could but acknowledge the

nobility and generosity of the apostles in their course of action, especially in forbearing

to appeal to a higher power against the magistrates who had persecuted them. The news of their unjust imprisonment, and miraculous deliverance, was noised about through all that region, and brought the apostles and their ministry before the notice of a large number who would not otherwise have been reached. Christianity was placed upon a high plane, and the converts to the faith were greatly strengthened. {8Red 43.3}

Thus we have the establishment of the church at Philippi under peculiar circumstances, and its numbers steadily increased. Among them were men of wealth and influence, whose noble generosity and ready sympathy were ever on the side of right. They often came to the aid of the apostles in their affliction and pecuniary necessity. Paul said of these brethren, "Now ye Philippians, know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." {8Red 44.1}

He sends also salutations from the brethren to Caesar's household; for officers in the employment of the emperor had been converted under the labors of the apostles, and through the manifestation of God in their deliverance from prison. {8Red 44.2}

Opposition at Thessalonica.

After leaving Philippi, Paul and Silas made their way to Thessalonica. They were there privileged to address a large concourse of people in the synagogue, with good effect. Their

appearance bore evidence of their recent shameful treatment, and necessitated an explanation of what they had endured. This they made without exalting themselves, but magnified the grace of God, which had wrought their deliverance. The apostles, however, felt that they had no time to dwell upon their own afflictions. They were burdened with the message of Christ, and deeply in earnest in his work. {8Red 44.3}

Paul made the prophecies in the Old Testament relating to the Messiah, and the agreement of those prophecies with the life and teachings of Christ, clear in the minds of all among his hearers who would accept evidence upon the subject. Christ in his ministry had opened the minds of his disciples to the Old-Testament scriptures; "beginning with Moses and the prophets, he expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself." Peter, in preaching Christ, produced his evidence from the Old-Testament scriptures, beginning with Moses and the prophets. Stephen pursued the same course, and Paul followed these examples, giving inspired proof in regard to the mission, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. He clearly proved his identity with the Messiah, through the testimony of Moses and the Prophets; and showed that it was the voice of Christ which spoke through the prophets and patriarchs from the days of Adam to that time. {8Red 45.1}

He showed how impossible it was for them to explain the passover without Christ, as revealed in the Old Testament; and that the brazen serpent lifted up in the wilderness symbolized Jesus Christ, who was lifted up upon the cross. He taught them that all their religious services and

ceremonies would have been valueless if they should now reject the Saviour, who was revealed to them, and who was represented in those ceremonies. He showed them that Christ was the key which unlocked the Old Testament, and gave access to its rich treasures. {8Red 45.2}

Thus Paul preached to the Thessalonians three successive Sabbaths, reasoning with them from the Scriptures, upon the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. He showed them that the expectation of the Jews with regard to the Messiah was not according to prophecy, which had foretold a Saviour to come in humility and poverty, to be rejected, despised, and slain. {8Red 46.1}

He declared that Christ would come a second time in power and great glory, and establish his kingdom upon the earth, subduing all authority, and ruling over all nations. Paul was an Adventist; he presented the important event of the second coming of Christ with such power and reasoning that a deep impression, which never wore away, was made upon the minds of the Thessalonians. {8Red 46.2}

They had strong faith in the second coming of Christ, and greatly feared that they might not live to witness the event. Paul, however, did not leave them with the impression that Christ would come in their day. He referred them to coming events which must transpire before that time should arrive. He warned them that they should "be not shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

{8Red 46.3}

Paul foresaw that there was danger of his words being misinterpreted, and that some would claim that he, by special revelation, warned the people of the immediate coming of Christ. This he knew would cause confusion of faith; for disappointment usually brings unbelief. He therefore cautioned the brethren to receive no such message as coming from him. {8Red 47.1}

In his Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul reminds them of his manner of laboring among them. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-4. He declares that he did not seek to win souls through flattery, deception, or guile. "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." Paul rebuked and warned his converts with the faithfulness of a father to his children, while, at the same time, he cherished them as tenderly as a fond mother would her child. {8Red 47.2}

When the Jews saw that the apostles were successful in obtaining large congregations; that many were accepting their doctrines--among them the leading women of the city, and multitudes of Gentiles--they were filled with envy and jealousy. These Jews were not then in favor with the Roman power, because they had raised an insurrection in the metropolis not long previous to this time. They were regarded with suspicion, and their liberty was, in a measure, restricted. They now saw an opportunity to take advantage of circumstances to re-establish themselves in favor, and, at the

same time, to throw reproach upon the apostles, and the converts to Christianity. {8Red 47.3}

This they set about doing by representing that the leaders in the new doctrine were raising a tumult among the people. They accordingly

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excited the passions of the worthless mob by cunningly devised falsehoods, and incited them to make an uproarious assault upon the house of Jason, the temporary home of the apostles. This they did with a fury more like that of wild beasts than of men. They had been instructed by the Jews to bring out Paul and Silas, and drag them to the authorities, accusing them of creating all this uproar, and of raising an insurrection. {8Red 47.4}

When they had broken into the house, however, they found that the apostles were not there. Friends who had apprehended what was about to occur, had hastened them out of the city, and they had departed for Berea. In their mad disappointment at not finding Paul and Silas, the mob seized Jason and his brother, and dragged them before the authorities with the complaint: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; whom Jason hath received; and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus." {8Red 48.1}

The Jews interpreted the words of Paul to mean that Christ would come the second time in that generation, and reign upon the earth as king over all nations. The charge was brought against the apostles with so much determination that the magistrates credited it, and put Jason under bonds to keep the peace, as Paul and Silas were not to be found. The persecuting Jews flattered themselves that by their course toward the Christians they had regained the confidence of the magistrates, and had established their reputation as loyal citizens, while they had, at the same time, gratified their malice toward the apostles, and transferred the suspicion which had

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heretofore rested upon themselves to the converts to Christianity. {8Red 48.2}

In his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul says, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." {8Red 49.1}

Those who preach unpopular truth in our day meet with determined resistance, as did the apostles. They need expect no more favorable reception from a large majority of professed Christians than did Paul from his Jewish brethren. There will be a union of opposing elements against them; for however diverse from each other different organizations may be in their sentiments and religious faith, their forces are united in trampling under foot the fourth commandment in the law of God. {8Red 49.2}

Those who will not themselves accept the truth are most zealous that others shall not receive it; and those are not wanting who perseveringly manufacture falsehoods, and stir up the base passions of the people to make the truth of God of none effect. But the messengers of Christ must arm themselves with watchfulness and prayer, and

move forward with faith, firmness, and courage, and, in the name of Jesus, keep at their work as did the apostles. They must sound the note of warning to the world, teaching the transgressors of the law what is sin, and pointing them to Jesus Christ as its great and only remedy.

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{8Red 49.3}

Paul at Berea and Athens.

At Berea Paul commenced his work again by going into the synagogues of the Jews to preach the gospel of Christ. He says of them, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women, which were Greeks, and of men not a few." {8Red 50.1}

We here see that questioning doubts and obstinate unbelief were not commended by the inspired apostle. In the presentation of the truth, in these last days, a diligent searching of the Scriptures should be awakened in those who honestly desire to be right. This will produce similar results to those that attended the labors of the apostles in Berea. Those who preach the truth in these days meet many who are the opposite of the Bereans. They cannot controvert the doctrine presented to them, yet they manifest the utmost reluctance to investigate the evidence offered in its favor, and assume that even if it is the truth it is a matter of little or no consequence whether or not they accept it as such. They think that their old customs and faith are good enough for them. But the Lord, who has sent out the apostles and their successors to their work, giving them a message to bear to the world, will hold the people responsible for the manner in which they treat that message of heavenly origin. God will judge all according to the light which has been presented to them. {8Red 50.2}

The apostles taught during the day, disseminating

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light to those who were in darkness; and then, through the larger portion of the night, labored with their hands to sustain themselves without calling upon any one for material aid. They did this to remove all suspicion that they were seeking personal advantage. Paul afterward writes, "For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail; for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." {8Red 50.3}

The minds of the Bereans were not narrowed by prejudice, and they were willing to investigate and receive the truths preached by the apostles. If men and women would follow the example of the noble Bereans, in searching the Scriptures daily, and in comparing the messages brought to them with what is there recorded, there would be thousands loyal to God's law, where there is one today. Even many who profess to love God have no desire to change from error to truth, but cling to the pleasing fables of Satan's creation. Error never sanctifies the receiver; but truth of heavenly origin purifies the heart. {8Red 51.1}

The unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica, filled with jealousy and hatred of the

apostles, not content with having driven them from their labors among the Thessalonians, followed them to Berea, and again stirred up the excitable passions of the lower class to do them violence. The teachers of the truth were again driven from their field of labor. Persecution followed them from city to city. This hasty retreat from Berea deprived Paul of the opportunity he had anticipated of again visiting the brethren at Thessalonica. {8Red 51.2}

Although the opposers of the doctrine of Christ

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could not hinder its actual advancement, they still succeeded in making the work of the apostles exceedingly hard. God, in his providence, permitted Satan to hinder the return of Paul to the Thessalonians. The faithful apostle pressed on through opposition, conflict, and persecution, to carry out the purpose of God as revealed to him in vision. {8Red 51.3}

Paul was sent from Berea to Athens. He was accompanied on his journey by some of the Bereans who had been newly brought into the faith, and who were desirous of learning more concerning the way of life from his teachings. When the apostle arrived at Athens, he sent these men back with a message to Silas and Timotheus to join him immediately in that city. The latter had remained behind in Berea to carry on the work so well commenced there, and to guide the new converts into the mysteries of their holy faith. {8Red 52.1}

Athens was indeed the metropolis of heathendom. Paul did not here meet with ignorant, superstitious idolaters, as at Lystra; but he encountered a people famous for their intelligence and education. Sculpture, representing gods, and deified heroes of history and poetry, met the eye in every direction; while magnificent architecture and paintings represented the national glory, and the national worship of imaginary gods. {8Red 52.2}

The senses were entranced by the beauty and glory of art. Sanctuaries and temples, erected with a total disregard to cost, reared their lofty forms on every hand. Victories of arms, and deeds of renowned men, were commemorated by tablets, and inscriptions upon marble. All these

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things made this renowned city like a vast gallery of art. As Paul looked upon the beauty and grandeur surrounding him, and saw the city crowded with idols, his spirit was stirred with jealousy for God, whom he saw dishonored on every side. {8Red 52.3}

His heart was drawn out in deep pity for the citizens of that grand metropolis, who, notwithstanding their intellectual greatness, were given to idolatry. Paul was not deceived by the grandeur and beauty of that which his eyes rested upon, nor by the material wisdom and philosophy which encountered him in this great center of learning. He perceived that human art had done its best to deify vice and make falsehood attractive by glorifying the memory of those whose whole lives had been devoted to leading men to deny God. {8Red 53.1}

The great moral nature of the apostle was so alive to the attraction of heavenly things, that the joy and splendor of those riches that will never fade occupied his mind, and made valueless the earthly pomp and glory with which he was surrounded. As he

saw the magnificence of the city, and its costly devices, he realized their seductive power over the minds of the lovers of art and science; his mind was deeply impressed by the importance of the work before him in Athens. He longed with affection for the sympathy and aid of his fellow-laborers. His solitude in that city of magnificence, where God was not worshiped, was oppressive. As far as human fellowship was concerned, he felt himself to be utterly isolated. In his Epistle to the Thessalonians he expresses his feelings in these words; "Left at Athens alone."

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{8Red 53.2}

Paul's work was to bear the tidings of salvation to a people who had no intelligent understanding of God and his plans. He was not traveling for the purpose of sight-seeing, nor to gratify a morbid desire for new and strange scenes. His dejection of mind was caused by the apparently insurmountable obstacles which presented themselves against his reaching the minds of the people of Athens. Grieved and indignant at the idolatry everywhere visible about him, he felt a holy zeal for his Master's cause. He sought out his Jewish brethren, and, in the Jewish synagogue of Athens, proclaimed the doctrine of Christ. But the principal work of Paul in that city was to deal with paganism. {8Red 54.1}

The religion of the Athenians, of which they made great boast, was of no value, for it was destitute of the knowledge of the true God. It consisted, in great part, of art-worship, and a round of dissipating amusement and festivity. It wanted the virtue of true goodness. Genuine religion gives men the victory over themselves; but a religion of dry intellect and taste is lacking in the essential qualities to raise its possessor above the evils of his nature, and to connect him with God. On the very stones of the altar in Athens this great want was expressed by the inscription, "To the Unknown God." Yes, though boasting of their wisdom, wealth, and skill of art and science, the learned Athenians could but acknowledge that the great Ruler of the universe was unknown to them. {8Red 54.2}

The great men of the city seemed hungering for matters of discussion, in which they would have opportunity to display their wisdom and oratory. While waiting for Silas and Timotheus

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to meet him, Paul was not idle, "He disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him." The great men of Athens were not long in finding out this singular teacher, who propounded such strange things to the people on all suitable occasions. {8Red 54.3}

Some who prided themselves upon the depth of their intellectual culture entered into conversation with him. This soon drew a crowd of listeners about them. Some were prepared to ridicule the apostle, as one far beneath them, socially and intellectually, and said jeeringly among themselves, "What will this babbler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods; because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection." {8Red 55.1}

The Stoics and the Epicureans encountered him; but they, and all others who came in contact with him, soon saw that he had a fund of knowledge even greater than their

own. His intellectual power commanded the respect and attention of the more intelligent and learned; while his earnest, logical reasoning, and his power of oratory, held the promiscuous audience. Thus the apostle stood undaunted, meeting his opposers on their own ground, matching logic with their logic, and philosophy with their philosophy. {8Red 55.2}

They reminded him of Socrates, a great philosopher, who was condemned to death because he was a setter forth of strange gods. Paul was counseled not to endanger his life in the same way. But the apostle's discourse riveted the attention of the people; and his unaffected wisdom commanded their admiration and respect. He was not silenced by the science or irony of the

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savants; and, after bandying many words with him and satisfying themselves that he was determined to accomplish his errand among them, and tell his story at all hazards, they decided to give him a fair opportunity of doing so. {8Red 55.3}

They accordingly conducted him to Mars' Hill. This place was the highest on the Athenian coast, and its recollection and associations were such as to cause it to be regarded with superstitious awe and reverence, that with some amounted to dread. There courts of justice had been held to determined upon criminal cases, and to decide difficult religious questions. There was a platform in the open air, with seats for the judges hewn out of solid rock. This platform was reached by stone steps. At a little distance below stood the temple of the gods, and their sanctuaries; and massive architecture, sculpture, and statuary made the place one of great magnificence. {8Red 56.1}

Here the Athenians conducted Paul, away from the public thoroughfares, and the tumult of promiscuous discussion; for the frivolous, thoughtless class of society did not care to follow him to this place of highest reverence. Here the apostle could be heard without interruption. Learned men addressed him: "May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? for thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know, therefore, what these things mean." "Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To The Unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all

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things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 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." {8Red 56.2}

Thus, in the most impressive manner, with hand outstretched toward the temple crowded with idols, Paul poured out the burden of his soul, and with deep reasoning revealed the fallacies of the religion of the Athenians. His words could not be converted.

Pointing to their statuary and idols, he declared to them that God could not be likened to forms of men's device. The works of art could not, in the faintest sense, represent the glory of the infinite God. He reminded them that their images had no breath nor life. They were controlled by human power; they could move only as the hands of men moved them; and those who worshiped them were in every way superior to that which they worshiped. Pointing to noble specimens of manhood about him, he declared, "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." {8Red 57.1}

Man was created in the image of this infinite God, being blessed with intellectual power, and a perfect and symmetrical body. He declared that the heavens were not large enough to

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contain God; yet how much less able were those temples made with hands. Paul, under the inspiration of his subject, soared above the comprehension of the idolatrous assembly, and sought to draw their minds beyond the limits of their false religion to right views of the true Deity, whom they instinctively acknowledged, and had called the "Unknown God," This glorious Being, whom he now declared unto them, was independent of man, needing nothing from his hand to add to his power and glory. {8Red 57.2}

The people were carried away with admiration of Paul's reasoning and eloquence. The Epicureans began to breathe more freely, believing that he was strengthening their position, that everything had its origin in blind chance; and that certain ruling principles controlled the universe. But his next sentence brought a cloud to their brows. He asserted the creative power of God, and the existence of his overruling providence. He declared unto them the true God, who is the living center of government. {8Red 58.1}

This divine Ruler had, in the dark ages of the world, passed lightly over heathen idolatry; but now he had sent them the light of truth, through his Son; and he exacted repentance from all men unto salvation; not only from the poor and humble, but from the proud philosopher, and the princes of the earth. "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." {8Red 58.2}

As Paul thus spoke of the resurrection from the dead, his speech was interrupted. Some

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mocked; others put his words aside, saying,"We will hear thee again of this matter." Thus the teaching of the apostle was brought to a close; for the Athenians, though enjoying the reputation of high literary and scientific culture, clung to their idolatry, and turned away from the light of a true and reasonable religion. When a people are wholly satisfied with their own attainments, little more need be expected of them. Highly educated, and boasting of their learning and refinement, the Athenians were yearly becoming more corrupt, and having less desire for anything better than that which they possessed. {8Red 58.3}

The labors of Paul in Athens were not wholly in vain. Several became converts to Christianity, and joined themselves to him. His words also, and the description of his attitude and surroundings, as traced by the pen of inspiration, were to be handed down through all coming generations, bearing witness of his unshaken confidence, his courage in loneliness and adversity, and the victory he gained for Christianity, even in the very heart of paganism. {8Red 59.1}

The providence of God has given us this glance at the life of the Athenians, in all their knowledge, refinement, and art, yet marked with vice and shame, that he might show how through his servant he rebuked idolatry, and the sins of a proud, self-sufficient people. The words of Paul memorialize the occasions, and give a treasure of knowledge to the church. He was placed in a position where he might easily have spoken that which would irritate his proud listeners, and bring himself into difficulty. Had his oration been a direct attack upon their gods, and the great men of the city who were before him, he would have

been in danger of meeting the fate of Socrates. But he carefully drew their minds away from heathen deities, by revealing to them the true God, whom he acknowledged, but who was to them unknown, as they themselves confessed by a public inscription. {8Red 59.2}

Paul Goes to Corinth.

Paul did not wait for his brethren, but, leaving them to follow him, went at once to Corinth. Here he adopted a different course of action from that which had marked his labors at Athens. While in the latter place, he had adapted his style to the character of his audience; and much of his time had been devoted to the discussion of natural religion, matching science with science, logic with logic, and philosophy with philosophy. But when the apostle reviewed the time and labor he had there devoted to the exposition of Christianity, and realized that his style of teaching had not been productive of much fruit, he decided upon a different plan of labor in the future. He determined to avoid discussions of theories and elaborate arguments as much as possible, but to urge the doctrine of salvation through Christ upon sinners. In his epistle to his Corinthian brethren, he afterward described his manner of laboring among them:-- {8Red 60.1}

"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching

was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." {8Red 60.2}

Here the apostle has given the most successful manner of converting souls from ignorance and the darkness of error, to the light of truth. If ministers would follow more

closely the example of Paul in this particular, they would see greater success attending their efforts. If all who minister in word and doctrine would make it their first business to be pure in heart and life, and to connect themselves closely with Heaven, their teaching would have greater power to convict souls, and many would be converted to God. {8Red 61.1}

Corinth presented to the apostle an important field. It was a large mercantile city, closely connected with Rome. Paul saw that if the gospel could be established there it would be rapidly communicated to all parts of the world. The Jews who had recently been banished from Rome, because of their continual insurrections, had taken up their residence at Corinth. Many who were innocent of any wrong were violently persecuted and were compelled to suffer with the guilty. Among this class were Aquila and Priscilla. Paul made the particular acquaintance of these persons, because their trade and his own were the same. {8Red 61.2}

The apostle preached through the day, and at night worked with Aquila and Priscilla at tent-making. While in a city of strangers, he would not be chargeable to any one, but labored with his hands for his own support; and while thus preaching and working, he presented the highest type of Christianity. He combined teaching

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with his labor; and, while toiling with those of his trade, he imparted to his fellow-workmen knowledge in regard to the way of salvation. In this way he had access to many whom he could not otherwise have reached. {8Red 61.3}

Corinth was regarded as a very unpromising field of labor. Idolaters were there in numbers, and Venus was their favorite goddess. A large number of dissolute women were employed in connection with the worship of this reigning deity, for the purpose of attracting pleasure-seekers of lax morals. The Corinthians were sunken to the depths of moral pollution. {8Red 62.1}

Paul found himself in the midst of a numerous population of Greeks and Jews. People from all parts of the world were called to this place. The apostle, according to his custom, preached first in the synagogue every Sabbath. When Silas and Timotheus joined him, they labored together with Paul. But when he taught that Jesus was the Messiah, the Jews were angry. "And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshiped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue." {8Red 62.2}

The apostle, in his teaching, dwelt upon Christ, and proved from Moses and the prophets that he was the long-looked-for Messiah. He did not labor to charm the ear with oratory, nor to engage the mind with philosophical discussions, which would leave the heart untouched. He preached the cross of Christ, not with labored

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eloquence of speech, but with the grace of God; and his words had a powerful effect. "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized." {8Red 62.3}

Paul met the worst opposition from the Jews. They hindered his labor in every way

possible, blaspheming the Spirit and power which everywhere attended him, and attributing to Satanic agency the miracles he wrought in the name of Christ. The conversion and baptism of Crispus had the effect to exasperate instead of to convince these stubborn opposers. Their opposition increased as the converts to Christianity increased in numbers. Similar results attend the labors of those who seek to win souls to the present truth. Many professed Christians are the most bitter and unreasonable opposers, in defiance of the most convincing evidence. {8Red 63.1}

Paul was very anxious to understand his duty, and the Lord gave him evidence that he was interested in his work, and cognizant of his anxiety and discouragement. A vision was given him in the night season, assuring him of the divine presence and support, promising him safety and success, and urging him not to keep silence, but to continue his efforts with renewed courage. In the moment of severe trial, conscious strength was thus given him of God to prepare him for still greater demonstrations on the part of the Jews. {8Red 63.2}

The increased success of Paul in presenting Christ to the people, roused the unbelieving Jews to more determined opposition. They arose in a body with great tumult, and brought him before

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the judgment-seat of Gallio, who was then deputy of Achaia. They expected, as on former occasions, to have the authorities on their side, and with loud and angry voices preferred their complaints against the apostle, saying, "This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law." {8Red 63.3}

The proconsul, disgusted with the bigotry and self-righteousness of the accusing Jews, refused to take notice of the charge. As Paul prepared to speak in self-defense, Gallio informed him that it was not necessary; that the affair did not come under his authority. Then turning to the angry accusers, he said, "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you. But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters. And he drove them from the judgment-seat." {8Red 64.1}

For the first time during Paul's labors in Europe, the mob turned on the side of the minister of truth; and, under the very eye of the proconsul, and without interference from him, the people violently beset the most prominent accusers of the apostle. "Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things." {8Red 64.2}

Gallio was a man of integrity, and would not become the dupe of the jealous and intriguing Jews. Unlike Pilate, he refused to do injustice to one whom he knew to be an innocent man. The Jewish religion was under the protection of Roman power; and the accusers of Paul thought that, if they could fasten upon him the charge of violating the laws of their religion, he would

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probably be given into their hands for such punishment as they saw fit to inflict. They thus hoped to compass his death. {8Red 64.3}

Both Greeks and Jews had waited eagerly for the decision of Gallio; and his immediate dismissal of the case, as one that had no bearing upon the public interest,

was the signal for the Jews to retire, baffled, and enraged, and for the mob to assail the ruler of the synagogue. Even the ignorant rabble could but perceive the unjust and vindictive spirit which the Jews displayed in their unreasonable attack upon Paul. Thus Christianity obtained a signal victory. If the apostle had been driven from Corinth at this time, because of the malice of the Jews, the whole community of converts to the faith of Christ would have been placed in great danger. The Jews would have endeavored to follow up their advantage, as was their custom, even to the extermination of Christianity. {8Red 65.1}

"And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them." {8Red 65.2}

Apollos at Corinth.

Paul's next scene of labor was at Ephesus. He was on his way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost; and his stay at Ephesus was necessarily short. He reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue, and produced such a favorable impression that he was entreated to tarry there, and to protract his labors among them. His plan to visit Jerusalem prevented him from doing so; but he promised to visit them on his return. He left Aquila and Priscilla to

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carry forward the good work which he had begun. {8Red 65.3}

It was at this time that Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew, visited Ephesus. He had received the highest Grecian cultivation, and was a scholar and an orator. He had heard the teachings of John the Baptist, had received the baptism of repentance, and was a living witness that the work of the prophet was not in vain. Apollos was a deep student of the prophecies, and was a powerful expounder of scripture, publicly proclaiming his faith in Christ, as far as he himself had received the light. {8Red 66.1}

Aquila and Priscilla listened to this able speaker, and saw that his teaching was defective. He had not a thorough knowledge of the mission of Christ, his resurrection and ascension, and of his Spirit, the Comforter, which he sent to his people. They accordingly sent for Apollos, and the educated orator received instruction from them with grateful surprise and joy. They explained the scripture to him more clearly than he had before understood it, and he became one of the ablest defenders of the Christian church. Thus a deep scholar and brilliant orator learned the way of the Lord more perfectly from the teachings of a Christian man and woman whose humble employment was that of tent-making. {8Red 66.2}

Apollos, having seen new light in regard to the way of salvation through Christ, accepted it gladly, and reasoned from the Scriptures with greater power and success than he had ever before done. He felt anxious to visit Corinth, and the Ephesian brethren wrote to the Corinthians to receive him as a teacher who was in full harmony with the acknowledged church of Christ. He accordingly went to Corinth, and labored

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with the very Jews who had rejected the truth as preached to them by Paul. He urged with them from house to house, both publicly and privately, showing them Christ in

prophecy; that he was Jesus whom Paul had preached, and that all their expectations of another Messiah to come were in vain. Thus Paul planted the seed of truth, and Apollos watered it; and the fact of Apollos supporting the mission of Paul gave character to the past labors of the apostle among them. {8Red 66.3}

His success in preaching the gospel occasioned some of the church to exalt his labors above those of Paul, while he himself was working in perfect harmony with Paul for the advancement of the cause. This rival spirit threatened to greatly hinder the work. Paul had purposely presented the gospel to the Corinthians in its veriest simplicity. Disappointed with the result of his labors in Athens, where he had brought his learning, eloquence, and ability to bear upon his hearers, he determined to pursue an entirely different course in Corinth. He presented there the plain, simple truth, unadorned with worldly wisdom, and studiously dwelt upon Christ, and his mission to the world. The eloquent discourses of Apollos, and his manifest learning, were contrasted by his hearers with the purposely simple and unadorned preaching of Paul. {8Red 67.1}

Many declared themselves to be under the leadership of Apollos, while others composed another party perseveringly adhering to the instructions of Paul. Satan came in to take advantage of these imaginary differences in the Corinthian church, tempting them to draw comparisons between the ministers who taught the

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way of salvation. Some claimed Apollos as their leader, some Paul, and some Peter. Thus Paul, in his efforts to establish Christianity, met with conflicts and trials in the church as well as outside of it. Factions were beginning to rise through the influence of Judaizing teachers, who urged that the converts to Christianity should observe the ceremonial law in the matter of circumcision. {8Red 67.2}

They still maintained that the original Israel were the exalted and privileged children of Abraham, entitled to all the promises made to Abraham. They sincerely thought that in taking this medium ground between Jew and Christian, they would succeed in wiping out the odium which attached to Christianity, and gather in large numbers of the Jews who would not otherwise embrace the true faith. They vindicated their position, which was in opposition to that of Paul, by showing that the course of the apostle, in accepting the Gentiles into the church without circumcision, prevented more Jews from accepting the faith than there were accessions from the Gentiles. Thus they excused their opposition to the results of the calm deliberations of God's acknowledged servants. {8Red 68.1}

They refused to admit that the work of Christ embraced the whole world; but claimed that he was the Saviour of the Hebrews alone; therefore they maintained that the Gentiles should receive circumcision before being admitted to the privileges of the church of Christ. After the decision of the council at Jerusalem concerning this question, many were of this same opinion, but did not then venture to push the matter farther. The council had, on that occasion, decided that

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the Jewish Christians might observe the ordinances of the Mosaic law if they chose, while they should not be made obligatory upon the Gentile Christians. The opposing class now took advantage of this to urge a distinction between the observers of the

ceremonial law and those who did not observe it, holding that the latter were removed farther from God than the former. {8Red 68.2}

Here Paul was forced into the battle, to argue the question whether the converts to Christianity should be Jews in every respect, save their belief that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, or whether they should discern to the end of that which had been abolished by the death of Christ, and bear evidence that they were children of Abraham, not merely in their bodies, but in their hearts, showing by their righteous lives the merits of the grace of Christ. {8Red 69.1}

Paul's indignation was stirred. His voice was raised in stern rebuke: "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." The party maintaining that Christianity was valueless without circumcision arrayed themselves against the apostle, and Paul had to meet them in every church which he had raised up; in Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. God urged him out to the great work of preaching Christ and him crucified; that circumcision or uncircumcision was nothing. The Judaizing party looked upon Paul as an apostate, bent upon breaking down the partition wall which God had established between the Israelites and the world. They visited every church which he had organized, creating divisions. Reasoning that the end would justify the means, they circulated false charges against the apostle, and endeavored to

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bring him into disrepute. As Paul, in visiting the churches, followed after these zealous and unscrupulous opposers, he met many who viewed him with distrust, and some who even despised his labors. {8Red 69.2}

These divisions in regard to the ceremonial law, and the relative merits of the different ministers teaching the doctrine of Christ, caused the apostle much anxiety and hard labor. In his Epistle to the Corinthians, he thus addresses them on the latter subject:-- {8Red 70.1}

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" {8Red 70.2}

He also explains the reason of his manner of labor among them: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" {8Red 70.3}

He thus shows them that he could not, when with them, address them as those who had an experience in spiritual life and the mystery of

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godliness. However wise they might have been in worldly knowledge, they were but babes in the knowledge of Christ, and it was his work to instruct them in the first rudiments, the very alphabet of Christian faith and doctrine. It was his task to sow the

seed, which another must water. It was the business of those who followed him to carry forward the work from the point where he had left it, and to give spiritual light and knowledge in due season, as they were able to bear it. {8Red 70.4}

When he came to them they had no experimental knowledge of the way of salvation, and he was obliged to present the truth in its simplest form. Their carnal minds could not discern the sacred revealings of God; they were strangers to the manifestations of divine grace. Paul had spoken to them as those who were ignorant of the operations of that grace upon the heart. They were carnal-minded, and the apostle was aware that they could not comprehend the mysteries of salvation; for spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. He knew that many of his hearers were proud believers in human theories, and reasoners of false theologies, groping with blind eyes in the book of nature for a contradiction of the spiritual and immortal life revealed in the Book of God. {8Red 71.1}

He knew that criticism would set about controverting the Christian interpretation of the revealed word, and skepticism would treat the gospel of Christ with scoffing and derision. It behooved him to introduce most carefully the great truths he wished to teach them. True Christianity is a religion of progress. It is ever giving light and blessing, and has in resource still greater

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light and blessing to bestow on those who receive its truths. The illuminating influence of the gospel of Christ, and the sanctifying grace of God, can alone transform the carnal mind to be in harmony with spiritual things. {8Red 71.2}

Paul did not venture to directly rebuke the licentious, and to show them how heinous was their sin in the sight of a holy God. His work was, as a wise teacher, to set before them the true aim and object of life, impressing upon their minds the lessons of the divine Teacher, which sought to bring them up from worldliness and sin, to purity and immortal life. The spiritual senses must be matured by continual advancement in the knowledge of heavenly things. Thus the mind would learn to delight in them; and every precept of the Word of God would shine forth as a priceless gem. {8Red 72.1}

Paul had especially dwelt upon practical godliness, and the character of that holiness which must be gained in order to make sure of the kingdom of Heaven. He wished the light of the gospel of Christ to pierce the darkness of their minds, that they might discern how aggravating to God were their immoral practices. Therefore the burden of Paul's preaching among them had been Christ, and him crucified. He wished them to understand that the theme for their most earnest study, and greatest joy, should be the grand truth of salvation through repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and in the saving merits of his blood. {8Red 72.2}

The philosopher turns aside from the light of salvation because it puts his proud theories to shame. The worldling refuses to receive it, because it would separate him from his earthly

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idols, and draw him to a holier life, for which he has no inclination. Paul saw that the character of Christ must be understood before men could love him, and view the cross with the eye of faith. Here must begin that study which shall be the science and the

song of the redeemed through all eternity. In the light of the cross alone can the true value of the human soul be estimated. {8Red 72.3}

The refining influence of the grace of God changes the natural disposition of man. Heaven would not be desirable to the carnal-minded; their natural, unsanctified hearts would feel no attraction toward that pure and holy place; and if it were possible for them to enter, they would find nothing there congenial to them, in their sinful condition. The carnal propensities which reign in the natural heart must be subdued by the grace of Christ, before fallen man can be elevated to harmonize with Heaven, and enjoy the society of the pure and holy angels. When man dies to sin, and is quickened to new life in Christ Jesus, divine love fills his heart; his understanding is sanctified; he drinks from an inexhaustible fountain of joy and knowledge; and the light of an eternal day shines upon his path, for he has the light of life with him continually. {8Red 73.1}

Paul now sought to impress upon them the fact that he himself, and the ministers who followed him, were only men, commissioned of God to teach them the truth; that they were individually engaged in the same work, which was marked out for them by their Heavenly Father; that they were all dependent upon him for the success which attended their labors. "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of

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Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." {8Red 73.2}

The consciousness of being God's servants inspires the minister with energy and diligence to perseveringly discharge his duty, with an eye single to the glory of his Master. God has given to each of his messengers his distinctive work; and, while there is a diversity of gifts, all are to blend harmoniously in carrying forward the great work of salvation. They are only instruments of divine grace and power. {8Red 74.1}

Paul says, "So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one; and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." The teacher of Christ's truth must be near the cross himself, in order to bring sinners to it. His work should be to preach Christ, and to studiously avoid calling attention to himself and thus encumbering the sacred truth, lest he hinder its saving power. {8Red 74.2}

There can be no stronger evidence in churches that the truths of the Bible have not sanctified the receivers than their attachment to some favorite minister, and their unwillingness to accept and be profited by the labors of some other teacher who is sent to them in the providence of God. The Lord sends help to his church as they need, not as they choose; for short-sighted mortals cannot discern what is for their best good.

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It is seldom that one minister has all the qualifications necessary to perfect any one church in all the requirements of Christianity; therefore God sends other ministers to follow him, one after another, each one possessing some qualifications in which the others were deficient. {8Red 74.3}

The church should gratefully accept these servants of Christ, even as they would

accept their Master himself. They should seek to derive all the benefit possible from the instruction which ministers may give them from the Word of God. But the ministers themselves are not to be idolized; there should be no religious pets and favorites among the people; it is the truths they bring which are to be accepted, and appreciated in the meekness of humility. {8Red 75.1}

In the apostles' day, one party claimed to believe in Christ, yet would not give due respect to his ambassadors. They claimed to follow no human teacher, but to be taught directly from Christ, without the aid of ministers of the gospel. They were independent in spirit, and unwilling to submit to the voice of the church. Another party claimed Paul as their leader, and drew comparisons between him and Peter, which were unfavorable to the latter. Another declared that Apollos far exceeded Paul in address, and power of oratory. Another claimed Peter as their leader, affirming that he had been most intimate with Christ when he was upon earth, while Paul had been a persecutor of the believers. This party spirit was in danger of ruining the Christian church. {8Red 75.2}

Paul and Apollos were in perfect harmony. The latter was disappointed and grieved because of the dissension in the church; he took no

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advantage of the preference shown himself, nor did he encourage it; but hastily left the field of strife. When Paul afterward urged him to visit Corinth, he declined, and did not do so until long after, when the church had reached a better spiritual state. {8Red 75.3}

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul speaks of Apollos as one who had watered the precious seed sown by himself. He made no mention of the false teachers who were sent to Corinth to destroy the fruit of his labor. Because of the darkness and division in the church, he wisely forbore to irritate them by such references, for fear of turning some entirely from the truth. But he called the attention of the Corinthians to his work among them, saying, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." {8Red 76.1}

Paul, as a champion of the faith, did not hesitate to declare the character of his work. But he did not thereby exalt himself when he asserted that he was a wise master-builder, who had laid the foundation for another to build upon. He had just stated, "For we are laborers together with God." He claimed no wisdom of his own; but divine power, uniting with his human efforts, had enabled him to present the truth in a manner pleasing to God. He was a co-laborer with Christ, a diligent worker in bringing spiritual knowledge from the Word of God and the works of Christ, to all whose hearts were open to evidence. United with Christ, who was the greatest

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of all teachers, he had been enabled to communicate lessons of divine wisdom that met the necessities of all classes and conditions of men, and which were to apply to all times, all places, and all people. In so doing, Paul took no glory to himself, as a humble instrument in the hands of God. {8Red 76.2}

God gave Paul the wisdom of a skillful architect, that he might lay the foundation of the church of Christ. This figure of the building of a temple is frequently repeated in the

Scriptures, as forcibly illustrating the building up of the true Christian church. Zechariah refers to Christ as the Branch that should build the temple of the Lord. He also refers to the Gentiles as helping in this building: "And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord." {8Red 77.1}

Paul had now been working in the Gentile quarry, to bring out valuable stones to lay upon the foundation stone, which was Jesus Christ, that by coming in contact with that living stone, they might also become living stones. In writing to the Ephesians, he says, "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God." {8Red 77.2}

Some ministers, through their labors, furnish the most precious material: gold, silver, and precious stones, which represent true moral worth sanctified and purified by the Spirit of God. The false material, gilded to imitate the true,--

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that is a carnal mind, and unsanctified character, glossed over with seeming righteousness,--may not be readily detected by mortal eye; but the day of God will test the material. "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it." {8Red 77.3}

The precious stones represent the most perfect Christians, who have been refined and polished by the grace of God, and affliction which they have endured with much prayer and patience. Their obedience and love resemble that of the great Pattern. Their lives are beautified and ennobled by self-sacrifice. They will endure the test of the burning day, for they are living stones. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." {8Red 78.1}

Many, from worldly policy, endeavor, by their own efforts, to become as polished stones, but cannot be living stones, because they are not built upon the true foundation. The day of God will reveal that they are, in reality, only hay, wood, and stubble. The great temple of Diana was ruined; her magnificence utterly perished; those who shouted, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," perished with their goddess and the temple which enshrined her. Their religion is forgotten, or seems like an idle tale. That temple was built upon a false foundation, and when tried, it was found to be worthless. But the stones that Paul quarried out from Ephesus were found to be precious and enduring. {8Red 78.2}

Paul laid himself upon the true foundation, and brought every stone, whether large or small, polished or unhewn, common or precious, to be connected with the living foundation stone, Christ

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Jesus. Thus slowly ascended the temple of the church of God. The apostle says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." {8Red 78.3}

Paul, in vision, had a view of the city of God, with its foundation of precious stones;

and he represents the true Christian converts to be gold, silver, and precious stones. But the Jews made the work of Paul exceedingly difficult. They were continually claiming to be the only true children of Abraham, and therefore the only legitimate building-stones for God's house; and when the Gentiles accepted the truth, and were brought to the true foundation, they murmured about this material. Thus they hindered the work of God; nevertheless, the apostle unflinchingly continued his labors. {8Red 79.1}

Paul and his fellow-workmen were skillful architects because they had learned from Christ and his works. They had not only to build, but to tear down. They had to contend with the bigotry, prejudice, and violence of men who had built upon a false foundation. Through the power of God the apostles became mighty in pulling down these strongholds of the enemy. Many who wrought as builders of the temple of Christ's church could be likened to the builders of the wall in Nehemiah's day: "They which builded on the wall, and they that bore burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon." {8Red 79.2}

One after another of the noble builders fell at his work by the hand of the enemy. Stephen

was stoned; James was slain by the sword; Paul was beheaded; Peter was crucified; John was exiled. And yet stone after stone was added to the building, the church increased in the midst of the terrible persecutions that afflicted it, and new workers on the wall took the place of the fallen. {8Red 79.3}

These faithful builders sought diligently to bring precious material to the living foundation. Paul labored to have his own heart, affections, and character correct and in harmony with the law of God; and then earnestly sought to bring about the same result with his converts. He exhorted Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." This is the duty of every teacher of Bible truth, to illustrate in his own life the active Christian virtues, to be pure in heart, given to holy conversation, to be good, and to do good. {8Red 80.1}

God will not accept the most splendid service, or the most brilliant talent, unless it is laid upon, and connected with, the living foundation stone; for this alone gives true value to the ability possessed, and makes it a living service to God. We may look back through centuries, and see the living stones gleaming like jets of light through the rubbish of moral darkness, errors, and superstition. These precious jewels shine with continually increasing luster, not alone for time, but for eternity. Although dead, the words and deeds of the righteous of all ages testify to the truth of God. The names of the martyrs for Christ's sake are immortalized among the angels in Heaven; and a bright reward awaits them when the Life-giver shall call them from their graves. {8Red 80.2}