THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

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Chapter 1

Why Was the Creation Story Written?

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:10-12)

Let the following facts that are stated in this text be carefully noted and remembered.

1. The "good tidings of great joy," that is, the good and joyful news, which is what the word "Gospel" means, consists in the announcement of a Saviour.

2. This Gospel or good news of salvation is "to all people."

3. This Saviour of the world, over whom "a multitude of the heavenly host" (Luke 2:13) were rejoicing, was but a helpless babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger because its parents were not able to command a better resting place.

From this last fact we may learn that:

"God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has 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, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are you 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 glories, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:27-31)

Nothing in this world is weaker than a new-born baby, and no one was more despised than Jesus was by the world, nor was any baby ever born whose birth attracted less attention by the world; yet He was: "The power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:24)

He is the One whom "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Corinthians 1:30)

So as no flesh has any cause to glory before God, no flesh has any ground for discouragement. No flesh can be weaker than was the Saviour of mankind. Even when grown to manhood He said: "I can of my own self do nothing." (John 5:30) "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come;

and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:6-7)

In this text let us note:

1. This everlasting Gospel is to all people, just as the angel said to the shepherds.

2. Since there is but one Gospel, (Galatians 1:7-8) we know that this everlasting Gospel, which is to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," (Revelation 14:6) is the good news of a Saviour, "which is Christ the Lord," (Luke 2:11) who shall "save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:31)

3. This Gospel calls for the glory--all glory--to be given to God, to whom alone it belongs. (See Matthew 6:13) As already learned, we are to give Him the glory, because there is nothing that man has wherein to glory.

We are to give God the glory, instead of man, because: "It is He that has made us, and not we ourselves." (Psalm 100:3)

He is worthy of all glory, because He is the Creator of heaven, and earth, and all things that are in them. Our acknowledgment of His glory as Creator puts us into the right relation to Him--we as His subjects, and He as our Saviour. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of

Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation unto everyone that believes." (Romans 1:16)

As we read this, let us remember that the Gospel of Christ is the good news that Jesus is a Saviour from sin. The power by which He saves, is the power of God working in Him. He came as a helpless babe absolutely unknown to the world. He had no beauty, that anyone should desire Him, and was "despised and rejected of men." (Isaiah 53:3)

By taking our flesh, He voluntarily assumed a place where He was unable to help himself. Yet we need not be ashamed of this Christ, weak and despised as He was, because He was "the power of God,"--the perfection of God's power shown in weakness. "That which may be known of God is manifested in them (that is, in ungodly men); for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity; that they may be without excuse." (Romans 1:19-20)

This text should be studied with great care, until the following facts contained in it are indelibly impressed on the mind:

1. Ever since the creation of the world, the invisible things of God,--all that may be known of God--are clearly to be seen.

2. The things which may be known of God are His everlasting power and Divinity.

3. These things are manifested in "the things that are made," that is, in creation.

Since we have seen the Gospel--the everlasting Gospel--to be the power of God unto salvation, and God's everlasting power is revealed in the things that are made, it follows that:

4. The everlasting Gospel is preached by every created thing.

That is, by everything that God has made, He shows us His Divine and everlasting power to save us from our sins. That is why no one has any excuse for ungodliness.

"His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3)

Taking all these texts into consideration, we can understand why the preaching of the everlasting Gospel from heaven calls upon us to "worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:7)

In them is seen the power of God unto salvation. Whoever recognizes that fact must worship God, because "Power belongs unto God." (Psalm 62:11)

No man has any power, nor any thing in which to glory. "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as Head above all. In your hand is power and might; and in your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." (1 Chronicles 29:11-12)

Lastly, let us ever remember that, since all things that are made reveal the power of God;--since the power that is manifested not simply to create but to uphold everything in the universe is the power that is working to save men;--and we see the Gospel in all creation, the story of creation was written for no other purpose than to teach us the Gospel, to show us God's power to save us from sin.--Present Truth, June 23, 1898.

Chapter 2

The Beginning

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

Who was in the beginning? What did God do? Who created? When did God create? When were the heaven and the earth created? From the texts in the preceding lesson recall and state the reason why the story of creation was written. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that has been made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:1-4) "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. ... Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was [done]; He commanded, and it stood fast." (Psalm 33:6,8-9) "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life: (for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); That which we have seen and heard, we declare unto you." (1 John 1:1-3)

1. The Gospel of John, which is wholly devoted to telling us how we obtain life through Jesus, (John 20:31) begins just where the story of creation begins: "In the beginning God--the Word --created all things."

2. The Word was in the beginning.

3. Life was in the Word, and the Word itself was life,--the Word of Life,--that eternal life which was with God in the beginning. That which was in the beginning was Life.

4. All things came from this Word, that is, from the Life.

5. We are saved by the Life,(Romans 5:10) that same Word of life which was in the beginning, and by which all things were created.

6. The Word, without which not one thing was created, "was made flesh, and dwelt among us"; (John 1:14) "and this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." (1 Peter 1:25)

7. By the Word were all things created, and by the same Word of power are all things still upheld. (Hebrews 1:3) But this eternal power, --the power of an endless life,--that is manifested in the things that are made, is the power which God uses to save believers.

So the story of creation is the preaching of the Gospel. The power that we see working in all nature is the Gospel in visible form. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; For in Him were all things created, in the heavens, and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning." (Colossians 1:14-18,RV, margin)

1. We have redemption through Christ's blood, that is, through His life, (Leviticus 17:11) the same life that was in the beginning, and from which all things proceeded.

2. Not only was Christ in the beginning, but He is the Beginning. He is "the Beginning of the creation of God." (Revelation 3:14) All things originate in Him.

3. Christ is "the image of the invisible God." (Colossians 1:15) But the invisible things of God are seen in the things that have been made. (Romans 1:20) Therefore in everything that has been made, Christ is to be seen.

   There is a worldwide difference between this truth and pantheism. The truth is that every created thing reveals God's power; the men of old "changed the truth of God into a lie"

(Romans 1:25) by saying that every created thing is God. So they worshiped and served the creature instead of the Creator. (Romans 1:25)

4. The fact that Christ is to be seen in every created thing is also shown by the truth already learned, that Christ is "the power of God," (1 Corinthians 1:24) and the eternal power of God is seen in "the things that have been made." (Romans 1:20)

5. We have redemption in Christ, because in Him all things were created. Thus we see that the power of redemption is the power of creation. The work of redemption is indeed nothing less than creation.

6. In Christ all things hold together; every tangible thing is held in permanent form by Him, and in Him alone men are complete.

7. The Head of creation is the Head of the church.

8. Christ is the Beginning and the end. Nothing can be begun or completed without Him. "In the beginning God." (Genesis 1:1) Christ is "the Beginning." (Revelation 1:8)

This is the story which every created thing tells us. Let these words be so deeply engraved in the mind, that it will be impossible to think of undertaking anything apart from Him. Let Him have His rightful place as the Projector and the Accomplisher,-- the One who

"works ... both to will and to do." (Philippians 2:13)--Present Truth, June 30, 1898.

Chapter 3

Power and Wisdom

"God has spoken once, twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God." (Psalm 62:11) "Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever." (Matthew 6:13) "There is no power but of God." (Romans 13:1) "You could have no power at all against me, except it were given you from above." (John 19:11) "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust in the balance: behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing. All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity." (Isaiah 40:15,17) "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as Head above all. Both riches and honor come of You, and You reign over all; andyour hand is power and might; and in your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." (1 Chronicles 29:11-12) "He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength." (Isaiah 40:29) "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:24) "Christ, In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:2-3) "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." (Isaiah 40:2) "The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King. He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His

wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion." (Jeremiah 10:10,12) "Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18) "The invisible things of Him, ... even His everlasting power and Divinity, ... are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made." (Romans 1:20) "His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:3) "By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many: for He shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53:11)

Read these texts until you cannot possibly forget what they say. Take them just as they say, and do not imagine that they mean something else. If the Lord had meant something else, He would have said it, instead of saying what He did. He who "gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding," (Daniel 2:21) knows how to say what He means. Know then, and understand, that there is absolutely no power in the universe, except the power of God. Man has no power whatever in himself. Man is one of the things that God has made, and so the power that appears in him is the power of God, just the same as in the rest of creation.

Whatever power the faint receive, comes from God. It is His own power. God is the strength of His people. (Psalm 68:35; Joel 3:16) "The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." (Isaiah 12:2)

Even the power that exalts itself against God, is God's power perverted. The kings of the earth and the rulers, with the people, moved by the devil, put Christ to death; but the power which they used so wickedly came from above. "Jesus Christ [is] the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:24)

Remember, He is the power and the wisdom. His Spirit is "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might." (Isaiah 11:2) "He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom," (Jeremiah 10:12)

The Lord made the heavens and the earth by His power and His wisdom. That is, He made all things by Jesus Christ. Without Christ, the Divine Word, the Power of God, not one thing was made; and He still "upholds all things by the Word of His power." (Hebrews 1:3)

Thus all the power in heaven and in earth is His. There is no manifestation of power, force, or energy, as men call it, in the universe, except the personal presence of the living Christ, by the Spirit of power. His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in all things.

His Divine power has given us all that is necessary to enable us to live godly lives. (2 Peter 1:3) That is to say, The power which is given us, to enable us to live godly lives, is the Divine energy that is manifested in all created things, whether in heaven or on earth. He who is the wisdom and the power of God, and who is revealed in all

the things that are made, is "of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Corinthians 1:30)

Thus all the power of God manifested in all creation, is available for our salvation. It is by the power and wisdom that made the universe, that the Lord justifies us, because He who bears all things bears our iniquities. This power that works in heaven and in earth, in every created thing, is the power that is given by the Holy Spirit to all who yield themselves absolutely to the Lord. This is the power with which He sends them forth to teach all nations His truth.

That hand which bears creation up
Shall guard His children well.
--Philip Doddridge, Hymn: How Gentle God's Commands, 1755.

--Present Truth, July 7, 1898.

Chapter 4

Power and Mercy

"The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honorable and glorious; and His righteousness endures for ever. He has made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion." (Psalm 111:2-4) "Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds." (Psalm 36:5) "God has spoken once; twice have I heard this: that power belongs unto God. Also unto You, O Lord, belongs mercy." (Psalm 62:11-12) "The earth, O Lord, is full of your mercy; teach me your statutes." (Psalm 119:64) "He that trusts in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." (Psalm 32:10) "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23) "[Christ] is before all things, and in Him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:17,RV, margin) "Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." (Psalm 130:7-8) "God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He lovedus, Even when we were dead through our trespasses, quickened us together with Christ (by grace have you been saved), And raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:4-6,RV) "Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in

power, not one is lacking." (Isaiah 40:26,RV) "In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also." (Psalm 95:4) "Why say you, O Jacob, and speak O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Have you not known? Have you not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, faints not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding. He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; But they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:27-31)

If you cannot at first see the things that here follow, in the texts just quoted, read the texts until you can. Take the truth direct from the Scriptures themselves.

Note that the Lord makes His grace and fullness of compassion known by making His wonderful works to be remembered. That is, His wonderful works reveal His graciousness and compassion. Power and mercy are combined. Both belong to God, and cannot be separated. Just as all the things that are made reveal the power of God, so all of God's works show His mercy. His power is merciful, and His mercy is powerful.

God's mercy is everywhere, in the heavens and in the earth. The earth is full of it. It is not merely on the earth, but it is in it. All the power that is seen in the things that God has made, is His mercy in

action. It is by the mercy of the Lord that we live. It is His mercy that keeps us alive. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not." (Lamentations 3:22)

Thus we see that mercy is power, for it is His power that keeps us.

It is in Christ that everything holds together. That is, "cohesion," which is but another term for "holding together," is God personally working to uphold all things. If matter did not hold together, we should have no place to stand on, and we ourselves would have no existence. So since it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, we see that cohesion is simply a manifestation of the mercy of the Lord. Cohesion is Christ, the power of God, working in nature. It is the word of His power upholding all things.

Think of the marvelous force that holds the mighty rocks in huge masses. What infinite energy is constantly working in every particle of matter in the universe, in order that there may be form and solidity. Can you fail to see the hand of God in it?

Men tell us that this force is "cohesion." Now "cohesion" simply means "sticking together." Therefore when they tell us that particles of matter, atoms, are held together by cohesion, it is the same as though they told us that matter is held together by holding together. "Cohesion" simply describes what is done, but does not tell what does the thing.

The Bible tells what does it. It is Christ the power of God. Thus it is that God shows us His power to save. He saves us by His mercy, in which He is rich. "with Him [there] is plenteous redemption." (Psalm 130:7)

How much? As much as there is force in the universe. "In His hand are the deep places of the earth." (Psalm 95:4)

All the force, even to the very center of the earth, is the working of the Lord's own hand. What has the Lord said of the safety of His sheep in His hand? "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29)

But God's mercy is in the heavens as well as in the earth. "Lift up your eyes on high" (Isaiah 40:26,RV) and see the stars. It is His power, His mercy, that keeps them in their places. His own hand guides them in their orbits "because He is strong in power, not one is lacking." (Isaiah 40:26,RV)

It is God's powerful mercy that, prevents them coming in collision. Or falling upon this earth and crushing it. What is the force that operates between the heavenly bodies? Men call it "gravitation;" the Bible tells us that it is God's own power, that is, it is the working of the "Saviour which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

If the words "cohesion" and "gravitation" hide the personal presence of the Lord, don't use them. In any case, don't say that cohesion, gravitation, chemical affinity, etc., do certain things. Don't think that the thing done is the One who does it. Don't forget that God's everlasting power and Divinity are revealed in the things that are made. (Romans 1:20,RV) Does not this help you to grasp the reality of the power that is put forth to save us? "The Gospel ... is the power of God unto salvation." (Romans 1:16)

So in everything that God has made we may see the Gospel, if we do not close our eyes in unbelief. Not only in every living thing, but in every rock, and in every grain of sand, as well as in the sun, moon, and stars, God shows us the power that redeems those who trust Him,--the power of the life of Christ, the power of the cross.

How can men who live on the solid earth, and who even dare trust that the unstable water will hold together sufficiently to bear them up, refuse to trust the Lord, whose all-pervading presence makes it possible for them to live at all?--Present Truth, July 14, 1898.

Chapter 5

The Spirit's Work

"The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:2) "Whither shall I go from your Spirit? or whither shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:7-10) "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless [or orphans]; I will come to you." (John 14:16-18) "When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into alltruth; for He shall not speak of himself. ... He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father has are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16:13-15) "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10) "It is the Spirit that quickens;...the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63) "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might, by His Spirit in the inner

man." (Ephesians 3:14-15) "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore." (Matthew 28:18-19) "You shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8) "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God who works all in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profitwithal. For to one is given through the Spirit, the word of wisdom; and to another, the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; ... But in all these works the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally as He will." (1 Corinthians 12:4-8,11)

The word "moved," in Genesis 1:2, is from a Hebrew word signifying: "To cherish one's young, to brood or hover over, as the eagle its young."

It occurs in: "As an eagle stirs up her nest, flutters over her young, spreads abroad her wings, takes them, bears them on her wings." (Deuteronomy 32:11)

The Syriac equivalent, which is far more common, "is used of birds which brood over their young; of a mother cherishing her infant; of Elisha cherishing the dead body of the child; also of a voice descending from heaven, and hovering in the air; also to pity." (Gesenius' Hebrew and English Lexicon)

There is no spot in the universe where the Holy Spirit of God is not. Read this in the second text quoted in this lesson. Read the texts

that tell plainly that the Holy Spirit is the direct Representative, the personal Presence of God, both Father and Son. So God is present in every place by His Spirit. "Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:21)

This is the Scripture teaching as to the "Real Presence."

The word "hell," in Psalm 139:8, which occurs so often in the Bible, is really the same as our common word "hole." Both are from one and the same Anglo-Saxon word. The Hebrew word from which it is translated is often rendered "grave," or "pit." It signifies, as will readily be seen, the portion of the earth under the surface, the hidden, secret part. So we learn from the text that there is no place, even in the inner part of the very earth itself, where the Spirit of God is not. "In His hand are the deep places of the earth." (Psalm 95:4)

When God strengthens one with might, it is by His Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the power of God. We have already learned that Christ is "the power of God," (1 Corinthians 1:24) and this lesson tells us that the Spirit takes the things of Christ, and shows them to us.

So it is that "the invisible things" of God, "even His everlasting power and Divinity," which "are clearly seen" in "the things that are made," become plain to us by the working of the Spirit. (Romans 1:20) He shows Christ, "the power of God" to us in the things that are made.

The Spirit is everywhere, in heaven and in the lowest and most remote parts of the earth, always the same Divine power. He is Christ's Representative, simply revealing Christ's power. Thus we see that in the most literal sense "all power" "in heaven and in earth" is given unto Christ, (Matthew 28:18) "the Author of eternal salvation." (Hebrews 5:9)

Remember that the Gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." (Romans 1:16)

A man can do a great many different kinds of work with the same strength. The same steam power can be applied in a great variety of ways. The power that pushes, can also pull. The same power that lifts up, can also cast down. So, "There are diversities of workings, but the same God who works all in all." (1 Corinthians 12:6)

This that is said of the power that works in the church, is as true of the power that appears in creation, since the power that is revealed in the things that are made, is the power by which God saves those who believe. All the power, or force, as it is usually termed, that is seen in matter whether in earth or heaven, is but the working of the one Spirit of God.

Men have changed the truth of God into a lie. Instead of recognizing God in His works, they said that the works themselves were God. So they "worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator." (Romans 1:25)

Not only so, but the ancients, in their limited idea of God, thinking that He could do but one thing, made every different work, and every different manifestation of energy, a different god. They had a god of the heavens, and a god of the earth; a god of the winds, and a god of the waves; gods for trees, and gods working different things in men. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." (1 Corinthians 8:6)

The foolishness of the men of old who could not see the power of the one God in all things that exist, is perpetuated unto this very day, by the men of earth who profess to be wise. Every distinct manifestation of energy is regarded as a different power or force, and to each one a different name has been given, as gravitation, cohesion, chemical affinity, electricity, etc.

Men will tell us that such and such a thing is accomplished by the power of gravitation, and another thing by electric force, and another by chemical affinity, as though there were so many different gods working. It is as though they should say that it requires a different power to plow the ground from what it does to sow the grain, and that a still different power is needed to reap it, and another to thresh it, and still another to lift the bags of grain into a cart.

But we all know that one man, with the strength that is given him, can do all these things. Even so one God by one Spirit shows His power in an infinite variety of ways in all creation.

The Spirit of God hovered or brooded over the face of the waters in the beginning, and brought order out of chaos. Matter was thus as it were impregnated with force, because the same Spirit of power still works in it. The so-called different forces, cohesion, gravitation, etc., are not different forces, but different manifestations of the one Spirit's power, working to preserve the earth, and make it a safe dwelling place for men.

The Word of the Lord is Spirit and life. (John 6:63) So the power of the Spirit in all creation is the power of the Word that upholds all things. God's Word is not a dead letter, but a living Spirit.

Recall the last lesson, in which we found that power is mercy. The power of God, which is seen in all creation, is the mercy by which He saves us through "the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly." (Titus 3:5)

Recall also the fact that the word rendered "moved," which describes what the Spirit of God did to the unformed earth, has also the idea of "to pity." Thus we may know that God, in filling the earth with His power, has filled it with His tender love and pity for mankind. The whole earth is full of His mercy: "The earth, O Lord, is full of your mercy: teach me your statutes." (Psalm 119:61)

The power by which the earth holds together,--the force that is seen in all created things, whether in heaven or in earth,--is the power by which the Lord protects His people, when He gathers them as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings. (Matthew 23:37) "How excellent is your loving-kindness, O God therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of your wings." (Psalm 36:7) "He that dwells in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. ... He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings shall you trust." (Psalm 91:1,4)

How true it is, that God has stretched out His hand, and caused "all the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 52:10) to see His salvation.

When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,

Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.
--Joseph Addison, Hymn: When All Thy Mercies, O My God, 1712.

--Present Truth, July 21, 1898.

Chapter 6

The Power That Draws

"The earth was without form, and void; ... and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:2) "Whither shall I go from your Spirit? or whither shall I flee from your presence? ... If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there." (Psalm 139:7,9) "Am I a God at hand, says the Lord, and not a God afar off? 24 Can any hide himself in secret place that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth?" (Jeremiah 23:23) "Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking." (Isaiah 40:26) "He stretches out the North over empty space, and hangs the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7) "Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North [or, more literally, is Mount Zion, the extreme North), the city of the great King. God has made himself known in her palaces for a refuge." (Psalm 48:1-3) "How are you fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the morning! how are you cut down to the ground, which did lay low the nations! And you said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: and I will sit upon the Mount of congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:12-14) "Jesus therefore answered and said unto

them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him." (John 6:43-44) "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] unto me." (John 12:32) "The Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn you." (Jeremiah 31:9)

Read these texts until you can see the following facts clearly stated: It was the Spirit of God, brooding over the face of the waters in the beginning, that brought order out of chaos. God's presence by the same Spirit is still in every part of the universe. He fills heaven and earth. Hell, that is, the inmost recess of the earth beneath, "is naked before Him." (Job 26:6) "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

The present continual working of the Spirit in every place, even in each individual particle of matter that compose the earth, is what still makes it a safe place to dwell on. That power causes the atoms to cohere: "in Him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:17:17)

So that the earth is a solid body, instead of a vast number of scattered particles. God is not only near at hand, but He is "afar off." (Jeremiah 23:23) It is His power that is doing the work which men call "gravitation." It holds the innumerable heavenly bodies in their places, so that not one is lacking.

It is a fact that there is an attractive force, a power that draws, in everything. Suspend two ivory balls from a height, and it will be seen that the distance between their centers is not so great as the distance of the two points from which they are suspended. If a ball be suspended a few inches from the face of a high cliff which ascends perpendicularly, it will be found that the ball is drawn toward the rock.

In every solid there is a strong force at work holding the particles together. The particles of water are not held together so closely. This drawing power is seen most clearly in what is called a magnet, and in the needle of the compass, which always, in the most mysterious manner, points toward the north.

There is something mysterious in this attraction to the north. The word in the Hebrew Bible, which is always used for "the north," signifies, "hidden, secret, concealed." God stretches out the north,--the hidden, secret place,--over empty space, and "hangs the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7)

That mysterious power emanating from the north, holds it in its appointed place, and likewise holds all the other heavenly bodies. This mysterious power is the power of God, whose dwelling place is "in the uttermost parts of the north." (Isaiah 14:13) "Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land." (Jeremiah 1:14)

It is from the temple of God that the plagues of the wrath of God are sent forth. (Revelation 15:1, 6-8; 16:1) Only those who dwell "in the secret place" of the Most High, will be kept safe from the plagues.(Psalm 91:1-11) "Power belongs unto God." (Psalm 62:11)

His everlasting power is seen in the things that are made. (Romans 1:20) Christ is the power of God, (1 Corinthians 1:24) and the Spirit is His Representative everywhere. All power in heaven and in earth is in His hands. (Matthew 28:18) The power that directs all the heavenly bodies in their orbits, leading them forth and drawing them back again, so that there is not the slightest confusion, is the power of the Spirit of God. The attractive power of God's own personality everywhere present, is that which holds the universe in order.

The cross of Christ is the power of God, for Christ, the power of God, is set forth only as the crucified One. Christ cannot truly be preached except as "Christ crucified." (1 Corinthians 1:23) Therefore every manifestation of power in the universe is but the manifestation of the power of the cross. The cross is the center of salvation because the crucified Christ, the power of God, is the center of the universe. So the power which is actively working in every particle of matter, and which is so visibly at work everywhere, is the power of the cross, by which God is working to draw all men to himself. (John 12:32)

God is real, and His salvation is real. When He tells us about the power of His salvation, He does not leave us to our imagination, nor

does He refer to something vague and indefinite and intangible, but shows the power actually working before our eyes, and even in our own bodies. The Word which is preached unto us, and which we are to proclaim to others, is "that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes." (1 John 1:1)

Therefore, "Unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21)--Present Truth, July 28, 1898.

Chapter 7

The Light

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." (Genesis 1:1-3) "The entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding unto the simple." (Psalm 119:130) "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." (Proverbs 6:23) "This is the message which we have heard from Him, and announce unto you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5) "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6) "Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause your face to shine; and we shall be saved." (Psalm 70:19) "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hides not from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You." (Psalm 139:11-12) "Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness." (Psalm 112:4) "Rejoice not against me, O my enemy; when l fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." (Micah 7:6) "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1) "I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Nothing in the world is clearer or more easy to be seen than light; and the Word of God is light, the proof of this being that when He spoke, immediately there was light. Therefore if we take the texts of this lesson as the pure Word of the God who is light, and who is "the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning," (James 1:17,RV) we shall find them very plain and easy to understand, and wonderfully enlightening to our eyes.

The Spirit of God brooded over the face of the deep, in the beginning, and brought order out of chaos, and caused the light to shine forth. God's Word is Spirit and life, and the Word is light. So it came to pass that when the Word went into the darkness, the light shone forth.

Take notice that it is no figure of speech when it is said that the Word of God is light. It is real light, such as "is sweet" (Ecclesiastes 11:7; Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun) to behold. The light which we have by day, and by night too, is the light that comes from the Word of God. There is no light in the world except that which comes from God's Word. "God is light." (1 John 1:5)

Christ is the Light of the world. "I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12) He is "the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:9)

The light by which every man in this world sees, is the shining of the Lord's countenance. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light," (1 John 1:7) that is, if we recognize the Presence of God in the light that shines upon us every day, then we shall walk in the light of His countenance, and in His name shall we rejoice all the day, and in His righteousness shall we be exalted: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance. "In your name shall they rejoice all the day: and in your righteousness shall they be exalted." (Psalm 89:15-16)

Thus we shall have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. ... This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. ... But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:3,5,7)

He who knows "the joyful sound" of God's Word, knows that it gives light, and while he listens to it he cannot possibly walk in darkness; for the Lord God will enlighten his darkness. "For You will light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness." (Psalm 18:28)

Men have discovered this much of truth, that light is motion.

Waves of light, though they can pass through air, are not waves of the air, as sound waves are. Waves of light can cross the most perfect vacuum; they travel thousands of miles in the vacuous space between the stars. They are waves of another medium which, so far as we know, exists all through space, and which we call, using Sir Isaac Newton's term, the ether. If you ask me what the ether is made of, let me frankly say, I do not know.

But if light consists of waves, and if those waves can travel across the millions of miles that separate the stars from the earth, then it is clear that they must be waves of something; they are not air-waves, nor water-waves, because interstellar space is devoid both of air and water. They are waves of a medium which, though millions of times less dense than water or air, has yet a property that resists being torn or sheared asunder; exceeding the resistance to shear even of hard-tempered steel.--Light Visible and Invisible, by Dr. Sylvanus P. Thomson, page 108.

Only the one who reads and with all simplicity of mind believes the Word of God, knows that this motion is due to the Spirit of God. Force energy, life, is motion, and so far at least as this world is concerned, the beginning of it all was when "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:2)

How richly God has endowed the world with the gift of His Holy Spirit! "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Psalm 107:8)

What more could God do than He has done to impress upon man the reality of His saving power? "the Word of Truth, the Gospel of our salvation," (Ephesians 1:13) is the Word which "commanded the light to shine out of darkness." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

If we believe, then we receive that Word into our hearts, and so the light shines in "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

That Word which is proclaimed unto us, is the Word "which was from the beginning." (1 John 1:1)

It was light then; it is light still. So every ray of light that comes to this earth,--and this means actual light, that enables us to see, --is a Gospel sermon. In this connection read the 19th Psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God," (Psalm 19:1) and preach the Gospel; for the Gospel message consists in this: "Fear God, and give glory to Him." (Revelation 14:7) "their words [have gone] to the end of the world," (Psalm 19:4) so that "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Revelation 14:6) have heard the Gospel. Compare Psalm 19:4 (Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.) with Romans 10:15-18. (And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace,

and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah said, Lord, who has believed our report? So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world) In the Gospel, "the righteousness of God [is] revealed." (Romans 1:17)

And the law of God is His righteousness. "Hearken unto me, you that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." (Isaiah 51:7)

Therefore the heavens in proclaiming the Gospel of light, make known that: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." (Psalm 19:7-8)

Thus it is a reality that:

"The Lord has made bare His Holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth [have seen] the salvation of our God." (Isaiah 52:10)

But the declaration of the heavens is not sufficient. When in addition to the preaching of the voiceless creation, the Gospel of the Kingdom, whose rule is "the perfect law of liberty," (James 1:25) is proclaimed in all the world by creatures to whom God has given tongues, then, and then only, will the end come. "You are the light

of the world. ... Let your light shine." (Matthew 5:14,16).-- Present Truth, August 4, 1898.

Chapter 8

The Light of the Word is Life

"Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." (Genesis 1:2-3) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (John 1:1,4-5) "That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:9) "And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth. ... And Jesus said, As long as I am in the world, l am the Light of the world. When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent)." He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing. ... And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes." (John 9:1,5-7,14) "The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." (1 John 1:2) "With You is the Fountain of Life; in your light we shall see light." (Psalm 36:9) "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannotbe hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives 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." (Matthew 5:14-16)

"Arise, shine, for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you. And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." (Isaiah 60:1-3) "I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, that you should be my salvation unto the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6) "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever makes manifest is light." (Ephesians 5:13) "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:19-21) "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That you may approve things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ." (Philippians 1:9-10)

Light comes only from the Word of God, as in the beginning.

Apart from the Word of God, there is no light. There is no light in the world except the light that comes from God's Word. Therefore those who reject the Word of the Lord are walking in darkness, and if they persist in that rejection, there is nothing for them in the future but "the blackness of darkness for ever." (Jude 1:13)

The Word of the Lord is Spirit and life. "It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63)

So, as we have seen, the light that shines upon the earth is light from the Spirit of God. There is therefore no need for anybody's being in ignorance of the Spirit.

The word which gives light is the Word of life. The Word is life, and "the life [is] the light of men." (John 1:4)

The light by which men walk in this world, is the life of Christ. The condemnation is that the life has been manifested, and all men have seen it, and yet few will recognize it.

The life of Christ,--the true light,--lights every man that comes into the world. "That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:9)

There is not a man in the world who can plead ignorance of the life of Christ. It will be no excuse to plead that we did not know that the light was the life. The Bible has told us. Even if we did not have the Bible, we know that light is life, not only for man but for the lower animals and plants. That light gives life is apparent to everybody.

And as to the source of light, we know at least that we did not make it. It was here before we were. It is a free gift to us, as free to

the poor as to the rich. This of itself is enough to show that it is not from man; for nothing that man makes is "without money and without price." (Isaiah 55:1)

But every free gift is worth thanks. The least and the only return that we can make for so wonderful a blessing as light, is to give thanks for it, not once, merely, but as often as we receive it, which is all the time.

Now if we look about to see whom we are to thank for the light, we shall at once discover that, like every good and perfect gift, it is "from above, and comes down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17)

So by continually giving thanks to the Giver of the light, we should be kept in the right way; for the promise is: "In all your ways acknowledge Him, end He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:6)

The life of Christ is given to the world as freely as the light, for the light is His life. No one need fear that there is not enough to supply everybody to all eternity. When people say that they cannot think it possible that the Lord can save them, they virtually say that they do not think that the Lord has life enough for everybody.

But this doubt has been answered before it could be made, for the light is inexhaustible. If there were a thousand times as many people in the world as there are now, not a soul would have any the less light. By using the light, we do not deprive anybody else of it. A

thousand candles may be lighted from a single candle without diminishing its light in the least. So the life of Christ is inexhaustible. He can give the whole of it to everyone in the world, and still have it all left.

Proof that Christ is literally the light of the world, is given in the case of the healing of the man that was born blind. There was a man who had never seen the light. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," (John 8:12) and to demonstrate the reality of the saying, He made the man see. (John chapter 9) This shows us that the light of day is the light that comes from Christ, and that by it we may receive salvation, if we receive it in faith. It shows us also that the Lord has not only life enough for everybody, but that He can give the light of life to those who have not the power to see.

With the Lord is the Fountain of Life: "For with You is the fountain of life: in your light we shall see light." (Psalm 36:9)

If we drink from that fountain, receiving the life by faith, we shall also be light. As Christ is the light of the world, so He says to His disciples, "You are the light of the world." (Matthew 5:14)

We have no light, however, except that which comes from the Word. We can shine only by the light of the glory of God. This is given to us, as we have already learned, by the Word which commanded the light to shine out of darkness. We do not make the light. We can "Arise and shine, [only because] our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon us." (Isaiah 60:1)

The Lord gives us light, not merely that we may enjoy it, but that we may be light and salvation to others. "This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That you may approve things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ." (Philippians 1:9-10)

We are exhorted to be sincere. The word "sincere" means literally "without wax." It is derived from the terms used in ancient times in the preparation of honey. When it was perfectly pure, without any wax in it, it would stand the test of the light; if held up to the light, no foreign matter could be seen in it. The light would pass through it. The honey was then sincere, that is, pure, without wax. "Whatsoever makes manifest is light." (Ephesians 5:13)

If we allow the life of Christ to dwell in us and control us, then on coming to the light it will be manifest that our works are wrought in God. "But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:21)

There is nothing that is not manifest to the light of the Word: "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. ... The Word of God...is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:13,12)

The Lord has not left us without practical demonstration of this truth also. The so-called "x-rays," enable us to see through material

that is ordinarily opaque, as wood or iron. Human flesh offers no obstruction whatever to these rays of light. And yet the rays themselves are invisible.

Nobody can ever understand the secret of it, because nobody can ever fathom the mystery of the life of God; but God has allowed us to have this additional demonstration of the fact that nothing can hide away from the light of His countenance. His light, and the sight of His eyes, can pierce even to the depths of the earth.

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:2)

This should move us to ready confession of our sins, since they cannot possibly be hid from Him. It is also most encouraging to us, because, since it is the life of Christ that saves, and the life is the light, we may know that we cannot possibly have sunk so low that the life cannot reach us. "You have set our iniquities before yourself; our secret sins in the light of your countenance." (Psalm 90:8)

Thank the Lord for that, instead of cringing at the thought, and vainly trying to hide the sins from the light of His countenance. Why? Because in His glance the sin will be driven away and consumed. Evil shall not dwell with Him: "For You are not a God that has pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with You." (Psalm 5:4)

Ah, then if we do not shrink from His presence, the sins must flee. It is the work of light not only to reveal corruption, but also to remove it. Disease germs are destroyed by light. Thus God would show us how the light of His countenance cleanses from iniquity. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7)--Present Truth, August 11, 1898

Chapter 9

Clouds and Rain

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day." (Genesis 1:6-8) "The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament shows His handiwork." (Psalm 19:1) "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10) "The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne." (Psalm 97:1-2) "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty. Who covers Yourself with light as with a garment; who stretches out the heavens as a curtain; Who lays the beams of His chambers in the waters; who makesthe clouds His chariot; who walks upon the wings of the wind." (Psalm 104:1-3) "The Lord has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm; and the clouds are the dust of His feet." (Nahum 1:3) "The Lord is the true God He is the living God, and an everlasting King. ... He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion. When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to

ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings with rain, and brings forth the wind out of His treasures." (Jeremiah 10:10,12-13) Behold, God is great, and we know Him not; the number of Hisyears is unsearchable. For He draws up the drops of water, which distill in rain from His vapor; Which the skies pour down and drop upon man abundantly." (Job 36:26-28) "Hearken you unto the noise of His voice, and the sound that goes out of His mouth. He sends it forth under the whole heaven, and His lightning unto the ends of the earth. After it a voice roars; He thunders with the voice of His majesty; and He stays them not when His voice is heard. God thunders marvelously with His voice; great things does He, which we cannot comprehend, For He says to the snow, Fall on the earth; likewise to the shower of rain, and to the showers of His mighty rain." (Job 37:2-6) "Can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, the thunderings of His pavilion? ... He covers His hands with the lightning; and gives it a charge that it strike the mark." (Job 36:30,32) "Did you know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge?" (Job 37:16)

"He binds up the waters in His thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them." (Job 26:8)

Read these texts as the living words of the living God. The whole of understanding them is in believing that they mean just what they say. Man, as well as the firmament, shows the handiwork of God. In Christ are all things created, and we also are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." (Ephesians 2:10)

If we believe that God is personally present, "in the firmament of His power," (Psalm 150:1) then when we consider the power that is revealed there we shall know and rejoice in "the power which works in us." (Ephesians 3:20)

Look in the margin of the Revised Version, in Genesis 1:6, and note that the word rendered "firmament" is the Hebrew for "expanse." "And God said, Let there be a firmament [margin: "expanse"] in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." (Genesis 1:6)

God made an expanse, a vast space to divide the waters from the waters. The stars are set in the expanse of the heavens. This idea of an expanse is found in: "Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain." (Psalm 104:2)

That God is actually and really present "in the firmament of His power," (Psalm 150:1) is seen in the, statement that "[He] makes the clouds His chariot," (Psalm 104:3) and "has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the, dust of His feet." (Nahum 1:3) "Behold, the Lord rides upon a swift cloud." (Isaiah 19:1) "When He utters His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens." (Jeremiah 10:13) "He thunders with the voice of His majesty. God thunders marvelously with His voice; great things does He,which we cannot comprehend." (Job 37:4-5)

If children were taught the truth about the thunder and the storm, "as the truth is in Jesus," (Ephesians 4:21) they would never cower in terror when the voice of God is heard in the heavens. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance. In your name shall they rejoice all the day; and in your righteousness shall they be exalted." (Psalm 89:15-16) "Has the rain a father?" (Job 38:28)

Has it? Read the answer in the Bible. Where does the rain come from? From the clouds. How does it get there? "He draws up the drops of water, which distill in rain from His vapor; Which the skies pour down and drop upon man abundantly." (Job 36:27-28)

Is the poor Indian, whose untutored mind sees God in the cloud, and hears Him in the wind, to be pitied for his ignorance? Is he in reality so "untutored" as the civilized man whose learning has caused him to leave God out of all his so-called science? "Can any understand the spreadings of the clouds?" (Job 36:29) "Do you know the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous workings of Him which is perfect in knowledge?" (Job 37:16)

These are questions to which no man even in these days is presumptuous enough to say, "Yes." "He binds up the waters in His thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them." (Job 26:8)

No scientist can explain the power by which the clouds are upheld in the sky. Only the first and only book of science, the Bible, tells us what it is. It is the "eternal power" of the Creator, which is

clearly seen in the clouds as well as in all other things that He has made.

By a little calculation we can form a slight idea of the wonderful power by which the waters are bound up in the thick clouds so that the cloud is not rent under them. This calculation can easily be made if we remember that a cubic foot of water weighs 62½ pounds. Let us take a comparatively small space. Perhaps the area best known by all is the space covered by the Parliament buildings. A cloud holding sufficient water to cause it to rain to the depth of just an inch over that space alone, would contain over 1250 tons of water.

A better idea of this weight can be obtained if we consider it as coal instead of water, for we are accustomed to seeing tons of coal. Think then of 1250 tons of coal being suspended over that small area. And think of the great clouds that send down their contents over miles and miles of country. What an infinite weight of water is floating about in the air over our heads!

What holds this water thus suspended? There can be but one answer: It is the hand of God. "[He] has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand." (Isaiah 40:13) "The balancings of the clouds [reveal the] wondrous workings of Him which is perfect in knowledge." (Job 37:16)

Jesus said: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32)

Now we know that the power by which He draws is very real. It is power that is constantly in operation before our eyes, drawing up the drops of water, "which distill in rain from His vapor." (Job 36:27)

It is a real, tangible power, to which we are to submit. Why should we not quietly yield to this power that tends to draw us upward to God, instead of, by our stubborn resistance, compelling it to "strive" with us? (Genesis 6:3)

When the Apostle sets Christ forth as the One who by himself purges our sins, he speaks of Him as "upholding all things by the Word of His power." (Hebrews 1:3)

The clouds of water give us something tangible by which we can grasp the power that saves us when we believe. We may trust Him, because "All power ... in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18) is His. Then: "Praise the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness." (Psalm 150:1-2) "Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, and you waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for He commanded, and they were created. He has also established them for ever and ever: He has made a decree which shall not pass away." (Psalm 148:4-6)

In the latest rendering of the Psalms, this last verse, as it is also indicated in the margin of the Revised Version, reads thus: "He

established them for ever and ever: He gave them a law which they may not transgress." (Psalm 148:6)--Present Truth, August 18, 1898.

Chapter 10

Rain and Righteousness

"Who has divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; To cause it to rain upon the earth where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein is no man; To satisfy the desolate and waste ground: and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth? Has the rain a father? or who has begotten the drops of dew?" (Job 38:25-28) "Be astonished, O you heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be you very desolate, says the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:12-13) "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of your house; and You shall make them drink of the river of your pleasures. For with You is the Fountain of life." (Psalm 36:8-9) "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb." (Revelation 22:1) "And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God." (Revelation 5:6) "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." (Revelation 7:17) "You visit the earth, and water it; You greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water; You prepare them corn, when You have so provided for it. You water the ridges thereof abundantly; You settle the furrows thereof; You make

it soft with showers; You bless the springing thereof." (Psalm 65:9-10) "Righteousness and judgment [justice] are the foundation of your throne; mercy and truth shall go before your face." (Psalm 89:14,RV) "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne." (Psalm 97:2,RV) "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you." (Hosea 10:12) "Drop down, you heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it." (Isaiah 45:8) "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." (Hosea 14:5)

The rain has a Father, for it is God himself who has begotten the drops of dew. "Has the rain a father? or who has begotten the drops of dew?" (Job 38:28)

He draws the drops of water to himself, and sends the rain upon the earth by His Word. God is the Fountain of living waters. "They have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters." (Jeremiah 2:13)

With Him is the fountain of life. "For with You is the Fountain of life." (Psalm 36:9)

This is not a figure of speech, but an actual fact, for out of the throne of God and of the Lamb proceeds the river of life. "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Revelation 22:1)

The Lamb slain,--Christ crucified,--is in the midst of the throne. "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as it had been slain." (Revelation 5:6)

Therefore the river of life proceeds from the crucified Saviour. So "the glorious Lord [is in reality] unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." (Isaiah 33:21)

All who live in Him cannot fail to be led unto "living fountains of waters. The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall" (Revelation 7:17) be their Shepherd. "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters." (Psalm 23:1-2)

Where does the rain come from? Read Psalm 65, and see: "You visit the earth, and water it: you greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water." (Psalm 65:9)

God waters the earth and enriches it with the river of God, which is full of water. How is it that it is full of water? It is the life of God himself, who is infinite. Don't argue with this text, and try to reason it out, which means to reason it away. Believe what it says, that the rain which waters the earth and makes it fruitful comes from the river of God. The rain certainly does not create itself. It is not self-existent. No; it has a Father; it comes direct from the bosom of God. Truly, "The Life was manifested, and we have seen it." (1 John 1:2)

God is "the living God." (Deuteronomy 5:26, etc.) His throne is a living throne (see the 1st chapter of Ezekiel). "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne." (Psalm 97:2,RV)

God's law is His righteousness. "Hearken unto me, you that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." (Isaiah 51:7)

So the foundation of the throne of God is His living law, His own life. See this indicated in the ark of the sanctuary, in which were the tables of stone. "At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which you broke, and you shall put them in the ark. And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand. And He wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spoke unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me." (Deuteronomy 10:1-5)

Christ is in the midst of the throne. He is the "Living Stone." (1 Peter 2:4)

The law of God is in His heart. "I delight to do your will, O my God: yea, your law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8)

So Christ, the life of God, is the foundation of His throne,--the Living Stone, on which is written the living law. It is from this "sure foundation" (Isaiah 28:16; Therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believes shall not make haste) the Rock, that the river of life flows. "Behold, I will stand before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." (Exodus 17:6) "And [they] did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." (1 Corinthians 10:4)

The river of life springs forth from the living law,--God's righteousness. Thus it brings the righteousness of the law--the righteousness of God--with it. "Drop down, you heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it." (Isaiah 45:8)

The rain that waters the earth comes from the river of God. It is the life of God in visible form. So it is a literal fact that God rains righteousness upon us, and the skies pour it down. No soul has any excuse for ungodliness and unrighteousness, for "abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness" (Romans 5:17) has been

bestowed on all. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Why then are not all saved, whether they believe or not? Since righteousness is literally rained down upon all mankind, why is it necessary to believe in order to be saved? Because believing is receiving. Believing is breaking up the fallow ground. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you." (Hosea 10:12)

If the ground is not broken up, then the rain runs off without producing any crop. "For the earth which drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it, and brings forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receives blessing from God: But that which bears thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation." (Hebrews 6:7-9) "The Lord is good unto all; and His tender mercies are over all His works." (Psalm 145:9)

See how abundantly, how lavishly, God bestows His gifts. He has enough, and to spare. He does not need, even if He had the disposition, to measure out the gift of life, lest the supply should run short. "God gives not the Spirit by measure." (John 3:34)

This He demonstrates to us, in that He causes it to "rain on the earth where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein is no man; To satisfy the desolate and waste ground." (Job 38:26-27)

He lets the rain fall on the barren rock, and on the wide expanse of ocean. So freely does He bestow His life upon mankind.--Present Truth, August 25, 1898.

Chapter 11

The River of Life

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; your eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." (Isaiah 33:20-21) "And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." (Revelation 22:1) "And I saw in the midst of the throne...a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God." (Revelation 5:6) "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life." (Revelation 7:17) "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs; But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." (John 19:33-34) "There are three that bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one." (1 John 5:8) "Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believes on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." (John 7:37-39) "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your offspring; And they shall spring up as among the

grass, as willows by the water courses." (Isaiah 44:3-4) "Restore unto me the joy of your salvation; and uphold me with your free Spirit." (Psalm 51:12) "When the kindness of God our Saviour and His love toward man appeared, Not by works done in righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, Which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Titus 3:4-6) "Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3)

God himself is a place of broad rivers and streams. The river of life flows from Him. "The glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." (Isaiah 33:21)

It is a real stream, because from it comes the rain upon the earth, as we saw in our last lesson. It is the life of God in visible form. "And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." (Revelation 22:1)

Christ crucified is in the midst of the throne, whence the water of life flows, so that the water flows direct from the cross. "And I saw in the midst of the throne ... a Lamb standing, as though it had

been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God." (Revelation 5:6)

The law of God was always in the heart of Christ, even when He was here in the flesh, so that He himself was the throne of God. He has told us that His body was the temple of God. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and will you rear it up in three days? But He spoke of the temple of His body." (John 2:19-21)

So it was fitting that the water of life should flow from His side as He hung on the cross. On the cross Christ gave His life for us and all mankind. So the water that flowed from His side was the water of life. "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." (John 19:34)

It was mingled with blood, for the water and the blood are one. So we see that the river of water of life is also the blood, the life, of the Lamb. The Lamb slain is in the midst of the throne, the source of the river of life. "The Spirit, and the water, and the blood ... agree in one." (1 John 5:8)

All three are life. So the water of life flowing from the throne of God,--from the slain Lamb,--is the Spirit of God. Christ himself has told us this in so many words. "He that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

(But this He spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive...)" (John 7:38-39)

The world cannot receive the Spirit of God, "because it sees Him not." (John 14:17) "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Our physical eyes are not adapted to see spiritual things; therefore if we could be permitted to enter heaven just as we are, we could not see the throne of God, nor the water of life, any more than we can see them where we are. But at the resurrection we shall receive a spiritual body, (1 Corinthians 15:44-51) and then we shall see the river of life, which is the Spirit of God. We can then see the Spirit as plainly as we now see our earthly friends.

But God gives us the Spirit, in order that, receiving Him by faith, we may become spiritual, and thus with our spiritual eyesight, that is, by faith in the words of God, we may see the Spirit in the gifts of God. The world cannot receive Him, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him, "but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you." (John 14:17) "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your offspring; And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." (Isaiah 44:3-4)

The Spirit is the water of life, and so it is always spoken of as being "poured out" upon us. (Acts 10:45) The reality of the gift of the Spirit, and the freeness of the gift, is shown to us by the rain, the life of which is the Spirit. The fullness of the salvation of God is made known to us in the rain that refreshes the earth, and by which we have life. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7)

The blood of Christ is the water of life, and is also the Spirit, and so it is that we are cleansed by "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Titus 3:5)

All the water that is in the heavens and earth comes from the throne of God, from the river of life. Water cleanses. This everybody knows. Thus it is that God makes us see the reality of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

The water that Christ gives is "living water." (John 4:10-11;7:38) It is flowing, not stagnant. Flowing water, living water, is pure. Even if impurity be thrown into it, it soon becomes pure. All the sewage of the city of Paris flows into the Seine, yet forty miles below the city there is not a trace of impurity in the water. And this is in this sin-cursed earth. With what confidence then may we not come to the "fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." (Zechariah 13:1)

And the reality of this cleansing is made known to us afresh every day, as we wash our bodies in water, or use water for the cleansing of our garments.

How freely and literally God has bestowed--"poured out"--His Spirit upon all flesh! Why will not all men receive Him? Read again the words of the scriptures that compose this lesson, and see how easily we may receive the Holy Spirit simply by believing. Do you believe? "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:2-3)

What a wonderful blessing is promised to those who meditate in the law of God. What is the law of God? Can you not see that it is His life, and that it is in everything that He has made? What a grand thing to be sure of prosperity in every undertaking! Let us then meditate in the law of God as revealed in His works. Let us pray, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law." (Psalm 119:18) "You, Lord, have made me glad through your work; I will triumph in the works of your hands." (Psalm 13:4)--Present Truth, September 1, 1898.

Chapter 12

The Air

"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters ... and it was so, And God called the firmament Heaven." (Genesis 1:6-8) "Your mercy is great unto the heavens, and your truth unto the clouds." (Psalm 57:10) "Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds." (Psalm 36:5) "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." (Psalm 33:6) "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into His nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7) "Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) "God that made the world and all things therein ... gives to all life, and breath, and all things. ... For in Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:24-25,28) "Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." (Job 12:9-10) "All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils; My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit." (Job 27:3-4) "If He set His heart upon man, if He gather unto himself His Spirit and His breath; All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust." (Job 34:14-15) "And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided." (Exodus 14:21) "With the blast of your nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as a heap, and the waters

were congealed in the heart of the sea." (Exodus 15:8) "Then said He unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy son of man, and say to the wind, Thus says the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived." (Ezekiel 37:9-10) "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father has sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive the Holy Ghost." (John 20:21-22)

All things have come into existence by the breath of the Lord; there is nothing that is not the offspring of His own life. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

But for the breath that God gives us, we could not live a moment; so it is because the Lord gives us breath, that we are not consumed. The air that God gives us is an expression of His faithful mercy and compassion. "Your mercy is great unto the heavens, and your truth unto the clouds." (Psalm 57:10) "Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds." (Psalm 36:5)

Thus it is that God has surrounded the very earth with grace and mercy. The air is an atmosphere of mercy. Everybody on earth lives and moves in the atmosphere of God's grace. If we believe this, and take the constant gift as coming from Him, we shall breathe in

righteousness; as well as drink it. "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17)

But everybody in the world lives by breathing. Breathing is something that cannot be omitted for a moment. It must be kept up constantly. Now if we glorified the Lord not only with our breath but in our breath, if we acknowledged that the breath which we have is His, thus allowing Him to direct the life that comes by breathing, our life would be one of faith, and it would be righteous.

The just therefore live by faith only by breathing faith. Jesus is the truth and the life. There is no life but His. We live by breathing. Therefore we breathe His life. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

This is true of everybody; but only those who recognize the fact get any real benefit from it. "Man that is in honor and understands not, is like the beasts that perish." (Psalm 49:20)

The air we breathe is the breath of God. The wind that gently moves the leaves of the trees, or that stirs the sea to its depths, is the breath of His nostrils. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." (Psalm 33:6)

In the beginning God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

breathed into His nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7)

But we live by the very same means, and in the very same manner that all mankind have always lived. We have exactly the same air that Adam had. Therefore we also breathe by the breathing of God. The Spirit of God is in our nostrils. This is as plain as the Word of God. Read again the scriptures that teach us this. Let them be firmly fixed in mind. Learn to live by faith. "Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." (Job 12:9-10) "All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils; "My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit." (Job 27:3-4)

How wondrously free are the gifts of God! How free is the gift of God's Spirit, God's life! "As free as the air." "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men. For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry souls with goodness." (Psalm 107:8-9) "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." (Psalm 150:6)--Present Truth, September 8, 1898.

Chapter 13

The Seas

"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:9-10) "And I saw another angel fly to the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:6-7) "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the Lord; for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth." (Psalm 96:11-13) "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him." (Psalm 33:6-8) "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty, Who covers Yourself with light as with a garment; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain; Who lays the beams of His chambers in the waters; who makesthe clouds His chariot; who walks upon the

wings of the wind." (Psalm 104:1-3) "Do you not fear me? says the Lord; will you not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it." (Jeremiah 5:22) "Who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth, as if it had issued from the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick z a swaddling band for it, And prescribed for it my decree, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shall you come and no further; and here shall your proud waves be stayed?" (Job 38:8-11) "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand?" (Isaiah 40:12) "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the seas, Even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:9-10) "By terrible things will You answer us in righteousness, O God of our salvation; You are the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are far off upon the sea; ... Which by His strength sets fast the mountains, being girded about with light; which stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of the waves, and the tumult of the people." (Psalm 65:5,7) "Are You not it which has dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that has made the depths of the sea, a way for the ransomed to pass over? Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." (Isaiah 51:10-11) "The sea is His, and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land. O come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." (Psalm 95:5-6)

The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." (Romans 1:16)

The everlasting power of God is seen in the things that are made. "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity." (Romans 1:20,RV) "The sea is His, and He made it." (Psalm 95:5)

Therefore the voice of the sea, whether audible or inaudible, proclaims the Gospel. "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand?" (Isaiah 40:12)

The vast expanse of the sea, which God measures in His hand, shows us the greatness of His power, which is mercy, because it is salvation. So it is not more, but less than a full statement of the truth, that:

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea.
--Frederick William Faber, There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy, 1862.

The mighty power of the sea is but the manifestation of the merciful power of God to save us from our sins. If we but listen to

His voice, our righteousness will be "like the waves of the sea." (Isaiah 48:18)

What power can pluck us out of the hand of Him who measures all the waters of the sea in the hollow of His hand? "By His strength sets fast the mountains, being girded about with light; which stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of the waves, and the tumult of the people." (Psalm 65:7)

God's power over the raging of the nations of the earth, is as great as His power over the sea. He can still them just as easily. "And He said unto them, Why are you fearful, O you of little faith? Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm." (Matthew 8:26)

This is to be the confidence of the people of God in times when "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." (Psalm 2:1-3)

God's power over the sea is an assurance to us of salvation. Because He rules the sea, "Therefore the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion." (Isaiah 35:10)

When the Lord comes, it will be for the salvation of His people. But that will only be the consummation of the salvation which He accomplishes for them day by day. In view of His coming to

judgment, the sea roars out its joy: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof. ... for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth." (Psalm 96:11,13)

The sea speaks the mighty power of God. If we but learn to understand its language, then we shall experience the power which it reveals, and shall also rejoice at the thought of the coming of the Lord, because we know the joy of His presence.--Present Truth, September 15, 1898.

Chapter 14

Sowing the Seed

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:11-12) "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth, And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knows not how. The earth bears fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he puts forth the sickle, because the harvest is come." (Mark 4:26-29,RV) "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently; Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." (1 Peter 1:22-24) "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to your Seed which is Christ." (Galatians 3:16) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... In Him was life ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John 1:1,4,14) "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some [seeds] fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up; Some fell upon

stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth; And when the sun was up they were scorched: and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them; But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. Who has ears to hear, let him hear. ... Hear therefore the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and understands it not, then comes the wicked one, and catches away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside. But he that received the seed into stony pieces, the same is he that bears the Word, and anon with joy receives it; yet has he not root in himself, but endures for awhile; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that hears the Word; and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that hears the Word, and understands it; which also bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty." (Matthew 13:3-9,18-23) "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:10-11)

From Mark 4:26-29 we learn that in the growth of corn from the sowing of the seed to the harvest we have a visible and perfect presentation of the kingdom of God. From the visible we learn of the invisible. The power of God, which is the Gospel, is seen in the things that are made. (Romans 1:20,RV; For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity.) "The earth bears fruit of herself," (Mark 4:28) that is, literally, "automatically." But an automaton, so-called, does not manufacture its own power. The power which runs an automaton is furnished by a spring that is wound up, so that although no application of power can be seen, the machine acting as a living thing, there is in reality a constant application of power from without. Through the spring, the force of the man who wound it is being constantly exerted. "Power belongs unto God." (Psalm 62:11) "There is no power but of God." (Romans 13:1)

The earth therefore brings forth by the power of God. Something is necessary before the earth can bring forth fruit of herself, and this is set forth in the parable. It is this: seed must be sown. The earth bears fruit of herself, but not until seed has been placed in it. If there were no seed in the ground, the earth could never bring forth anything.

Now when the earth was first created, there was nothing in it. When the dry land was separated from the water, it contained no seed, and had it been left alone, it would never have brought

anything forth. What did God do, in order that the earth might bear fruit? He spoke to it. He sent forth His Word into the earth. The seed, therefore, whence everything comes, that grows out of the earth, is the Word of God. "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:11-12)

Take a handful of corn, and cast it upon the ground. If the conditions are favorable, it will spring up and bear fruit. What is the life of the seed,--that which gives it germinating power? It is the Word of the Lord. The real seed of everything that grows is nothing other than the living Word of the living God. We see therefore that the Word of God is very real, although we cannot see it. There is nothing real except the Word. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides for ever." (1 Peter 1:23)

Thus we find that when we are told that the new birth is effected by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever, it is not a figure of speech, but the statement of an actual fact, and the reality of it is shown to us by the corn growing from the seed that is cast into the earth.

The fact that we cannot see the seed which God places in us for our regeneration, and that we cannot explain how it is done, makes

no difference with the fact, nor with our faith. We cannot see the life of the seed which we cast into the ground. Nobody can tell by looking at seed whether it has life in it, and will germinate or not. And when it is sown, nobody knows the mystery of growth. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; ... and the seed should spring and grow up he knows not how." (Mark 4:26-27)

No farmer refuses to sow seed, because he cannot tell how it grows and multiplies; but if he should refuse to sow seed until he could understand and explain all about how it grows, he would be no more foolish than the man who refuses to accept the Lord until he can understand how the Lord can speak righteousness into his soul, and cause it to grow and multiply. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... In Him was life." (John 1:1,4)

Christ is the Word, and the Word is the seed; hence Christ is the Seed. "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to your Seed which is Christ." (Galatians 3:16)

This is true in every sense. The Word from which everything grows which God has made, is the life of Christ. So it is that in eating bread (good bread, of course) we are eating the body of Christ.

"For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth just as the earth brings forth her bud, that is, by speaking to the souls of men, just as He does to the earth. They who hear shall live. If we consciously yield to the Word of God as completely as the earth does involuntarily, we cannot fail to bring forth fruit unto eternal life.--Present Truth, September 22, 1898.

Chapter 15

The Seed Quickened

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit. He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." (John 12:24-25) "That which you sow is not quickened, except it die; And that which you sow, you sow not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; But God gives it a body, even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own." (1 Corinthians 15:36-38) "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your Seed, which is Christ." (Galatians 3:16) "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ... And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:27,29) "As He is, so are we in this world." (1 John 4:17) "He saved others; himself He cannot save." (Matthew 27:42) "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man; And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name." (Philippians 2:5-9) "When He came into the world, He said, Sacrifice and offering You would not, but a body You have prepared

me." (Hebrews 10:5) "We are members of His body." (Ephesians 5:30) "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die; but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live." (Romans 8:8-13) "For, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord ... That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." (Philippians 3:8,10) "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." (Romans 6:5) "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20-21)

All our knowledge comes from the Word. The statements that follow are not comments, but simply repetitions of what is set forth in the preceding texts. They are for the purpose of calling closer attention to the texts themselves. Let each reader ponder these texts

until they are indelibly printed in his mind and on his heart. They should be as familiar to us as our own names. Then can we see not only the truths that follow, but much more that cannot be put into words.

The kingdom of God is like seed cast into the earth. (Mark 4:26-29) We are God's husbandry, or tillage. "You are God's husbandry [margin: "tilled land"], God's building." (1 Corinthians 3:9,RV)

The growth of a seed from the time that it is sown until the harvest, is a visible and constantly recurring manifestation of the truth of the Gospel as it affects men.

That which was placed in the earth in the beginning, to cause it to bring forth grass, herbs, and trees, was the Word of the Lord. The Lord, therefore, is the real seed, the life of all visible seeds. Christ is the Word, and He is the Seed. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit." (John 12:24) "That which you sow is not quickened, except it die." (1 Corinthians:36)

If all men would remember one of the first and plainest truths concerning plant life, it would be their salvation. That truth is that the seed must die in order to live and multiply. No one ever gets back the seed which he sows, yet this fact does not cause the farmer to keep the seed, and not sow it. He who would keep the little quantity of grain that he may have, gets nothing from it; but if he casts it into the ground, seemingly throwing it away, he gets much

more. "He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." (John 12:25)

So the man who lives for himself, loses his life, while he who lives for others, giving his life for them, gets more abundant life. Even Christ pleased not himself, (Romans 15:3) yet He has the most perfect satisfaction, and fullness of joy.

In coming to earth Christ "emptied himself." The word in Philippians 2:7, rendered "made of no reputation," and "emptied" in the Revision, is the same that is rendered "made void," in Romans 4:14 and 1 Corinthians 9:15, and "of none effect" in 1 Corinthians 1:17. Thus we can see that Christ not only gave up everything that He had in heaven, in coming to this world, but He most literally gave up himself. God prepared Him a body, and made Him a perfect Man. "He saved others; himself He cannot save." (Matthew 27:42)

This intended taunt flung in the face of Jesus as He hung on the cross, was really His glory as the Saviour of men. Only by giving himself, taking absolutely no thought for himself, could He save others. He gave up His life, not simply when He was on the cross on Calvary, but constantly. His whole life was in giving of His life for others.

But in giving away His life, throwing it away, as it must have seemed to many, when He chose death rather than being made king, He not only gained it, but saved the lives of millions more. "For, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the

knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord. ... That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death." (Philippians 3:8,10) "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." (2 Corinthians 1:3-6)

Any man who is thoroughly devoted to the salvation of others, thinking not once of himself, not even of his own salvation, will be made salvation to others, and will thereby have his own salvation assured; for only the presence of God with a man can work this perfect unselfishness which saves others, and that presence is the man's own salvation. While we are looking out for others, God himself is looking out for us. "Wherefore when He came into the world, He said, Sacrifice and offering You would not, but a body You have prepared me." (Hebrews 10:5) God prepared Jesus a body, by the same power by which He prepares a body for every seed that is sown. And by the same power, He makes us members of Christ's body. Just as the Spirit of God completely filled Jesus, so that His body was only the instrument through which the Holy Spirit manifested himself, even so it will be with all who give up their own

lives for the sake of the Lord Jesus. God will prepare them a body fit for His own dwelling place. "The body is ... for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." (1 Corinthians 6:13)

He will use the brain to think through, the vocal organs to speak through, and the hands and feet to act through. It will be God manifest in the flesh, for Jesus came to this world for no other purpose than to show us the possibility of this being the case with every man.

The life of the seed that is sown, as well as of the plant that grows, is the life of God alone. That life manifests itself through the form which we see, as a constant object lesson to us. If we are willingly as passive in the hands of God as the grain is involuntarily, His life will work in us the same as in Jesus of Nazareth.

This in "the power of the resurrection." (Philippians 3:10) The resurrection of Jesus simply declared Him to be the Son of God with power. (Romans 1:1-4) He was the Son of God all His life, but the resurrection from the dead made it apparent to all; for it showed that the power by which He had lived a righteous life was the power that brings life from the dead. The very same power was manifested in His resurrection that was manifested in all His life.

The belief in the resurrection of the dead is nothing else than the belief in God's perfect righteousness manifested in human flesh. Jesus was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18) "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of

His. ... But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you." (Romans 8:9,11)

This is a thing done not merely at the resurrection of the last day, but every day. For note what the consequence is of this quickening of our mortal bodies: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." (Romans 8:12)

Jesus said: "Whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14)

The water that He gives is the Holy Spirit. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this He spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.)" (John 7:37-39) "It is the Spirit that quickens." (John 6:63)

When we come to the Lord, to receive wholly of His life, to live by Him, our bodies are prepared for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit quickens the body, so that instead of being dead in sin, it is alive unto righteousness. Our members then become instruments of righteousness. The life of Christ manifest in mortal flesh gives not simply victory over sin, but over disease as well:

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases." (Psalm 103:2-3)

It is this same life dwelling in us that, by the same power that it has over the flesh, quickens our mortal bodies into immortality at the coming of the Lord. The power that now works in believers is the power of the resurrection. Christ in us is the hope of glory. 59 "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." (Romans 6:5) "For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20-21)

The life of Christ in the flesh is of course the perfect example of the quickening power of the Spirit. But God has provided that we may have it continually before us. Every seed that sprouts, of whatever kind, is an illustration of the power of the life of the Spirit to triumph over difficulties.

Here is a seed enclosed in a shell that is so hard that a vigorous blow with a hammer will not suffice to break it. The shell is hard and dead. Is it possible that any life can come from that? Wait and see. Silently, without observation, the Word of life within operates, the dead, hard shell gives way before it, and the new life manifests itself. Even so, "The kingdom of God is within you. ... [It] comes

not with observation," (Luke 17:21,20) but its power is infinite. If we will but acknowledge that the kingdom is the Lord's, and allow Him His own rightful place in His own kingdom, we shall "be conformed to the image of His Son," (Romans 8:29) and, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man will be renewed day by day," (2 Corinthians 4:16) "in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)--Present Truth, September 29, 1898.

Chapter 16

All Flesh Is Grass

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:11-12) "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knows not how." (Mark 4:26-27) "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; The grass withers, the flower fades; because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isaiah 40:6-8) "I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in me that bears not fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more 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 you, except you abide in me. I am the Vine; you are the branches; He that abides in me, and Iin him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing." (John 15:1-2,4-5) "In that day sing unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." (Isaiah 27:2-3) "He that keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." (Psalm

121:3-4) "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:28-30) "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." (Hosea 14:5) "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." (Psalm 92:12-14) "Who has believed our report? and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." (Isaiah 53:1-2) "Your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation; I the Lord will hasten it in his time." (Isaiah 9:21-22) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. ... To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified. ... For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:1,3,11) "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the

Lord, so walk in Him: Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." (Colossians 2:6-7)

The statement that "all flesh is grass," is absolute and unqualified. It is true that in 1 Peter 1:24 we read that "All flesh is as grass;" (1 Peter 1:24) but that does not in the least destroy the force of the statement in Isaiah. The Scriptures do not contradict themselves. All flesh is as grass, because all flesh is grass. We may contradict the statement, and say that we cannot see how we are grass, and that we do not think it means just that; but in so doing we shall never find out what it does mean, and shall deprive ourselves of all the comfort that there is in it.

There is comfort in the knowledge of the fact that all flesh is grass. The 40th chapter of Isaiah, in which the statement occurs, is a message of comfort. The special message of comfort which God sends to His people, is that: "All flesh is grass" (Isaiah 40:6)

This is a part of the message that is sent to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord. The other part is, "the Word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isaiah 40:8)

We can never realize the full strength of the Word of God until we realize that we are but grass, as helpless as is the grass of the field; for as long as we imagine that we have any strength in ourselves, we cannot rest wholly on the strength of the Lord, on the Word that upholds all things; and to the extent that we depend on

our own fancied strength, are we useless. This message, "All flesh is grass," (Isaiah 40:6) "but the Word of our God shall stand for ever," (Isaiah 40:8) is only another statement of the message of: "Fear God, and give glory to Him,...and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:7)

We give glory to God only when we acknowledge that He alone has the power, and that we are helpless; that in Him alone is life and righteousness; that in Him is everything, while in us is nothing. He is light, while we are in ourselves but darkness.

When we hold fast this confession, and allow Him to work in us and to clothe us even as He does the grass of the field, men see our good works and glorify Him, because He does the works. Then we may be "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Philippians 1:11)

To have the perfect righteousness of God, by the faith of Jesus Christ, is all that is needed to meet the Lord. So we see that the message which leads men to confess themselves to be as weak and worthless as the grass of the field, and God and His Word to be everlasting strength and righteousness, must be the preparatory message for the Lord's coming.

Note that in the Saviour's words in Matthew 6:28-30 the lilies of the field are counted as grass. There are many different kinds of grass that grow out of the ground, so that we have a large range of

objects in nature to study in order to find out what we are, and how God would deal with us. Corn, as well as everything else from which bread is made, is simply grass. Let this be remembered, for it has a practical bearing on our study of the life of faith.

Do not fail to note the fine recognition of the fact that all flesh is grass, in the words of the Saviour. After calling our attention to the lilies of the field, He says, "If God so clothe the grass of the field." (Matthew 6:30)

That which is ordinarily called simply grass, is grass of the field; men are a higher order of grass, destined for infinitely higher purposes, but grass nevertheless.

Not only are we grass, but we are designed to be trees,--trees of righteousness. Let the student recall the lesson on "The Fruit of the Light," and he will see some of the lessons to be learned from the fact that we are called "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." (Isaiah 61:3)

If we constantly keep in mind the scriptures which tell us that we stand in close relationship with the grass of the field and the trees of the wood, and that the kingdom of God is like the seed that is cast into the earth, and grows to perfection, we shall be continually learning Gospel lessons; for we are seldom out of sight of something that is growing.--Present Truth, October 6, 1898.

Chapter 17

The Power of Growth

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass...and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit." (Genesis 1:11-12) "He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth." (Psalm 104:14) "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field: The grass withers, the flower fades; because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isaiah 40:6-8) "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that plants anything, neither he that waters, but God that gives the increase." (1 Corinthians 3:6) "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. ... God has spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God." (Psalm 62:9,11) "He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increases strength." (Isaiah 40:29) "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." (1 Corinthians 1:23-24) "In your hand is power and might; and in your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." (1 Chronicles 29:12) "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is

light." (Matthew 11:29-30) "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." (Lamentations 3:27) "And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9-10) "There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13) "Verily I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matthew 17:20) "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." (Luke 18:27) "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18) "You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8)

Remember that God's message of comfort includes the special cry, "All flesh is grass" ... "but the Word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isaiah 40:6,8)

There is nothing that grows that is weaker than the tender grass; it is a synonym for weakness and instability. Just as there is nothing weaker than the grass, so there is nothing stronger than the Word of God. In this lies the comfort.

It is not an uncommon thing for people to acknowledge that they are weak. Even the strongest physically have times when they feel weak. Especially among professed Christians is a confession of weakness a common thing. Nevertheless they do not get comfort out of the confession. On the contrary, the fact that they are obliged to confess that they are weak, is a source of great sorrow to them. They are continually mourning their weakness: "I am so weak!" is the sorrowful cry. "Oh, if I only had more strength!" is their often expressed wish. What is the trouble? Simply this, that their confession does not go far enough. They say that they are so weak, and wish that they had more strength, thereby showing that they flatter themselves that they have some strength.

But the facts are that all men together are lighter than vanity, (Psalm 62:9) and that God alone has power. (Romans 13:1; Psalm 62:11) He is the Almighty. That is, He has all might, so that there is no might outside of Him. Strength is an attribute of Divinity. If man had strength in himself he would be God. So just to the extent that men imagine that they have strength, do they imagine themselves to be God. As long as men think themselves to be gods, with strength in themselves, so long will they trust in themselves instead of in God. But, "He that trusts in his own heart is a fool." (Proverbs 28:26)

As long as a man thinks that he has the slightest particle of strength, there is continual failure and discouragement before him. What is the remedy? Simply this, to acknowledge the fact that there

is absolutely no strength in him, but "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." (Isaiah 26:5)

And then to say, "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup." (Psalm 16:5)

Then he has the benefit of everlasting power and Divinity, although he himself is but helpless grass.

Walk through a cornfield in the spring time. Everywhere you will see little rifts in the ground, showing where the tender blades are pushing their way up to the light. All over the earth there is a general upheaval, more in the aggregate than any earthquake ever known, yet there is not the slightest sound or commotion. Men go about entirely unconscious of what is taking place. What causes it? It is the power of God's Word, which in the beginning and ever since said, "Let the earth bring forth grass." (Genesis 1:11)

The word "dynamo" is simply the Greek word for power. We have another form of the same word in the familiar word "dynamite." All know what dynamite is used for, and what terrible explosions it causes. Well, this rifting of the earth by the growing grass is but an example of the working of God's dynamite. God's dynamite, contrary to that perverted form which man makes use of, works silently, and to upbuild, instead of, with deafening noise, to destroy.

When the poor woman who was dying from loss of blood came behind Jesus and touched the hem of His garment, and was instantly made whole, the Lord said, "Somebody touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me." (Luke 8:46,RV)

This is the word just referred to. The power that went from Him can be conceived only by thinking of the force which men call dynamite; but, as already stated, it works quietly and to restore, instead of to destroy. It is what He gives to everyone who believes on Him, and the illustration of the same thing is constantly before us in the power that is manifested in the growing grass.

Just as power--the power of the life of Christ--came into the poor woman; just as the power of the ever-living Word animates the grass of the field; even so does the Spirit of life in Christ come into us, and manifest itself as righteousness, when we believe in truth.

Look a little closer at that growing corn. Here we see not only a little crack in the earth, but a portion of it is raised up a heavy clod is tilted to one side, and stands on edge. What causes it? Look down, and you will see a tiny, white, tender blade of corn underneath it. That little spire of grass, that if removed from its bed has not strength enough to stand alone, is now not only standing bolt upright, but is bearing a load many thousand times its own weight.

Is grass then such powerful matter? No; it has no strength at all. At any rate, anybody can see that there is a power manifested here that is no part of the grass itself. What is it? The nearest that

anybody can come to an answer without the Bible is that it is "vital force." That is all right; it is the strength of life, for that is what vital force means. But the Word of God tells us that Christ is "the life." (John 14:6) The force therefore that is manifest in the growing grass is nothing other than the power of the life of Christ.

Now we may form some idea of the statement, "His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3)

If a man could lift as much in proportion to his size and weight as the tiny blade of grass does in pushing the clod of earth away from before it, it would not be so difficult a thing for him actually to remove a mountain, would it? But the mountains of earth are where the Lord has placed them, and do not need moving. The mountains that man needs for the most part to remove are the mountains of sin. This earth, and earth life, are upon him, holding him down.

The power which God gives him is first of all to be directed to the removing of this load. Let him now receive that word which said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," (Genesis 1:11) and in obedience to which the tiny blade comes forth, even though it must raise what to it is a mountain, and the world and all the lust thereof cannot any longer hold him down. Let a man consciously and voluntarily submit himself to the Word of the Lord as completely as the grass of the field does unconsciously and involuntarily, and the same power that brings it to perfection as grass, will bring him to

perfection as man, even "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:13)

The only thing that hinders is man's pride, which makes him unwilling to acknowledge that he has no more power than the grass of the field. But that is the fact, and it is far better to acknowledge it and so be filled with Divine, everlasting power, than to deny it, and have no power at all.--Present Truth, October 13, 1898.

Chapter 18

Intelligent Action in Plants

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit ... and it was so." (Genesis 1:11) "All flesh is grass. ... But the Word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isaiah 40:6,8) "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." (1 Corinthians 3:19-20) "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Romans 1:21-22) "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5) "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." (2 Corinthians 3:5) "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Corinthians 2:12) "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23) "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:6) "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord. ... For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord." (Isaiah 55:7-8) "The secret of

the Lord is with them that fear Him." (Psalm 25:14) "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. ... Of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom." (1 Corinthians 1:24,30) "Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:2-3) "The Lord gives wisdom; out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs 2:6) "Wisdom and might are His: ... he gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." (Daniel 2:20-21) "Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3) "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." (Colossians 3:16)

Jesus Christ is "the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6) As there is no life but from Him, so there are none of the manifestations of life that are not from Him. This does not make Him responsible for everything that men think and do, since they to so great an extent hold down the truth and the life in unrighteousness. They do not give the life free course, but pervert it, and the result is confusion and emptiness. "Christ [is] the wisdom of God, [as well as] the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:24)

Just as there is no power but of God, so there is no wisdom but the wisdom of God. The so-called wisdom of men who reject the

Lord, is foolishness with Him. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." (1 Corinthians 3:19)

There is no right thought except the thought of God. "All flesh is grass." (Isaiah 40:6)

Man has no more power to manufacture thought than the grass of the field has. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

Our perfect gift is from above, and comes down. Muscles are the organs by which motion is effected, but they do not originate motion. If they had that power in themselves, then they would continue to move indefinitely at will. But all have seen muscles that could not act, and that not only in dead men. There must be a power to act on the muscles, else they are useless. That power is the life of the Lord.

So with the brain. It is the organ of thought, but it does not originate thought. A power entirely distinct from the brain must act through it, else it is useless. When that power is allowed free course, the thoughts are right; otherwise they are vague and perverted. "23 The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23) "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." (Isaiah 55:7)

But a man's ways and thoughts are all that make him anything more than a useless lump of clay. Does the Lord desire that a man

shall forsake his ways and his thoughts, and be a nonentity? Not by any means. He offers him something that is far better.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9)

God's ways and thoughts are as much higher than man's ways and thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. The Scriptures therefore teach us that it is possible for God to take complete possession of a man, and to think and act through him. This is God's design for man. Only as this is the case, is man a complete and perfect man.

The body is designed to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that means that all the organs of the body are to be simply the instruments through which the Holy Spirit will manifest himself. This complete submission to the will of God will not destroy any man's individuality, but will on the contrary make it more marked. God is infinite. He who has made every plant "after its kind," each with a distinct characteristic of its own, will make every man perfect after his kind, if he will but be as passive to the Spirit of God as the plants of the field are. "Commit your works unto the Lord, and your thoughts shall be established." (Proverbs 16:3)

Only by the Spirit of God can we "know the things that are freely given us by the Lord." (1 Corinthians 2:12)

What has the Lord freely given us? All things. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) "[He] gives us richly all things to enjoy." (1 Timothy 6:17) "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17) "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven." (John 3:27)

Since everything is given us by the Lord, and we cannot know the things that are freely given us by Him except by the Holy Spirit, it follows that there is absolutely no real knowledge in the world that does not come from the Spirit of God. To reject the Holy Spirit is to reject wisdom and knowledge. If He does not think in us, we have no thoughts that are worth thinking. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

O what marvelous treasures of wisdom and knowledge there must be for all who are willing to humble themselves to admit that they know absolutely nothing, and to submit to let God think His own thoughts in them! Some of the possibilities for man when God's thought and Word has free course in him, are revealed in the plants of the field, which offer no opposition by self-sufficient pride.

In studying God's action in them, let us remember that He will do as much greater things in the man who is as submissive to Him, as the object for which man was created is greater than that for which the grass of the field was made.--Present Truth, October 20, 1898.

Chapter 19

The Glory of the Heavens

"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days, and years; And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:14-17) "Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking." (Isaiah 40:26) " Once have I sworn by your holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." (Psalm 89:35-37) "Thus says the Lord, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divides the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name; If those ordinances depart from before me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall cease from being a nation before me forever." (Jeremiah 31:35-36) "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth! who has set your glory upon the heavens." (Psalm 8:1) "The heavens declare the glory of God; and

the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice cannot be heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them has He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a strong man to run his course. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." (Psalm 19:1-7) "The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory." (Psalm 84:11) "Then spoke Jesus again unto them saying, I am the Light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12) "Awake, you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you." (Ephesians 5:14) "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings." (Malachi 4:2) "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6) "You are 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." (Matthew 5:14,16) "Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you. And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." (Isaiah 60:1-3) "Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought the

group into a high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." (Matthew 17:1-2) "Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20-21) "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:13) "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Daniel 12:3)

God's everlasting power and Divinity are seen in the things that He has made, (Romans 1:20,RV) and in nothing do they more plainly appear than in the heavenly bodies. They are where they can be seen by all, and they speak a language that all can understand.

No sound is heard from the sun, moon and stars; that is why they can speak to the understanding of all. If they used any of the languages of earth, only a portion of the people could comprehend their speech; but by their silent shining forth of the glory of God, their words have gone to the ends of the earth, so that "all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God;-–for God's glory is His power, and His power is salvation." (Isaiah 52:10)

The sun, moon, and stars did not create themselves. They are not the originators of the light which they send forth. It is God's glory that they declare by simply letting it shine, as He has put it upon

them. The light which they give to the earth is light direct from the presence of the Lord; it is indeed the light of His presence. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" (1 John 1:5) and Christ is the shining of His glory. (Hebrews 1:3) So Christ is the light of the world. (John 8:12) "[He is] the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:9)

We cannot have the fact too strongly impressed upon our minds that Christ is the light of the world, that is, He is all the light there is. The light that rejoices our eyes every day, is really the personal presence of Christ with us. If these scriptures were but real to us, what a difference it would make in our lives. We should know that we are constantly in the presence of the Lord.

As Christ is the light of the world, so are His true followers. "You are the light of the world." (Matthew 5:14)

But it is only as His light is allowed to pass through us, that we are the light of the world. Christ shines upon us, and if we are sincere, that is, if there is nothing in us to obstruct the light, the light shines through us, and we share His glory. What a wonder, that Christ will let mortal men occupy the same relation to the world that He himself does!

The same light which God commanded to shine out of darkness, is the light which He shines into our hearts. (2 Corinthians 4:6) Do not forget that the light that shines upon us new every morning is to enable us to behold our God. Jesus said, "The glory which You gave

me I have given them; that they maybe one, even as we are one. I in them, and You in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent me, and have loved them as You have loved me." (John 17:22-23)

The glory of God, which Christ has given us, marks us as sons of God, even as He is. We are joint-heirs with Christ, and the Father loves us even as He loves Him. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2)

The glory is not now recognized in us as the glory of God, even as it was not in Christ, except on the mount of transfiguration; but when He comes, the glory of His grace, with which He has filled us, will shine forth, so that our bodies will shine like His glorious body. But His body shines above the brightness of the sun. And the glory in which the saints will at last appear, is but the glory which now is given to them in the form of grace and truth.

So the lesson that we are to learn is that the power that is revealed in the whole heavens, is the power that is given now, to enable us to live to the glory of God.--Present Truth, October 27, 1898.

Chapter 20

The Animal Creation

"And God created great whales [literally, "sea-monsters"], and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl, after his kind; and God saw that it was good. ... And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps upon the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:21,24-25) "The invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity." (Romans 1:20) "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you; Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you. Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." (Job 12:7-10) "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are in my mind." (Psalm 1:10-11,RV,margin) "The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun arises, they gather themselves together and lay them down in their dens. ... These wait all upon You; that You may give them their meat in due season. That You give them they gather: You open your hand, they are filled

[satisfied] with good." (Psalm 104:21-22,27-28) "The eyes of all wait upon You; and You give them their meat indue season. You open your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing." (Psalm 114:15-16) "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:29-31) "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." (Luke 12:6-7) "Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise; Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provides her meat in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest." (Proverbs 6:6-8) "Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south? Does the eagle mount up at your command, and make her nest on high?" (Job 39:26-27) "Gave you the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? Which leaves her eggs in the earth, and warms them in the dust, And forgets that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. ... Because God has deprived her of wisdom, neither has He imparted to her understanding." (Job 39:13-15,17) "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not consider." (Isaiah 1:2-3) "Yea, the stork in the heaven knows her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord. How do you say, We are

wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain He made it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken in, they have rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?" (Jeremiah 8:7-9) "For the Lord gives wisdom: out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs 2:6) "None says, Where is God my maker, who gives songs in the night; Who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the fowls of heaven?" (Job 35:10-11) "Behold, God exalts by His power; who teaches like Him?" (Job 36:22)

The everlasting power and Divinity of God are seen in the things that are made. God has made the animal creation as well as the plants; therefore in animals we may see His presence and power displayed.

Remember that the worker is not the thing worked. There is an infinite difference between the Creator and the thing created. The power that is seen in anything must not be confounded with the thing itself. Neither men nor any of the lower orders of creation are God, but His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in everything from highest to lowest. Nothing but sin cherished hinders its perfect manifestation.

From the beasts, the birds, and the fishes we are to learn lessons about God. From them we learn not only God's power, but His tender care and love of all the fowls of the mountains, and all the beasts of the field, not one is out of His mind. They receive their

food directly from Him, and He never forgets to feed them. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." (Matthew 10:29)

Two sparrows were sold for a farthing in the days of the Saviour, and if the purchaser would take two farthings' worth, one bird would be given, and no account would be made of it. But although man made no account of it, God did not forget it. Not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without His permission. "Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:31)

We are of more value than many sparrows; how safe, then, we are in His care. Satan cannot come near one of God's children, to do him the slightest injury, without direct permission from God; (See Job 1:8-12) and when this is allowed, God's power to sustain is so much more wonderfully manifested, that the sufferer can rejoice in the midst of it. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall

into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:2-4)

Man does not "make his own living" any more than the birds and beasts do. They gather what God gives them, and man can do no more. Man sows seed in the earth, and God makes it grow, and man gathers it. The seed which is sown is itself given to man.

The birds and bees work much more diligently to procure food for themselves and their young than men do; yet the latter boast of how they make their own living, and regard the former as being entirely supported by others. But all are alike supported from the same source.

No man can "make a living," and therefore God has not given it to any man to do. God is the Author of life, and He alone gives it. God would have men without care, the same as the birds; not reckless, but trustful as they are. Our business is to glorify God, to allow Him to glorify himself in us, by working His righteousness in us, and He will attend to our living.

Man gets wisdom from the very same source that the beasts and the birds do. In himself he has no more wisdom than they have; and when he rejects God, the source of all knowledge, he knows even less than do the dumb brutes. The most stupid beasts of burden have more real knowledge than does the man who rebels against God.

But God designed man to be inconceivably higher than any other creature, and will give the wisdom that will place him in this position, if he will but acknowledge Him as the Giver of everything.--Present Truth, November 3, 1898.

Chapter 21

The Dust of the Earth

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God made man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:26-27) "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7) "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree." (Genesis 2:9) "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind. ... Let the earth bring forth grass." (Genesis 1:24,11) "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. ... Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; Behold, He takes up the isles as a very little thing." (Isaiah 40:6,15) "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart upon them. God has spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God." (Psalm 62:9-11) "You turn man to dust, and say, Return, you children of men." (Psalm 90:3,RV,margin) "And Abraham answered, and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." (Genesis 18:27) "I have heard of You by the hearing of the

ear; but now my eye sees You. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5-6) "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." (Psalm 51:17) "Like as a father pities his children so the Lord pities them that fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust." (Psalm 103:13-14) "He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." (1 Samuel 2:8) "Awake, awake; put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come unto you the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake yourself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem; loose yourself from the bands of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion." (Isaiah 52:1-2) "I can of my own self do nothing." (John 5:30) "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has 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, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are." (1 Corinthians 1:27-28) "And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, them am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9-10) "He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might, He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait on the Lord shall

renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:29-31) "Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust; for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (Isaiah 26:19)

Out of the ground the Lord made man, the lower animals, and plants. All are from the dust, and all return to dust again. When they have returned to dust, it is impossible to distinguish between them. Their dust is all alike. That which makes the difference between them in life is the working of God in them. "All flesh is grass." (Isaiah 40:6)

Even though man, contrary to the design of God, eats animal food, the animal which he eats lives upon herbs, so that not only the first man, in the beginning, but every man, even to this day, comes from the ground. "Dust you are, and unto dust shall you return." (Genesis 3:19)

It is not necessary to make comparisons between man and any other creature. Go back to the origin of man, and consider him just as he is, namely, dust. What power is there in the dust? Look at the dust in the street; what can it do? Nothing. That is the power of man, for man is dust.

The lesson that we are to learn is that we have no more power or wisdom in ourselves than the dust has that lies under our feet. We

are dust that has been fashioned by the hand of God into a certain shape, and the breath of the Almighty has come into us, giving us understanding. We have nothing to boast of over the dust that still lies in an unformed mass. "What have you that you did not receive?" (1 Corinthians 4:7)

A very insignificant part of the dust, too, is man. In the sight of God, as compared with His vast universe of matter, all the nations together "are counted as the small dust of the balance." (Isaiah 40:15)

The dust that lies on the grocer's balance, which is so fine that it is not perceptible, and which makes no material difference in the amount of that which is being weighed, bears the same relative proportion to the earth that all nations together do to the universe of God. "When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; What is man, that You are mindful of him? and the son of man, that You visit him?" (Psalm 8:3-4)

God makes no account of degrees and ranks among men. The prince and the pauper are both made from the same dust. Let the prince be buried in all his robes of royalty, and the beggar be buried in his rags, and when they have returned to dust no man could tell which was born in a castle and which in a cottage. "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity." (Psalm 62:9)

Men of low degree in the estimation of the world, are vanity; that would probably be admitted at least by men of "high degree;" but men of high degree are a lie, because they seem to be something when they are nothing; in reality both high and low are all together "lighter than vanity." Just as stated in the preceding paragraph, they are not of sufficient weight to make it worth while to blow them off the balances in which the universe is weighed.

Why should the spirit
Of mortal be proud?
--William Knox (1789-1825), Poem: Oh, Why Should the Spirit of Mortal be Proud? (This was said to be one of Abraham Lincoln’s favorite poems).

"Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith." (Romans 3:27)

Man has nothing but what God has given him. He can be nothing of value, except as God makes makes him such. Just to the extent that man is anything different from what God's own life in him would make him, is he a disgrace and a curse. Man has no more ground for boasting than has the dust that the wind whirls about; for all that makes him different from that is the life of God in him. "You turn man to dust, and say, Return, you children of men." (Psalm 90:3,RV,margin)

Men forget that they are dust, and consequently they put themselves in the place of God, and that is lawlessness. Then God

turns them again to dust, or contrition (not "destruction," as in the common version); that is, He allows something to come upon them to convince them that they are but dust, and absolutely helpless, and then He says: "Come again, you children of men." (Psalm 90:3,Coverdale,1535)

Just as in the beginning He made man of the dust of the ground, and crowned him with glory and honor, so whenever a man will be as passive dust as was that in the beginning, God will make a man of him, of whom He can say that he is "very good." (Genesis 1:31)

God's power to create is our hope of salvation. This working of God in the beginning, to make man of the dust of the ground, and His continued working to make men new when they are willing to be counted as only dust, is the hope of the resurrection, for it is the same working. "Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust: for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (Isaiah 26:19)

Those who dwell in the dust shall awake and sing at the coming of the Lord; but the song that they will then sing will be the very same song that God now puts into the mouth of those whom He lifts out of the dust and filth of the pit. "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but You have in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for You have cast all my sins behind your back." (Isaiah 38:17)

The power that converts is the power of the resurrection, the power of the world to come. It is the power that in the beginning made the heavens and the earth, and made man of the dust of the ground. What God has done, He can do, for His arm is not shortened, that He cannot save. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear." (Isaiah 59:1)

Much as it goes against a man's natural inclination to regard himself as nothing but helpless dust, there is everlasting strength in the acknowledging of the fact, for it puts him where the Almighty Creator can lift him up to His own throne, and crown him with everlasting glory and honor. "He that humbles himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14:11)--Present Truth, November 10, 1898.

Chapter 22

Man's Dominion

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Genesis 1:26-28) "Adam, which was the son of God." (Luke 3:38) "You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of your hands." (Hebrews 1:10) "One in a certain place testified, saying, what is man, that You are mindful of him? or the son of man, that you visit him? You made him a little lower than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of your hands: You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Hebrews 2:6-9) "And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered

with the waves; but He was asleep. And His disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us; we perish. And He said unto them, Why are you fearful, O you of little faith? Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the waves obey Him?" (Matthew 8:23-27) "And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy: Son, be of good cheer; your sins be forgiven you. ... That you may know that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins, (then said He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up your bed, and go unto your house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitude saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto man." (Matthew 9:2,6-8) "And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go you, therefore, and teach all nations. ... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:18-20) "That you may know. ... What is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, Which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all." (Ephesians 1:18-23) "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He

loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are you saved;) And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:4-6) "And He called unto Him His twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease, and all manner of sickness." (Matthew 10:1) "Jesus Christ our Lord...was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans 1:3-4) "The Lord has said unto me, Ask of me, and I shall give You the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession; You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalm 2:8-9) "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God." (1 John 3:1-2) "He that overcomes, and keeps my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father." (Revelation 2:26-27) "Then spoke Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand still upon Gibeon; and moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed." (Joshua 10:12-13) "And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." (1 Kings 17:1)

"Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are." (James 5:17) "You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) "Thus says the Lord, The labor of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans men of stature shall come over unto you, and they shall be yours; they shall come after you; in chains shall they come over, and they shall fall down unto you, they shall make supplication unto you, saying, Surely God is in you; and there is none else." (Isaiah 14:14)

God is "the great King." (Psalm 48:2; Matthew 5:35) Man was made in His image, and was His son, so that he was created a prince. "Adam, which was the son of God." (Luke 3:38)

He was given dominion over the works of God's hands, but this dominion was not an arbitrary thing. Man was not merely appointed king, but he was made a king. The authority was in him. "There is no power but of God." (Romans 13:1)

Man in himself has no more power than the dust of which he is made; but since the everlasting power and Divinity of God are seen in all the things that He has made, (Romans 1:20) it was but natural that in the highest of God's creatures this power should be manifested in the highest degree. The royal authority that was given to man in the beginning was the fullness of God's presence in him.

God set man over the works of His hands. The works of God's hands are described in the 1st chapter of Genesis, and are mentioned in Hebrews 1:10. They include all that God made in the beginning. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. ... And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Genesis 1:26,28) "You, Lord, in the beginning have laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of your hands." (Hebrews 1:10) "You made him a little lower than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of your hands: You have put all things in subjection under his feet." (Hebrews 2:7-8)

It was no small dominion that was given to man.

- The heavens and the earth that were made "in the beginning" were put in subjection under his feet.

- The fish of the sea, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air were to obey his will, and to come and go at his command; and

- The very earth itself was to be subject to him.

This is plainly set forth in the texts quoted. It seems almost incredible that such power was given to man, yet we are bound to believe it, because God's Word tells us so. Why should we not be glad to believe it? For "Whatsoever God does, it shall be forever." (Ecclesiastes 3:14)

Nevertheless we do not now see all things put under man. On the contrary, we see man for the most part weighed down under the burdens of this earth. Why is this? It is not of God's appointment. Man sinned, and lost the glory with which he was crowned. His authority consisted solely in the righteousness which God's presence gave him; and when he rejected the Lord and lost the righteousness, he necessarily lost the dominion. The scepter of Christ's kingdom is a scepter of righteousness. "But unto the Son He said, Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of your kingdom." (Hebrews 1:8)

But Jesus tasted death for every man, and because of this He is crowned with glory and honor. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Hebrews 2:9)

This crown He has as man, for it was as the Son of man that He tasted death for every man. Therefore as man He now has the dominion which God in the beginning gave to man. All power in heaven and in earth is in His hands. (Matthew 28:18)

Remember that this power is in His hands as man,--the representative man,--for as God He had it all before He ever came to earth. God had never given up His right as Lord over all, and it was not necessary that Christ should come to earth to establish this claim; what He came for was to become man, and as man to win back what man had lost. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." (1 Corinthians 15:21)

Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans 1:4)

He was the Son of God before He was raised from the dead, just as much as afterwards, (See Matthew 3:17) but it was the resurrection from the dead that demonstrated the fact. It was by the Spirit of holiness that He was raised. He was raised because as the Son of God He was holy.

This same Spirit of holiness--the Spirit of adoption--God has given us, so that we are sons of God, (Romans 8:14-15) even as Jesus Christ is. "It does not yet appear what we shall be;" (1 John 3:2) the world does not recognize us as sons of God, just as it did not recognize Christ as the Son of God; but the resurrection will prove the fact. The resurrection will not make us sons, but will make the fact evident to all.

Jesus Christ, having been raised from the dead, was raised "above all principality and power, ... not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Ephesians 1:21)

The world to come is the new earth, and it was the new earth over which God in the beginning gave man dominion. Christ, therefore, as the Son of man, having by the Spirit of holiness that dwelt in Him been shown to be also the Son of God, has the very same dominion that man in the beginning had as the son of God. And this He has for every man, since "by the grace of God He tasted death for every man." (Hebrews 2:9)

Therefore in Him we are raised to the dominion which man lost through sin. It is true that we do not now see all things in subjection under man, that is under all mankind, yet it is a fact that this dominion is given to those who are in Christ. If they do not exercise it, it is because they do not realize "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." (Ephesians 1:18) "He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He has set the world upon them." (1 Samuel 2:8)

Evidences of the reality of this power as a present possession have when occasion demanded been seen not only in the Man Christ Jesus, but also in those who were His followers. To all it is said: "You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." (Acts 1:8)

The Lord wishes us to understand that Jesus of Nazareth was not a unique specimen, but that He was God's idea of what every man ought to be. It is only as one comes "to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [that he is] a perfect man." (Ephesians 4:13)

Jesus said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John 14:12)

There was no power manifested in Jesus that has not also been manifested in some of His faithful followers. God is not partial with His children. "Unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7)

We may none of us ever perform what are termed miracles, but we need the power nevertheless, for nothing less than the fullness of the power which God gave to man in the beginning, and which is now in "the Man Christ Jesus," (1 Timothy 2:5) can enable us to conquer sin and Satan. "Power and authority over all devils" (Luke 9:1) is needed by every person who overcomes, for we have the entire host to contend with. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6:12)

Thank God, this power is given to us!

I'm the child of a King,
The child of a King;
With Jesus, my Saviour,
I'm the child of a King.
--Hattie E. Buell, Hymn: A Child of the King, 1877.

--Present Truth, November 17, 1898.

Chapter 23

Food Out of the Earth

"And the Lord God said, Behold, I have given you every green herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so." (Genesis 1:29-30) "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." (Genesis 2:9) "He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that He may bring forth food out of the earth." (Psalm 104:11) "And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots and when we did eat bread to the full, for you have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven unto you; and you shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no." (Exodus 16:3-4) "You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments, or no. And He humbled you, and suffered you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you know not, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by

every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord does man live." (Deuteronomy 8:2-3) "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then said Jesus unto them, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the Bread of God is He which comes down from heaven, and gives life unto the world. ... I am that Bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." (John 6:31-33,48-50) "Our fathers ... Did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." ... "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." (1 Corinthians 10:1,3-6,9) "And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust." (Psalm 78:18) "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." (Hebrews 3:19) "And he that doubts is damned if he eat, because he eats not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23) "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do you, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat

this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death, till He come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily; shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (1 Corinthians 11:23-30) "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases; Who redeems your life from destruction; who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies; Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." (Psalm 103:2-5) "Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfies not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." (Isaiah 55:2) "My son, attend to my words; incline your ear unto my sayings; Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh." (Proverbs 4:20-22) "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17)

It is out of the ground that God makes the food grow that should be eaten by every living creature. It is true that many animals, since the fall, subsist largely or wholly on the flesh of other animals; and man has also been allowed to do the same thing; "but from the beginning it was not so." (Matthew 19:8)

Since the work of Christ is to restore all things, it is evident that the food which God gave man in the beginning is the best for him, and should be adopted by all who wish the perfect image of God to be restored in them, as in the beginning.

Plants, and plants only, can assimilate unorganized matter. They can take the ultimate elements, and transform them into living substance. Then these elements are in a condition to be assimilated by animals. But this food does not undergo any change in the bodies of the lower animals that it does not undergo in the bodies of men. No new food substance is formed in the bodies of animals.

They simply use that which has already been prepared in the plant for both man and the other animals. Therefore when men eat the flesh of animals, they are simply taking their food second-hand; and food that has once been used loses strength and value just the same as any other article does through use. Thus it is that the flesh of animals is not so nourishing as grains. More than that, the degenerate characteristics of the animal are necessarily imparted to the food that it has formed into its own flesh; and if the animal is diseased, which is very commonly the case, this evil is intensified.

When God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, to fulfill to them the promise made to Abraham, He gave them the purest food possible--bread direct from heaven. Is it not consistent that when He "sets His hand the second time" (Isaiah 11:11) to deliver His people, He will expect them to come as nearly as possible to the

same style of living? In those days the people tempted God, by asking meat for their lust, and as a consequence they were destroyed. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." (1 Corinthians 10:6)

The bread which they had was from heaven, given not by Moses, but by God. It was daily bread, for the nourishment of their bodies, and was their living for forty years. Yet it was "spiritual meat." (1 Corinthians 10:3) It was by giving them this bread that God undertook to teach them that man does not live by bread only, but by the Word of God. Therefore we see that in eating of it they were eating the Word of God.

By the giving of the manna, God would have us learn that in the daily bread which He gives us, He is giving us himself. Christ is "the living bread that came down from heaven," (John 6:51) and it was upon His body that the children of Israel were fed; in refusing that food, they were rejecting Christ.

But they did not discern the Lord's body, and so, although the food which they had was the very best that could be given them, they died. They ate and drank condemnation to themselves. Men may do this, we learn from the 11th chapter of 1 Corinthians, even while eating the body of Christ. And yet, if we do not eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, we have no life in us. (John 6:53) Only the perfect body and blood of Christ can give life, but that life must be received in faith, else even it will be of no avail.

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the very purest materials that can be obtained,--unleavened bread and unfermented juice of the grape, "the fruit of the vine," (Mark 14:25) is the best possible exhibition of the body and blood of Christ, "a Lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter 1:19) Christ said of it, "this is my body," (Matthew 26:26) and, "this is my blood." (Matthew 26:28)

It is to teach us the same lesson that was given in the manna,--that in the food which He gives us, He gives us himself; that what nourishes our bodies is at the same time to be to us "spiritual meat." (1 Corinthians 10:3)

It follows therefore that the Lord's Supper is the model meal. Christ is "The bread of God...which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world." (John 6:33)

Whoever does not eat of Him by faith, has no life. So then we should eat of nothing else but Him, if we would have perfect life. If in our daily meals we ate only of that food in which the perfect life of Christ is clearly exhibited, and ate in recognition of that life, we would be constantly living in Him. Such a life would be a life of faith, and would therefore be a life of righteousness.

It is by taking the words of Christ, which are Spirit and life, that we eat His flesh and drink His blood. But we must remember that Christ gives us His words in a tangible form. Remember that the manna was given to show that man must live by the Word of the

Lord. But the words of the Lord "are life unto those who find them, and health to all their flesh." (Proverbs 4:22)

So this living by faith,--the conscious taking of the Lord's life, and that only, in the food which He gives us,--will be physical health.

It does not mean self-punishment or the mortification of the body by denying one's self of any good thing, but on the contrary the eating of that which is good, (Isaiah 55:2) having the mouth satisfied with good things, (Psalm 103:5) and delighting in fatness. (Isaiah 55:2)

It is as much more enjoyable a way of living as righteousness and health are more enjoyable than sin and disease.

Life is fullest of content
Where delight is innocent.
--Thomas Campion (1567-1620), Masque at the Marriage of the Lord Hayes.

--Present Truth, November 24, 1898.

Chapter 24

His Commandment Is Life Everlasting

"God said, Let there be light; and there was light. ... God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. and it was so. ... God said, Let the waters under the firmament be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. ... God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. ... God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so." (Genesis 1:3,6-7,9,11,24) "He sends forth His commandment upon earth; His Word runs very swiftly. He gives snow like wool; He scatters the hoar frost like ashes. He casts forth His ice like morsels; who can stand before His cold? He sends out His Word, and melts them; He causes His wind to blow, and the waters flow." (Psalm 147:15-18) "Fire and hail; snow, and vapors, stormy wind fulfilling His Word." (Psalm 148:8) "For He said to the snow, Be on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength." (Job 37:6) "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these comes of evil." (Matthew 5:37) "Let him that stole, steal no more. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." (Ephesians 4:28-29) "Let all bitterness, and wrath and anger, and clamor and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice;

And be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:31-32) "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5) "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." (Colossians 3:15-16) "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it." (1 Peter 3:10-11) "Let love be without dissimulation." (Romans 12:9) "I know that His commandment is life everlasting." (John 12:50) "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints." (Psalm 85:8) "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live." (Isaiah 55:3) Then I opened my mouth, and spoke, and said unto him that stood before me, O my Lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me One like the appearance of a man, and He strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto you, be strong, yea, be strong. And when He had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak; for You have strengthened me." (Daniel 10:16-19)

Note from these texts that whatever God says is so. This does not mean merely that He tells the truth, but that whatever He says ought to be, comes to pass. "[He] calls those things that be not as though they were." (Romans 4:17)

The very calling of their names brings them into existence. His Word creates. When God wanted the earth and the things that are on it to come into being, He simply said, "Let them exist," and immediately they were.

Therefore if anyone wishes to learn the way of life and righteousness, "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you. Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this?" (Job 12:7-9)

What will these teach us? They will teach us that if we hear what God the Lord speaks, we shall have life and peace. There is life in simply hearing the Word of the Lord. "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that hears my Word, and believes on Him that sent me, has 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. ... Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, And shall come forth." (John 5:24-25,28-29)

Read the story of Lazarus, of the daughter of Jairus, and of the son of the widow of Nain, to see the life-giving power that there is in the Word of the Lord. Now, "These are written that you might

believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name." (John 20:31)

When the prophet Daniel had a vision from God he lost all strength, and even his breath left his body. Then the Lord spoke to him, and said: "be strong, yea, be strong." (Daniel 10:19)

And immediately he was strengthened. That same Word says to us: "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." (Ephesians 6:10) "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 2:1) "Have not I commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you whithersoever you go." (Joshua 1:9; Compare with Isaiah 41:10-16) It will be well worthwhile to look up many other places in the Bible where direct commands are given, and whenever one is found, instead of thinking, "What a hard thing to do!" remember that the word which commands that these things be done is the same word that says to the snow, "Be on the earth," (Job 37:6) and which commands the rain to fall. It is the same word that in the beginning created all things, and caused "the light to shine out of darkness." (2 Corinthians 4:6) "This commandment which I command you this day, it is not too hard for you, neither is it far off." (Deuteronomy 30:11,RV)

If we hear the Word of the Lord, not for one moment merely, but continually, it will be as easy for us to do according to the commandments of God as it was for the earth to bring forth grass at His command. The dead do not do anything to make themselves

live; they simply hear the voice of the Lord, and live. "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." (John 5:25)

So our part, when we are dead in trespasses and sins, is to listen continually to what the Lord says, and we shall live and be strong. Remember that God's Word is always the creative word. Read the following very carefully: "This He ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when He went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not. I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots. You called in trouble, and I delivered you; I answered you in the secret place of thunder: I proved you at the waters of Meribah. Selah. Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto you: O Israel, if you will hearken unto me; There shall no strange god be in you; neither shall you worship any strange god. I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt: open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." (Psalm 81:5-10)

See what a wonderful promise God makes to His people, that if they will only hearken unto Him there shall be no strange god found among them, and no false god shall be worshiped by them. He will take the idols away. Now read Exodus 20:1-3, and see that this is the same thing: "And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:1-3)

From this learn that all the commandments of God are but "exceeding great and precious promises," (2 Peter 1:4) of what He will do for us if we will but heed His words.--Present Truth, December 1, 1898.

Chapter 25

God's Rest

"And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31) "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made." (Genesis 2:1-3) "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work; But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work; you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:8-11) "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters." (Revelation 14:6-7) "I am the Lord your God: walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them: and hallow my Sabbaths; And they shall be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God." (Ezekiel 20:19-

20) "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them." (Ezekiel 20:12) "Behold your God!" (Isaiah 40:9) "Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28) "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest." (Exodus 33:14) "O how great is your goodness which You have laid up for them that fear You; which You have wrought for them that trust in You before the sons of men." (Psalm 31:19) "For by grace have you been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; Not of works, that no man should glory. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:8-10) "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ["there is a new creation," RV]; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." (2 Corinthians 5:17-18) "Giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; For by Him [in Him] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him." (Colossians 1:12-16) "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst. ... When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."

(John 19:28,30) "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent." (John 6:29) "Wherefore, even as the Holy Ghost says, Today if you shall hear His voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, like as in the day of temptation in the wilderness, Wherewith your fathers tempted me by proving me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was displeased with this generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; but they did not know my ways; As I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest. Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God. ... We see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief." (Hebrews 3:7-12,19) "Let us fear, therefore, lest haply, a promise being left of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good tidings preached unto us, even as also they; but the word of hearing did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with them that heard. For we which have believed do enter into that rest; even as He has said, As I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has said somewhere of the seventh day on this wise, and God rested on the seventh day from all His works; And in this place again, They shall not enter into my rest. ... There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His." (Hebrews 4:1-5,9-10)

Rest follows labor; but the labor must be finished, or else there can be no real rest. Moreover, the work must be well done, so that it is perfect and complete, or else the rest will not be perfect.

When God had worked six days in creating the heavens and the earth, and all things in them, He rested on the seventh day, because His work was done, and was well done. Everything was perfect.

The Sabbath is the sign that He is God, for only God could do perfect work; and the fact that God rested, shows that His work was perfect. "His work is honorable and glorious; and His righteousness endures for ever. He has made His wonderful works to be remembered." (Psalm 111:3-4)

Literally, "He has made a memorial for His wonderful works."

How is the Sabbath a memorial of God's creative power, and thus a sign that He is God? Thus: Just as one rests only after work is done, and finds the joy and satisfaction of rest in the contemplation of the work well done, the Sabbath is the constant reminder of the fact that God's works are perfect; it continually reminds us that He created all things, and, most of all, that He finished His work.

In the best and fullest sense of the word, His work was finished: it was complete and perfect. Creation was a finished piece of work. Otherwise there could have been no perfect rest following. The Sabbath is therefore the sign or mark of perfection.

When we look abroad upon the earth now, we do not see all things perfect. The curse has marred the works of God's hands. Man, creation's lord, has fallen, and his dominion has suffered with him. The Sabbath, however, remains. There remains a rest for the people of God. That is still left.

But it is a sign of perfection. It is the proof that God's creation was made perfect. It is the proof that He is a great God and does great things. Therefore since God makes nothing in vain, (Isaiah 45:18) and "Whatsoever God does, shall be for ever," (Ecclesiastes 3:14) the Sabbath is the pledge that everything, man included, shall be made new again. It is therefore the evidence of the sanctifying power of God. The everlasting Gospel calls upon men to "worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:7)

That is what the Sabbath does. Therefore it follows that the Sabbath is the fullness of the everlasting Gospel. It is the seal of perfection. It marks a new creation complete and perfect. This new creation is effected through the cross. "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The Messiah is the one who restores all things, and it is by the power of His cross that He does it. The power of the cross is the power that created the heavens and earth in the beginning; for the preaching of the cross is the power of God, (1 Corinthians 1:18) and the power of God is seen in the things that are made. (Romans 1:20)

So when Jesus was about to yield up His life upon the cross, He cried, "It is finished." (John 19:30)

In Him, therefore, that is, through His cross, the works of God, which were finished from the foundation of the world, are ours when we believe. The rest which Christ gives those who come to Him, is the rest that comes from works finished and perfect. The Sabbath teaches us that Christ's power to save is the same as the power that made all things perfect in the beginning. "His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3)

The good works in which God wishes us to walk are already prepared for us. God himself has wrought them for us, and laid them up for us. We find them in Christ. In Him the works of God are manifest, and they are ours by faith. By faith we receive Christ, and receiving Him we have the finished works of God.

But when we have the finished works of God, it is evident that we have God's rest. The true keeping of God's Sabbath, therefore, instead of being an attempt to get righteousness by works, is the acceptance of righteousness by faith. It means simply trusting in the Lord for everything; letting Him be the One who both wills and works in us.

This is why those who do not have faith in Christ cannot keep the Sabbath. Only by faith do we enter into God's rest. Without

perfect faith there can be no Sabbath keeping, because only by faith do we receive the perfect work of God in Christ.

How plain the Sabbath of the Lord makes the fact that there can be no such thing as a man making himself righteous by his own works. For instance, a man who does not know this fact, is striving to make himself righteous. Righteousness is right doing, and the righteousness that is required is the righteousness of God. Therefore only God's doing, God's work, can be counted righteous. So the man is trying to do God's work. We say to him, "My dear friend, you are working for nothing. How foolish are you to be trying to do a work that is already finished. The works were finished from the foundation of the world; and the proof of it is found in the fact that God rested the seventh day from all His works. Moreover, the work is that which only God could do, and that is why He has finished it. Leave off your own work, accept God's finished work, and thus be at rest."

In the Sabbath of the Lord we find the fullness of the fact that "To him that works not, but believes on Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Romans 4:5)

The word "Sabbath" means "rest." Indeed it is the Hebrew word for rest. The seventh day is the rest of the Lord. God's presence alone gives rest, and that is why the Lord calls us to come to Him to find rest.

Now as the seventh day is God's rest,--God's Sabbath,--it follows that in it we find the "Real Presence." Not of course in the formal, outward cessation of labor on that day, but in the perfect trust in the righteousness of God, of which the rest from physical work on the seventh day of the week is a sign.

God's perfect works are found only in Christ, for in Him were all things created, and in Him all things exist. Therefore we must have the real presence of the Lord, in order to have the perfect work of God. But when we have the real presence of Christ, bringing the perfect work into our lives, then we have God's perfect rest, which comes from perfect works finished. So the true Sabbath of the Lord is His real presence with us. "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, ... Then shall you delight yourself in the Lord." (Isaiah 58:13-14)--Present Truth, December 8, 1898.

Chapter 26

The Beauty of the Lord

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:6-7) "He has made everything beautiful in its time." (Ecclesiastes 3:11) "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastises the nations, shall He not correct, even He that teaches man knowledge?" (Psalm 94:9-10) "All the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary." (Psalm 96:5-6) "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." (Psalm 27:4) "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." (Psalm 19:1) "You are fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into your lips." (Psalm 45:2) "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men." (Isaiah 52:11) "He has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." (Isaiah 53:2) "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree."

(Hosea 14:5-6) "Let your work appear unto your servants, and your glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish the work of our hands upon us." (Psalm 90:16-17) "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 6:28-30) "For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the meek with salvation." (Psalm 149:4) "Awake, awake; put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean." (Isaiah 52:1) "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." (Psalm 96:9) "Your eyes shall behold the King in His beauty." (Isaiah 33:17) "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him; And they shall see His face." (Revelation 22:3-4) "As for me, I will behold your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with your likeness." (Psalm 17:15)

The invisible things of God, even His everlasting power and Divinity, are seen in the things that He has made. (Romans 1:20) "The heavens declare the glory of God." (Psalm 19:1)

So in the things that God has made, we see His own presence revealed. God puts himself into all His works. The Word which was in the beginning with God, and which was God, (John 1:1) and in

which was life, (John 1:4) is the Word that made all things. "He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:17)

That is, they hold together. So it is from the life of the Lord that everything comes, and in that life that everything is upheld. "we are His offspring," (Acts 17:28) and the mountains, as well as the whole earth, were "brought forth" from His very being. (Psalm 90:2) Thus it is that everything that God has made bears His impress. "[He] has set His glory upon the heavens." (Psalm 8:1,RV)

Every faculty that any man has is but the working of God in him. If we do not put anything in the way,--if we do not refuse to be used by the Lord,--God will so work that everyone of our faculties shall be perfect. "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastises the heathen, shall He not correct? He that teaches man knowledge, shall He not know?" (Psalm 94:9-10)

From this we learn that whatever faculties man has, God has them infinitely more perfect. Whatever man can do, God can do better. We see because God gives us sight--a portion of His own power of seeing. We hear because God uses our ears as instruments of His power to hear. So to the questions, "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?" (Psalm 94:9)

We may add, "He that made all things beautiful, must He not be beautiful?"

Just as the invisible things of God are seen in that which He has made, and everything bears the stamp of His own life, in spite of the curse, so all the beauty that is seen in the universe is but the shining through of the beauty of the Lord.

Men's judgment concerning beauty has been very much perverted. They call many things beautiful, which are really ugly; and many things in which men see no beauty at all, are the very soul of beauty. "The Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7)

That is why when Christ, who is "fairer than the sons of men," (Psalm 45:2) came to this earth, He had "no beauty that men should desire Him" (Isaiah 53:2) when they looked upon Him. They looked at what He appeared to be, and not at what He really was.

Have you never had the experience of meeting with a person who at first seemed ugly, but who, after intimate acquaintance, was really beautiful? The first sight was not prepossessing, but when you saw what the person really was, the ugliness of feature was entirely forgotten. This shows that beauty of character is the only real beauty. The saints of God may be very plain outwardly, but when the hidden things are brought to light, then shall they shine forth in the beauty of holiness.

The beauty of Israel is as the beauty of the olive tree. An olive tree is one of the most gnarled, twisted, and ungainly of trees. It grows on hard, stony soil, and more often than not will have the appearance of an old willow tree that has been torn by storms until it is almost dead. Its beauty is the abundant crop of fruit that it bears, in the evidence that it shows of the richness of life in it. So the life of God in the soul is the real beauty of men, and that alone will constitute their beauty in the ages to come. "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of ... the lilies of the field. ... Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, ... shall He not much more clothe you?" (Matthew 6:29,28,30)

"If God so clothe the grass." How does He clothe the lily? With His life that is in it, making it grow. The beautiful clothing of the lily is but the outward manifestation of the life within. The beauty is not put on from without, but comes from within. It is an essential part of the lily itself. Take the beauty away, and the lily is no more. Its beauty is God's life in it shining forth. Even so God will clothe all His children.

Strength and beauty are in the sanctuary of the Lord, because He is the perfection of beauty. So the one thing that the Psalmist desired was to "dwell in the house of the Lord,...to behold the beauty of the Lord." (Psalm 27:4)

He said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake, with your likeness." (Psalm 17:15)

Not, as some misread it, "When I awake in your likeness." No; the Psalmist had such a true sense of the beauty of the Lord, that he knew that the sight of the Lord's face would alone be perfect satisfaction. To be permitted to look at that face throughout eternity, will be the highest blessing that can be bestowed on men. Eternity will not be long enough to cause one to become tired of gazing on the face of the Lord. Each moment will reveal some new and glorious feature.

How may we form some idea of the beauty of the Lord? By looking at the things that He has made, and looking by faith, so that we can see Him in them.

Learn first that there is no real beauty in the universe except the beauty of the Lord. Then think of all the beauty of the grass, trees, and flowers. Add together the beauty of the forests and the meadows, the colors of the rainbow, and the glorious tints caused by the setting sun. In thinking of these, one almost forgets the beautiful plumage of the birds, but that must be added in, too. Who can conceive the marvelous beauty of all these combined?

But as these are only "parts of His ways," so all the beauty that is revealed in this earth, is but a single feature, as it were, of the beauty of the Lord. All the beauty of the stars, not simply as their many colors are revealed through the telescope, but as a close acquaintance would reveal it, and the beauty of the infinite number of worlds that cluster round these beautiful suns, is but the manifestation of the beauty of the Great King.

Ah, how much more meaning we can now see in that statement concerning the redeemed, "They shall see His face." (Revelation 22:4)

Not only when they stand in the place where the seraphim veil their eyes from the splendor of the glory, will the ransomed ones see His face, but wherever they wander in the great universe, the face of their Redeemer will shine out to them in all the wondrous beauty that everywhere appears. Who will not be satisfied?

What is the practical benefit of this lesson to us? Is it merely a matter of curiosity? Far from it. "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

It is the beholding of the beauty of the Lord as it is revealed to us in the things that He has made, that prepares us for the sight of His face when He comes. "He will beautify the meek with salvation." (Psalm 149:4)

The more we see and know of the marvelous beauty of the Lord, the more do we know of the power of His salvation. As we see the beauty that God has put into and upon the lower creation, we may form some idea of the beauty with which man, who was made to be creation’s lord, will be clothed when he is restored to his own dominion.

And as we think of that, it is that we may know the perfection of the beauty of holiness which God has for us even now. Let us then pray with new and more enlightened faith, "Let your work appear unto your servants, and your glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish it." (Psalm 90:16-17)--Present Truth, December 15, 1898.

Chapter 27

The Fullness of God

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. ... And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:1-2,31) "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the fullness of the whole earth is His glory." (Isaiah 6:3,RV,margin) "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein, For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." (Psalm 24:1-2) "The word of the Lord is right; and all His works are done in truth. He loves righteousness and judgment; the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." (Psalm 33:4-5) "The earth, O Lord, is full of your mercy; teach me your statutes." (Psalm 119:64) "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:24) "The Word was made flesh, and dwell, among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) "Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18) "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." (Ephesians 4:10) "And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." (John 1:16) "[Christ] is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the church; who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from

the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell." (Colossians 1:17-19) "Take heed lest there shall be any one that makes spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ; For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, And in Him you are made full." (Colossians 2:8-10) "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Philippians 1:11) "Unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7) "God gives not the Spirit by measure." (John 3:34) "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ... That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That you ... may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:14,16-19) "[The church] is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all." (Ephesians 1:22) "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Habakkuk 2:14)

God's name is I Am. Nothing exists except by Him. Everything bears His impress, because He has put himself into everything that He has made. Apart from Him there is nothing.

At the bidding of the Lord, the matter that forms the earth came into existence. But the earth was formless and empty. Then the Spirit of God moved upon it, brooded over it, and it was filled. Its fullness was the goodness and the glory of God.

That brooding of the Spirit impregnated matter with force. Wherever there is matter there is force; but the force is no part of the matter itself, but is the manifestation of "the fullness of God." The force of the winds and the waves, and the power which the rock has to resist pressure, is but the manifestation of the life of the "Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." (Ephesians 4:6)

The fullness of the earth is the goodness and the glory of God. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the fullness of the whole earth is His glory." (Isaiah 6:3,RV,margin)

That is, all the force that is exhibited in nature is but the power of God's goodness. All the fullness of God dwells in Christ, and "He ascended upon high, ... that He might fill all things." (Ephesians 4:8,10)

As sin brought emptiness, so the cross of Christ brings fullness. Sin tends to bring the earth into it condition of confusion and emptiness, (Isaiah 34:11) but by the cross, which lifted Christ up to the throne of glory, the earth will again be filled as it was in the beginning. "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:17,RV)

All things consist in Christ. In giving Him to us, God has given us all things. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) "Of His fullness have all we received." (John 1:16)

All the power that there is in the whole creation is ours. Whether we believe it or not, the fact remains that God has given all things to everybody; the Gospel is the revelation of this truth to us. The message now is "Fear God, and give glory to Him." (Revelation 14:7)

We give Him glory by worshiping Him as the Creator of the "heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:7)

And we worship Him as such only when we allow Him to exercise His creative power in us; for if we do not yield ourselves to Him, acknowledging that we are nothing apart from Him, then we deny His supreme power. It is not enough that "The heavens declare the glory of God," (Psalm 19:1) and that the invisible things of God, even His everlasting power and Divinity, are seen in everything on the earth, and in the very earth itself. (Romans 1:20) Man also, whom God has created for His glory, must show forth the excellencies of God.

God crowned man in the beginning with glory, (Psalm 8:5) and until God's glory is fully revealed before the world in man, (Romans 8:19) the work of the Gospel will not be finished. When those who

are willing to follow Christ have so learned His power in the things that He has made that they know nothing else save Christ and Him crucified, (1 Corinthians 2:2) then will the church in very truth be "the fullness of Him that fills all in all." (Ephesians 1:23)

- Then will the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, (Habakkuk 2:14) for the world can see the fullness of His glory in mortal men, so that they will be without the shadow of an excuse for not believing in Him. (2 Thessalonians 1:10)

- Then will Christ's work of filling all things be perfected, and there will be no place in the universe for those who will not allow Him to fill them. (Daniel 2:35)

- Then will the kingdom of God come, and His will be done in earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:10)

Then will this scripture be fulfilled: "And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, I heard saying, Unto Him that sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever." (Revelation 5:13,RV)--Present Truth, December 22, 1898.

Chapter 28

Conclusion

With the present number we conclude the series of lessons that have been conducted for the past six months with the story of creation as the basis. It is designed to continue them, beginning with the next number, using the book of Isaiah as the basis. (See the book, The Gospel of Isaiah)

Many companies of believers have been much blessed by the studies of the present lessons in their Sabbath schools, and it is hoped that even greater blessings may be experienced from the study of those which are to follow.

"Everything was done from the beginning, and there is nothing in the universe, physical, intellectual, moral, that is not in the first verse of the first chapter of the first book of the Bible."--Dr. Parker.

These are true words. Think then what an unlimited field of study is presented in the whole of the first chapter.

What a grand thing it would be to have a school with the story of creation as its entire curriculum. It was from such a school that He who spoke as never man spoke (John 7:46) was graduated.--Present Truth, December 22, 1898.

Chapter 29

Behold your God

By comparing Isaiah 40:3-5 with John 1:23 and Luke 3:4-6, we readily see that in the first-mentioned chapter we have the prophecy of the mission of John the Baptist. Concerning this there is no possibility of any misunderstanding.

But where many err is in supposing that the work prophesied of by the prophet Isaiah was finished when the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth died. That this was not the case, is as plain as that John himself came in fulfillment of it. The prophecy itself shows this.

If we read as far as the ninth verse of Isaiah, we shall see that the message of John the Baptist included this exhortation and announcement: "Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." (Isaiah 40:9-10)

Thus we see that the special mission which John the Baptist began, reaches to the coming of the Lord to give reward to all His people. The prophecy did not foretell the coming of John, but only of a voice, and that voice must continue to sound until the necessity for it ceases by the coming of the Lord. Men may be put to death, but the voice cannot be stifled.

That voice was to proclaim the nothingness of human flesh, and the greatness of God, thus teaching absolute faith and trust in Him, and preparing people for His coming; for only those who become acquainted with the Lord are prepared for His coming, and all the preparation that is needed for that event is personal acquaintance with Him.

That this message, "Behold your God!" is to be given before the coming of the Lord, and is not a cry announcing His appearance in the sky, is evident enough when we remember that His coming will be like the lightning that shines from one end of heaven to the other, (Matthew 29:27) so that "every eye shall see Him," (Revelation 1:7) and there will then be no need for anybody to say, "Behold Him!" No; the message is preparatory to that event; it introduces people to the Lord, so that those who heed it may be able to say when the Lord comes, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." (Isaiah 25:9)

We know now why the message is given, "Behold your God!" People have not liked to retain God in their knowledge, (Romans 1:28) and have consequently become corrupt, and are in danger of the eternal destruction which at the Lord's coming will be the lot of "them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of ourLord Jesus Christ." (2 Thessalonians 1:8)

The question now is: "How shall we make the acquaintance of the Lord? Where are we to behold Him?"

The answer is, in "the things that are made." (Romans 1:20)

Ever since, the creation of the world, all that may be known of God is clearly to be seen in the things that He has made. People have so long been serving the works of their own hands, that they have become like their idols, "eyes have they, but they see not." (Psalm 115:5)

They need to have their eyes opened, and turned to the works of God's hand, where He stands revealed. God's "everlasting power and Divinity." (Romans 1:20,RV) are revealed through the things that He has made. So every created thing proclaims the Gospel,--the good news of a Saviour from sin,--because the Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." (Romans 1:16)

Thus it is that every created thing announces a Saviour, because it reveals God's power, and "Christ [is] the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:24)

So the message proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem, is repeated and re-echoed by every created thing. The heaven, and earth, the sea, and the fountains of waters, repeat the message of salvation. Day and night the voice keeps saying, "Behold!"

And shall men, the crown of creation, be silent? Nay; in addition to the silent voice of the life, the being,--which they possess in

common with the rest of creation,--they have articulate speech, so that with "a loud voice" (Revelation 14:7) they can cry, "Behold your God, in heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters; and worship and give glory to Him!"

It is to this end that these lessons have been written. May each one who studies them have his eyes opened to see the Lord in all His power and glory; and as the exceeding loveliness of the sight fills you with "joy unspeakable and full of glory," (1 Peter 1:8) you will need no second bidding. "Lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" (Isaiah 40:9)--Present Truth, June 23, 1898.

Chapter 30

The Beginning and the End

Jesus Christ is the Beginning, the source, of the creation of God. (Revelation 3:14) Apart from Him not one thing was made. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:3)

In Him were all things created; that is to say, all things spring from His Being, so that He is "the everlasting Father;" (Isaiah 9:6) for He is the firstborn of all creation. "[He] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:15-17)

He is the image, and effulgence, the wisdom, and the power of God. All the works of God are begun and completed in Him. The 8th chapter of Proverbs is the call of wisdom; but Christ is the wisdom of God, so that the words are the words of Christ concerning himself. In the twenty-second verse we read: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old." (Proverbs 8:2)

Now there is in the Hebrew of this verse no word indicating

"in," so that, as expressed in some translations, it properly reads, "the beginning of His way." Christ is the Beginning of God's way, as stated in: "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." (Revelation 3:14)

Also the word rendered "possessed," in Proverbs 8:22, is the same as that used by Eve when Cain was born, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." (Genesis 4:1)

So we may read the text thus: "Jehovah brought me forth, the beginning of His way, before His works of old."

With this passage compare 1 Corinthians 1:24; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; and Revelation 3:14. Then continue reading in Proverbs: "When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields; nor the beginning of the dust of the earth. When He established the heavens, I was there; when He set a circle upon the face of the deep; When He made firm the skies above; when the mountains of the deep became strong; When He gave to the sea its bound, that the waters should not transgress His commandment; when He marked out the foundations of the earth; Then I was by Him as a Master Workman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; Rejoicing in His habitation

earth; and my delight was with the sons of men." (Proverbs 8:24-31,RV) "In the beginning--God." (Genesis 1:1)

And Christ, the Word of God, is the Beginning of His way. "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2:9)

Therefore through Him alone we have access to the Father. He died for us "that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter 3:18)

What we must come to, therefore, is the Beginning. Contrary to the usual idea, the Beginning is not what we start with, but what we are to come to. True we ought to start at the Beginning, but we do not, and because we do not, none of us start right. And because we do not come to the Beginning, we keep "out of the way." (Romans 3:12) "Whosoever, shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." (Luke 19:17)

Where does a little child begin to learn? At the beginning. It does not think that it knows anything, and so allows itself to be taught. It accepts truth by faith, and so it learns. So we, like children, should begin at the beginning, and then we should begin right, for when we come back to the beginning, we come to God.

If men would trust in the Lord with all their heart, and not lean to their own understanding, (Proverbs 3:5) they would always do and say the things that are right, and would make no mistakes whatever. They could not go wrong, for it would be the Spirit of the Lord thinking and working in them.

The reason why we fail is because we assume that we are able to originate plans and to think for ourselves, and do not recognize God as the only Beginning. We are so anxious to get to the end, that we almost entirely lose sight of the Beginning. Just as though it were possible ever to attain the end while ignoring the Beginning! But we are too impatient to "wait on the Lord." (Psalm 37:34)

We are like, the man who is not content to sit quietly on board the steamer and be carried to his destination, but must needs leap into the sea, and try to swim there by himself. Of course he will drown if he doesn't get back into the ship. So with us, unless we abide in Him, "who is the Beginning." (Colossians 1:18)

For He is "the Beginning and the end, the first and the last." (Revelation 22:13)

So when we have got to the Beginning, lo, we are at the end! In Him all fullness dwells, (Colossians 2:9) "and of His fullness have we all received." (John 1:16)

In Him we find all things, from first to last. To go back to the Beginning and to be taught like little children, that is, to take simple statements of fact, and to believe them, and not to profess to know anything except what we have been told (allowing God to be the Teacher) seems altogether too simple. We are ambitious for the complex wisdom of the world, which is foolishness.

But when we humble ourselves to be children and to walk with God and learn of Him, then we find out that the simple beginning contains the sum, of all wisdom. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." (Proverbs 1:7)

But that does not mean that something else is the end of it for "the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." (Job 28:28)

Men regard the Beginning as something they advance from, and look back to; whereas it is what we are to come to and abide with. When we come to Christ, the Beginning, we have the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. (1 Peter 1:9)

The last message of the Gospel directs us to the Beginning, as the preparation for the end. "Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:7)

To fear God and give glory to Him, "is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

To live in constant recognition of Him as "the Author and Finisher," (Hebrews 12:2) and to allow all our works to be begun and wrought and finished in Him, is righteousness, because He is righteous. The devil has sought to beguile us from "the simplicity that is in Christ," (2 Corinthians 11:3) and has succeeded. Now as the end approaches, the call is sounded "with a loud voice," (Revelation 14:7) for us to come to the Beginning, and to remain there, that we may rejoice in the end.

The Gospel of John begins where Genesis begins, and Revelation ends with the beginning. So the Gospel is an infinite circle, ending where it begins, and enclosing the universe. If we are content to abide at the Beginning,--God,--we have everything. If we despise the Beginning, we have nothing.

There are infinite possibilities of knowledge and achievement in the Lord. He is the One "which is, and which was, and which is to come." (Revelation 1:1)

His name is I Am. (Exodus 3:14) Wherever and whenever we receive Him, we find the Beginning and the end.

In Him alone we learn the truth of that which has been; His Word therefore is the only authentic history. In Him only do we know the truth and reality of that which is; so His Word is the only true text book of science. And He by His Spirit reveals to us things to come, because He takes the things of Him who is to come, and shows them to us. "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16:13-14)

This is not philosophical speculation, but is simple truth. O that we all might be simple enough to see it, and faithful enough to abide in it! Then we should let all our works be wrought in God, and they

would be perfect. We should not boast so much about being "independent thinkers," but should allow God to think for us, and our thoughts would be as much higher than ordinary human thoughts as the heaven is higher than the earth. (Isaiah 55:9)

This would not be the slavish following of another, for the service of God is freedom. It would be God thinking in us, not instead of us. And why should He not, since He is our life? Who should use our brains and our muscles, except the One in whom we live, and move, and have our being? (Acts 17:28) He is able, for He is the Beginning. Whatever He does not begin in us is nothing. When the light of the Sun of righteousness shines on it, it will be found to be emptiness.

Let us then speedily learn the Beginning of God's Word, and find in it the sum of all revelation.--Present Truth, June 30, 1898.

Chapter 31

Where Were You?

When God "answered Job out of the whirlwind," He began at the beginning, saying: "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if you have understanding." (Job 38:4)

The same question could be asked of every man who lives, or who has ever lived, and not one of them could say a word. Everything else in the whole creation was made before man was. Man was the last of all. When he came into being, he found everything complete; and every man that has ever been born has found everything waiting for him when he arrived.

Why this arrangement? Evidently so that no man could have any chance to lay claim to share with God the honor of creation. It is a fact that no man can create. This needs no argument. Men work, and effect changes in form and appearance of many things; but no man ever yet added the slightest particle of matter to the substance of the earth or to anything that exists; and no man ever can do it.

Yet such is the conceit and self-assertion of the human mind that if God had performed any new act of creation after man came into being, man would surely claim that he himself had done it.

Even as it is, men are very prone to exalt themselves above God. The only thing that will keep them--us--from doing this in some

form or degree, is to remember "who is the beginning." (Colossians 1:18)

We are wont to pride ourselves not a little upon the fact that man was made last--"the crown of creation." (Psalm 8:5; Hebrews 2:9) It may serve to abate that pride if we think that God made man last because there was no use for him before; there was nothing that he could do, he would have been hopelessly in the way of the progress of creation, and what is more, he would not have been able to maintain himself. God had to provide all things first, so that man, the most helpless of created things, might be able to live.

If all men had but kept in mind this simple truth, and had remembered that in Christ, who is the Beginning, "were all things created," (Colossians 1:16,RV) and "He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together," (Colossians 1:17,RV) there would never have been a pope, great or small. "Do you seek great things for yourself? seek them not." (Jeremiah 45:5)

Let us rather be content to remain children, keeping close to the Beginning. "In all your ways acknowledge Him [as the beginning] and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:6)

What He begins, He will carry to successful completion.--Present Truth, June 30, 1894.

Chapter 32

Power to Witness

"You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses ... unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

In the same connection He also said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore." (Matthew 28:18)

Take these texts in connection with Romans 1:20, which tells us that this power is seen in everything that has been made,--in the blade of grass, and in the hosts of the heavens,--and see what encouragement it is for all men.

We learn of the power by which God works to save us from sin.

Every soul who is longing for deliverance may know that "the power that works in us" (Ephesians 3:20) to save, whenever we really desire salvation, is the power that supports and holds together the universe. Then let no one say or think that God cannot save a sinner such as he is. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.

There is encouragement also to witness to the power of this salvation; for the power that saves is the power by which witnesses are sent forth. Nothing less than all power in heaven and in earth can save a man from sin; so that whoever is saved has all that power

with which to proclaim the Word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation.

Notice that what is needed, and all that is promised, for the proclamation of the Gospel, is power. The Lord does not promise eloquence nor learning, but power. Paul was not destitute of that which in the world passes for wisdom, yet he says, "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." (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)

It is power that tells; not human power, but Divine power. "There is no power but of God," (Romans 13:1) so that all attempts to make an impression are vain. "He whom God has sent, speaks the words of God," (John 3:34) "the Word of God is quick, and powerful." (Hebrews 4:12)

All therefore that is needed for the Gospel to go with power is to have a company of people fully yielded to God's power, that is, to His will, and saved by it. There need not necessarily be many. Twelve such men effected a mighty change in the world a few hundred years ago.

All are not apostles; all are not evangelists; all are not called to go as missionaries to other lands, or even to other neighborhoods than their own; but each one who is saved can witness to the power

of Christ to save, with all the power by which he has been saved.--Present Truth, July 7, 1898.

Chapter 33

God's Power in Man

There is no power in the universe except the power of God.

This is plainly taught in the Scriptures, and is so self-evident as to need no argument. Some will ask: "How then is man responsible for his actions? Why isn't he as irresponsible as the beasts, or the plants of the field?"

To many who ask this question, it seems unanswerable; but really it is a very shallow question, and shows wonderful lack of thought. It is really a sufficient answer to the question, to say that God did not make man to be a beast nor a vegetable.

To say that God ought to save a man regardless of his actions, since all the power that is in him is the power of God, and therefore man is not responsible for his acts, is inconsistent, in that it demands that God shall treat us as both vegetables and men. God does not save the beasts nor the vegetables of the field. He who wishes to disclaim all responsibility for his own acts, ought not to expect that God do anything else with him than let him go to destruction, just as He does to other things that are irresponsible.

But the plants of the field, and the beasts, although irresponsible, fulfill the object of their existence, in that they do not resist the will

of the Lord, while man does not do this; and therefore he cannot possibly be treated as an irresponsible being.

It is God's power in man, and yet every man has perfect freedom. God made man in His own image, to be a companion for himself; but a cowering slave could not be a companion for God. There must be no fear, no restraint, in perfect companionship.

Now it is utterly impossible for any man to exist apart from the power of God. No man can keep himself alive. So God mercifully exercises His own power in man's behalf, and whoever loves life will yield to that power. And since God's power is infinite, it follows that whoever yields to that power has unlimited freedom of action. Only the one who tries to resist the power,--he who rejects it,--finds himself fettered and limited.

God does not compel anybody to love Him, since love cannot be forced. So if a person does not wish to love the Lord he need not; but all those who hate Him, love death, (Proverbs 8:36; But he that sins against me wrongs his own soul: all they that hate me love death) for He is the life. (Deuteronomy 30:20; John 14:6)

Thus everybody has before him the choice of life or death, and can have whichever he chooses. (Deuteronomy 30:19) Surely that is fair. If man hates the life of God, if he refuses to yield to God's power, then he inevitably finds himself hampered and bound, because there is no power but of God, and he is shutting himself off from the source of supply.

But if he yields to the power in its fullness, if he chooses life, then he is as free as God himself, for the power which works in him unrestrained is the power that fills and upholds the universe. He can do whatever he pleases, and all that he does will prosper. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:3)

Nowhere in the universe will such a man feel any restraint to his effort, for nowhere will he come to the limit of the power that works in him.--Present Truth, July 7, 1898.

Chapter 34

Justified by Knowledge

"By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53:11)

What knowledge of us has the Lord, and how does He have it? Thus:

"The Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:12-13,RV)

There is nothing that the Lord does not know about men; and He knows it not by hearsay, not as the result of inquiry, but from actual experience. The Word that creates and upholds is present in every being, for the Word is the life. In every fiber of the body, there is the Word of God present. He knows the sins, because He bears them. The knowledge by which He justifies, is the knowledge of experience: for He bears the iniquities.

In the Lord, power and wisdom are combined. There is power intelligently directed. His power is His wisdom, and His wisdom is powerful. Thus it is that there is no such thing as chance in the

world; force does not act at random, but since it is God's own power, it acts according to the wisdom of God. By His wisdom God has established the world: "The Lord by wisdom has founded the earth; by understanding has He established the heavens." (Proverbs 3:19)

And by His discretion He has stretched out the heavens: "He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His discretion." (Jeremiah 10:12)

By His knowledge He justifies: "By His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53:11)

Thus we see that the wisdom and power that saves us from sin is identical with that which created and upholds the universe.

What chance then is there for anybody to say, "I am such a sinner, that it doesn't seem possible that the Lord can save me"? "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14)

No one need philosophize or draw conclusions; all we have to do is to recognize and admit a simple fact, namely, that the Lord is the Creator. "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name," (Psalm 29:2) "worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters," (Revelation 14:7) and you will never find any place for doubts as to the power of God to do whatever He pleases.--Present Truth, July 7, 1898.

Chapter 35

Great Things

"The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honorable and glorious." (Psalm 111:2-3) "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also." (Psalm 95:3-4) "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable." (Psalm 145:3) "For You are great, and do wondrous things; You are God alone." (Psalm 86:10) "Great things does He, which we cannot comprehend." (Job 37:5) "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things." (Psalm 72:18)

Not only is it God alone who does great things, but He does nothing else but great things. He is a great God, and He does great things. The least thing that He does is great.

The smallest flower, the tiniest and most slender blade of grass is the product of power greater than that possessed by all nations and kings on earth. Nothing less than infinite power could make it; but there is no power greater than infinite power; therefore in the smallest thing, that God has made,--a blade of grass, a grain of sand, yea, even a single atom,--the everlasting power and Divinity of God are displayed as really as in the sun, moon and stars. "The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and merciful in all His works." (Psalm 145:17,margin)

This is the rendering given in the text of several versions. Now since all the works of the Lord are merciful, and He does only great works, it follows that His mercy is as great as His works. His works are done in mercy; but they are the product of infinite power; so the mercy of the Lord is equal to His power, and identical with it. Therefore, "According to the height of the heaven above the earth, so great is His mercy." (Psalm 103:11,margin)

Literally, "so mighty is His mercy." Remember now that it was "Not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us." (Titus 3:5)

The power of this mercy to save us, is the power that is revealed in the whole universe. What comfort, then, there is for us in reading that: "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before prepared, that we should walk in them. ... It is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:10,13)

We know that His great mercy will do great things, not simply for us, but in us. Yea, He will enlarge us also. "I will run the way of your commandments, when You shall enlarge my heart." (Psalm 119:32) "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; ... in your hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." (1 Chronicles 29:11-12) "It is God that girds me with strength, and makes my way perfect. ... You have also given me the shield of your salvation; and your right hand

has held me up, and your gentleness has made me great." (Psalm 18:32,35)

All this is the mercy of the Lord. "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us [made us alive] together with Christ (by grace are you saved), And has raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:4-6)

It is by the mercy of God that we are raised up with Christ, and made to sit in the heavenly places with Him, for His mercy is great above the heavens; but in the raising of Christ from the dead, and setting Him "at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, ... [God showed] the working of His mighty power." (Ephesians 1:20-21,19)

So again we see that the power of God is His mercy. All creation proclaims the power of God, and therefore the mercy by which He saves us from our sins.

It is wonderful indeed; so great is the field into which the Lord brings us, that it seems as though we were in a dream; nevertheless it is true, and "our mouth [may be] filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing," (Psalm 126:2) and we can say: "The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad." (Psalm 126:3)

O come to the Father
Through Jesus the Son,

And give Him the glory;
Great things He has done.
--Fanny Crosby, Hymn: To God Be the Glory, 1875.

--Present Truth, July 14, 1898.

Chapter 36

The Word of the Gospel

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) "And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." (1 Peter 1:35)

Therefore whoever receives the Word of the Gospel receives God. When the Word of God dwells in any man's heart, God himself abides there. "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:33)

This is not a fanciful thing, but a fact. The Word which, when received, brings God into the life, is "alive and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight. But all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:12)

Can the Word, that is, God, do no more for us than reveal our defects when we receive it? "Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3) "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such

thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:27)

Some will perhaps say with Solomon, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain You." (1 Kings 8:27)

To many it seems incredible that God should in very truth have His abode with those who hear His voice. "Thus says the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that you build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things has my hand made, and all those things have been, says the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my Word." (Isaiah 66:1-2)

God does not count himself honored when the wealthy and the powerful espouse His cause, trusting in their riches and power, for it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." (Zechariah 4:6)

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. The humblest, feeblest, basest of mankind, may receive that Word, and manifest in their lives "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." (1 John 4:2)

"The vilest offender who truly believes"--Fanny Crosby, Hymn: To God Be the Glory, 1872. receives power to become the son of God, and "whoso keeps His Word, in him verily is the love of God

perfected." (1 John 2:5) "[The] base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen ... That no flesh should glory in His presence." (1 Corinthians 1:28-29) "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of men as the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower thereof falls away: but the Word of the Lord endures forever." (1 Peter 1:24-25) "Thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Isaiah 57:15)

Thus it is evident that to receive the Word of God means the accomplishment in us of all that God desires to see. The perfect life of Christ was the Word made flesh; and whoever receives the Word will find that it is a Word of power, "able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified." (Acts 20:32) "Sanctify them through your truth: your Word is truth." (John 17:17) "This is the work of God that you believe on Him whom He has sent." (John 6:29) "And His name is called, The Word of God." (Revelation 19:13)

The question is often raised: "If God be so full of love and mercy as you say, why does He permit men to be mowed down like grass by murderous weapons?"

God has no pleasure in the death of men, but He has given man the choice between life and death. The choice is offered to all, and men will often deliberately choose the way of death. Then when

they find it a painful and disagreeable portion, they rail at God because He permits evil to come upon them.

The wise thing to do then is to acknowledge that they made a foolish choice and turn from their evil way, and take life instead of death. To those who find that they have been spending their money for that which is not bread, and their labor for that which satisfies not, the Lord calls: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:7)

Satan has largely succeeded in getting men to lay upon God the blame for his own work of destruction. They accuse God of doing nothing to prevent evil, when He might stop it. "The god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not." (2 Corinthians 4:4)

And instead of recognizing the infinite love of God in all His dealings with men, they impute to Him the attributes of Satan. God's character is on trial before the universe. If it shall appear that anyone has lost eternal life on account of God's negligence, indifference, or lack of provision, it will make Him responsible for the loss of that soul, and He would then be the criminal.

But when the secret things are made manifest, and the hidden things are brought to light, it will be made clear that God did everything that infinite love and wisdom could do, consistently with

man's right of free choice, to turn men back from the paths of destruction, and no man's blood can be charged to Him. All will acknowledge that: "Just and true are your ways, You King of saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify your name? For Youonly are holy: for all nations shall come and worship before You, for your judgments are made manifest." (Revelation 15:3-4)

Men will know then that they sold themselves to Satan to work his hellish will, lured by his lying promises of earthly gain and honor. Iniquity will appear in its true light, and Satan will be seen by all as the loathsome, degraded thing he is. "They that see you shall narrowly look upon you, and consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? ... You have destroyed your land and slain your people. ... He who smote the people in Israel with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hinders. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet, they break forth into singing." (Isaiah 14:16-17,20,6-7)--Present Truth, July 14, 1898.

Chapter 37

His Mercy Endures Forever

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known your faithfulness to all generations." (Psalm 89:1)

But nobody can live upon a past experience. The Christian's rejoicing does not consist merely in telling what God did at some time in the past even for him. Life--real life--is not in the future nor in the past; it is now. Therefore the only reason why we can sing of the mercies of God forever, is that "His mercy endures forever." (Psalm 136:1) "For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever; your faithfulness shall You establish in the very heavens." (Psalm 89:2) "Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds." (Psalm 36:5) "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children." (Psalm 103:11,17)

Someone will say, "Yes, the mercy of the Lord is forever, but only to a certain class; there comes a time when His mercy ceases for sinners; and may it not be that it has now ceased?"

To this it is necessary only to say that it will be time enough for people to talk about God's mercy ceasing, when they read something

in the Bible to that effect; but in the face of the statement, repeated many times, that "His mercy endures for ever," and that: "The Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works." (Psalm 145:9)

It is exceedingly presumptuous for anybody to say that there ever will come a time when God's mercy for anybody will cease, or be in the least diminished. God's mercy is himself, for He is love, and it must be as enduring as He is. We read that He is "from everlasting to everlasting," (Psalm 90:2) and even so have we just read of His mercy. To say that there will come a time when God's mercy will cease, is the same as saying that there will come a time when His righteousness will cease. There is no more reason to limit God's mercy than there is to limit His righteousness.

True, it is said that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, but the same thing is also said of His righteousness. But neither the one nor the other statement gives us any reason to conclude that either God's mercy or His righteousness will ever cease, or ever be restricted in any degree.

The righteousness of God endures for ever, yet it will not be found on everybody. Why not? Because so many will not submit unto the righteousness of God. "The free gift comes upon all men unto justification of life." (Romans 5:18)

But many reject the gift. It is evident, then, that God cannot be charged with unrighteousness. If men will not take what He freely

gives, He is clear. So His tender mercy is over all, and it endures for ever; and the fact that many utterly refuse His loving mercy, does not in the least diminish it. In an otherwise most excellent hymn, occur these words:

But if you still His call refuse,
And all His wondrous love abuse,
Soon will He sadly from you turn,
Your bitter prayer for pardon spurn.
--Emma F. R. Campbell, Hymn: Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By.

No, never! That is not the Lord. Says Jesus, "Him that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) "He is able to save to the uttermost," (Hebrews 7:25) not simply the worst sinner; but to the longest time that any sinner may need and desire pardon, because "He ever lives to make intercession for us." (Hebrews 7:25)

There will indeed be a time when men who have abused His love, and definitely refused His call of mercy, will call, and will not be heard, (Proverbs 1:24,33) but the reason why is that:

- They do not desire pardon--cleansing from sin.

- They would gladly escape the consequences of sin, but they do not desire holiness.

- Their sorrow is not godly sorrow that works repentance. (2 Corinthians 7:10)

He does not heed their cry, because they do not ask for anything that He has to give. Even though they might seem to ask for life, they do not really ask for it, because they do not ask for holiness.

There will never be a time when a truly repentant sinner will be rejected by the Lord. The only reason why probation will cease, will be that there will no longer be any need of it. The decree will be made: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Revelation 22:11)

This will not be an arbitrary fixing of destiny. It will not be that God's patience is exhausted, so that He will say: "I will not stand this any longer; I will not give them any more opportunity."

No; it will simply be the announcement of the fact that everybody has made a final decision, so that no change would be made even were probation to be continued for a thousand years. And the mercy of God will be as great when the wicked are destroyed, as it was when Jesus hung on the cross. "To Him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for His mercy endures for ever: ... But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for His mercy endures for ever. To Him which led His people through the wilderness: for His mercy endures for ever. To Him which smote great kings: for His mercy endures for ever: And slew famous kings: for His mercy endures for ever: Sihon king of the Amorites: for His mercy endures for ever:

And Og the king of Bashan: for His mercy endures for ever." (Psalm 136:10,15-20)

The greater the thing refused, the greater the loss. Let no one think that because the mercy of God is so infinite and so eternal, therefore he is safe without it. What a foolishly fatal conclusion!

The fact that the mercy of God is so great, filling heaven and earth, is the great reason why we should accept it; for if we reject it, there will be nothing left for us but eternal destruction. If His mercy were feeble, it might be rejected with comparative impunity; but since it fills eternity, the rejection of it is an eternal loss.

Let us rather at once accept His mercy, and accept it as freely as He gives it; and then, since "His mercy endures for ever," we, being filled and surrounded and transformed and preserved by His mercy, must also endure for ever. Then indeed we can sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever.--Present Truth, October 20, 1898.

Chapter 38

Receive the Holy Ghost

The necessity of obeying this injunction is shown by this statement: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Romans 8:9)

The possession of the Spirit of God is not something that is optional with the Christian. Many seem to think that the receiving of the Spirit merely marks a higher state of Christian experience, --one which is very desirable, but yet not absolutely essential. They talk much about the "higher Christian life," as though there were two kinds of Christian life, one all ordinary, everyday life, and the other special and extraordinary, marked by being filled with the Spirit.

All this is most erroneous and misleading. The people who talk so much about the "higher Christian life," are good, and sincere, and well-meaning, but they nevertheless do a great deal of harm, by giving their hearers and readers a false idea of Christianity.

By talking about the "higher Christian life," they convey the idea that there are two kinds of Christian life,--a high and a low life. It is in reality the Roman Catholic distinction of "saints" and ordinary Christians.

The lower life is supposed to be good enough for all ordinary purposes, and sufficient for salvation, while the other is thought to

be for people who are devoted to great deeds, and who live outside of the reach of the petty trials that fall to the lot of common people.

The Spirit for All

Now when we read that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His," (Romans 8:9) we see that any teaching that tends to make anybody satisfied without the full possession of the Spirit of God, and that makes people think that any life is Christian that is not the very highest, is contributing to their destruction. "But where is the Spirit? and where shall I go, and what shall I do to receive it?"

These are important questions, and most easily answered. Let us take them one at a time. "Where is the Spirit?"

Rather ask, "Where is He not?" "Whither shall I go from your Spirit? or whither shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:7-10)

Instead of being difficult to find the Spirit of God, there is on the contrary no place where one can escape His presence.

All Power in Heaven and Earth

The Holy Spirit is Christ's Representative. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." (John 14:16-18)

It is by the Spirit that Christ dwells in the hearts of His people. Christ is the power of God, and this power is seen in everything that is made; so that every manifestation of what men call "natural force," is but the working of the Spirit of God.

In the heaven and in the earth, even to its very depths, the Holy Spirit is working to hold all things in the shape which was given them when in the beginning He brooded over them. There is no power but the power of God, who "gives power to the faint, and increases strength to them that have no might;" (Isaiah 40:29) and it is by the Spirit that God strengthens with might: "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." (Ephesians 3:16)

Therefore we see that the Holy Spirit of God is the source of all strength. The moving of the Spirit is what makes it possible for men to move.

The Measure of the Gift

Thus we see that the Spirit of God has been working in the earth, and in men, from the very beginning. There is not a man on the earth, with whom the Spirit has not striven. And as Christ "died for all," (2 Corinthians 5:14) when He ascended on high He poured out the Spirit on all flesh. How much, if any, difference there is between this manifestation of the Spirit and that which existed from the beginning, we cannot know; but one thing we may be assured of, and that is that the receiving of the Holy Spirit in fullest measure is the privilege of every person on the earth. Moreover, if one really "receives" the Spirit, he must receive the fullness of the Spirit, "for God gives not the Spirit by measure." (John 3:34)

Not Manifest in All

Someone will perhaps say, "If this is so, then there is no need of answering the question as to how we are to receive the Spirit, since it seems that everyone is in possession of it already, and therefore everybody must be saved."

Not quite so fast. It is true that the Spirit has been poured out on all flesh, but it does not follow that everybody has received Him. The fact that the Spirit is obliged to "strive" (Genesis 6:3) with men, shows that He is not received. The trouble is that men resist, instead of receiving. Only those who absolutely yield to the power that works in all created things, even in men, "receive" the Holy Ghost.

"They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." (Isaiah 40:31)

There is no strength but from the Lord, and they that wait on Him receive fresh supplies of it continually. It is the power of an endless life, that is forever young. Waiting on the Lord, therefore, is the essential for receiving the Spirit, and the consequent power; for power comes with the reception of the Holy Ghost. "But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Waiting on the Lord

What is this waiting on the Lord? It is very simple. It is the constant actual acknowledgment that we are dependent on Him for everything, and that He alone is our rightful Ruler. It is to acknowledge in a practical manner that we belong absolutely to the Lord, to be used by Him according to His will. And it is to do this constantly.

It is complete submission to Him. It is the attitude of waiting on Him, waiting for Him to speak to us, or to take us in hand to use us, and yielding absolutely to Him when He does proceed to use us. It is to have no will of our own, but to accept His will.

Do you say that this is too hard a requirement? that it is too difficult a thing to do? Why should it be so difficult? It requires no

strength whatever. The Lord knows that we have no strength, and His way provides for such a case, by giving us His strength. All that is required of us is to let go, and rest; it is to be still, and know that the Lord is God.

It is quite true that such self-effacement does not suit proud human nature, but it is evident that there can be nothing easier, if there be the willingness, since all that is involved is the letting go and holding still.

How much power will be imparted to the one who receives the Spirit? All power. This is the privilege of every person, and is at the demand of every believer. Nothing less will do for anybody. The Christian life is a new creation, and nothing but God's everlasting power can create. Infinite power is required for the creation of the smallest particle of matter, and nothing less than just that power is revealed in the smallest thing that God has made, and no greater power is required for the creation of the universe.

So we see that the power which God gives by the Holy Ghost is for all circumstances, great as well as small. There are not two Gods, neither are there two powers. As God is one, so is His power one, and undivided. The same power that performs mighty miracles is the power that is required to enable a man to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being faithful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Colossians 1:10)

Not for Self-Exaltation

It is a great mistake to suppose that being filled with the Holy Ghost necessarily makes one a wonder-worker. God is "meek and lowly in heart," (Matthew 11:29) and therefore the possession of His Spirit makes one the farthest possible from being inclined to "show off." John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from birth, yet he never did any miracles.

Jesus was also filled with the Spirit, yet there was nothing about Him that distinguished Him from other men, except to those who had spiritual discernment. It is true that mighty works did show themselves in Him, yet He was known among men as the carpenter of Nazareth.

Jesus was as full of the Spirit when He worked at the carpenter's bench, as when He preached the Gospel. He was no less full of the Spirit when He sat weary and hungry and thirsty on Jacob's well, than when He taught the multitudes on the mount.

In the wilderness, tempted of the devil, He possessed the same fullness of the Spirit that He did on the stormy sea of Galilee. The same fullness of the Spirit was required:

• to enable Him to answer questions correctly, or not to answer at all;

• to take the little children kindly in His arms and bless them;

• to feed the multitudes;

• to wash the feet of His disciples;

• to talk with Nicodemus; or • to raise Lazarus from the dead.

"Love vaunts not itself." (1 Corinthians 13:4)

Therefore the possession of the Spirit, whose first-fruit is love, does not lead one to esteem himself different from other men, or apart from them. The one who is filled with the Spirit is the same in all respects as other men, except that he is constantly possessed with a consciousness of utter helplessness.

He knows that he has no strength, and that therefore as the power that is given him is not his own, he has no right to attempt to use it for his own purposes. And since it is not possible for a mere man to do the works of God, he is in a constant state of passive submission to the will of God, that He may work in him "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)

That which the inanimate creation does unconsciously and involuntarily, he does consciously and voluntarily.

It is God That Works

Then whether God chooses to do what men would call little things through him or great things, it is all the same to him. To be used as the instrument of a small work, overlooked or even despised by men, does not depress him, nor does it elate him to be used as the instrument of what men call something great, and which they would naturally applaud.

When one is so well acquainted with the Lord that he can recognize the greatness of God's power in the least things, then God can use him in the performance of what men call great things; and yet he may never be used in that kind of service. If he is so used, however, he takes it just as much a matter of course in the line of God's working, as he does in what men call the ordinary things of life.

This is not because he has any lack of appreciation, but just the contrary, He lives in constant recognition of God's infinite power in all the details of life, and gives Him all the glory; and he can do no more. He has constant appreciation of God's power, and since he knows that it takes the same power to do the small things as the great, he praises God just as much for the one as for the other.

The Free Spirit

This is the lesson which all nature teaches us. Much more might be said, and the subject can never be exhausted, but this is certainly

sufficient to show that the reception of the Spirit of God is not an indifferent matter. No one can be a true Christian without receiving the Spirit, and no one can really "receive" the Spirit, without being filled with it, since God does not give the Spirit by measure. (John 3:34)

The Spirit is as free as the air. Give the air all opportunity, and it will rush in; yield to the Spirit, and He will take possession. And there is no such thing as yielding by degrees, since resistance is resistance, be it ever so feeble; so that receiving means absolute submission. Therefore he who "receives" the Holy Ghost must necessarily be filled with the Spirit. Only so can he live the true Christian life.

Do not make the mistake of saying that you have yielded to the Spirit, and that therefore all that you do must necessarily be the Spirit's working. In other words, let us beware of mistaking our own spirit for the Spirit of God. The man who is filled with the Spirit will make no parade of his goodness. He will make no claim for himself. Love vaunts not herself. His religion will not be in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

There is no limit to the possibilities before the one who is yielded to and possessed by the Spirit, for the Spirit of God is "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." (Isaiah 11:2)

Yet the possessor, conscious that he has this treasure in an earthen vessel, will be humble, giving glory to God. A vessel? Yes, he himself is only a "vessel," a means of conveying the Spirit to others. "He that believes, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38)

Obeying the Truth Through the Spirit

How to receive the Spirit? Study the story of creation, not simply that which is recorded in the 1st chapter of Genesis, but that which is written on the earth, the sea, and the sky, and you will know. Then when you say to the messenger of God, bringing God's word, no matter what it is, "Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me as You will," the Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you, and all that comes from you will be holy. (Luke 1:38,35)--Present Truth, July 21, 1898.

Chapter 39

The Secret of the Lord

The earth was without form, and "void," when the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, bringing order out of chaos. (Genesis 1:2) The Hebrew word from which "void" is rendered, is the same that which in Job 26:7 is rendered "the empty place," where we read: "He stretched out the North over the empty place." (Job 26:7)

When we know that the North--secret place--is God's dwelling place, we can understand why there is such an attraction toward the North, and why it is that the earth is kept in position by this mysterious attraction. We say, we can understand why, not how.

God's own presence, by the Spirit, filled every particle of the matter of the earth, and instantly order came out of chaos. Each atom assumed the correct position in relation to every other atom, just as a company of well drilled soldiers fall into line at the word of command.

God dwells in the secret place, and His name is Secret. (Judges 13:18) But, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." (Psalm 25:14)

Not that men can comprehend the secret, but it is with them. That is, God's presence, that power by which He draws all things to himself, is with them, bringing order into their disordered lives. "Receive the Holy Ghost." (John 20:22)

Yield to Him as passively as the drops of water do to the sun, and the same Divine Power that in the beginning hovered over the face of the waters, and which still keeps the earth steadily turned toward the polar star, will continually overshadow you, and in the midst of a fallen world's perplexity will fill you with the peace of God.--Present Truth, August 4, 1898.

Chapter 40

Walk in the Light

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5) "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

Sin is therefore the absence of glory; it is darkness. Thus we see that the glory of God is His righteousness. He is righteousness; that is His being. But He is light. The glory that shines from Him is the shining out of His character. He is light, and the light that shines from Him is the light of His life. "[Christ] is the image of the invisible God," (Colossians 1:15)

He is the brightness, the effulgence, the shining forth of His glory.

"Who being the brightness [RV: "effulgence"] of His glory, and the express image of His person." (Hebrews 1:3) "The Lord God is a sun and shield." (Psalm 84:11)

Christ is the shining of God's glory, which is His righteousness, so that He is "the Sun of righteousness." (Malachi 4:2)

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:13)

After stating at one time that He is the light of the world, He showed the reality of it by giving sight to a man born blind. (John 9) Jesus is the light of the world, by which men see to go about. The Lord is upright: "He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him." (Psalm 92:15)

Thus it is that He is the Sun of righteousness, for He is the light of the world. The light, therefore, which shines upon this earth is the righteousness of God in Christ. "The heavens declare the glory of God." (Psalm 19:1)

He has set His glory upon the heavens. (Psalm 8:1,RV) The sun but transmits to us the light that emanates from "the eternal Father." (Isaiah 9:6,RV)

But that light is God's own character, His own personality. Therefore the sun brings to us the righteousness of God. The true light is that which "lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:9)

The sun lights and warms the whole earth. "His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." (Psalm 19:6-8)

Thus we see that the law of God, the living righteousness of God, has been and is given to every man on earth. "The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." (Titus 2:11)

What then shall we do? Take the light as God's own gift, His own life, and rejoice in it. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7) "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:6)

Acknowledge God in the light, which shines constantly, and God will make you righteous. He will shine righteousness into your hearts. Oh, what a glorious thing light is! "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." (2 Corinthians 9:15)--Present Truth, July 7, 1898.

Chapter 41

The Light of Life

"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." (1 John 1:1)

All the light that men have is the life of God. "That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:9)

God's life shines. " God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5) "God has shined in our hearts to give the light." (1 Corinthians 4:6)

Men, unconsciously to themselves, recognize that the light of the world is the life of God, by avoiding the light when they do evil deeds. There is something about the light that makes the daytime out of harmony with the spirit of wrong-doing. Impure thoughts and motives feel, in the light, as in the presence of a strong, repressing influence. Speaking of evil-doers, murderers, thieves, adulterers, despoilers of the poor, Job says, "They are of those that rebel against the light." (Job 24:13) "Everyone that does evil hates the light." (John 3:20)

The light is life. The life comes to all men from God as freely as the light does. If a man allows the life of God to control him, his deeds will be good. Only as God's life is allowed to appear are the deeds such as not to be ashamed of.

Wicked men do good deeds sometimes. That is due to the fact that all those particular instances they do not resist the life of God; whereas, in many other things they do resist it. When a good deed is done, it will bear bringing to the light. "He that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:21)

The life was the light. Sometimes men get fresh light, and it calls them to new experiences. They question with themselves whether they can obey the light or not, and often decide that it requires too much of them. This is because they forget that the light is the life.

The light that reveals new truth is the life and power of the thing revealed. Whenever one sees a new duty to be performed, that which reveals it is the strength and life required to discharge it. Some people have questioned for years whether they should keep the Sabbath of the Lord, hoping some day to receive power to do so, but the light that brought the knowledge of the truth to them was the life that would have made them able had they received it. Said Christ, "I know that His commandment is life everlasting." (John 12:50)

We need not look to the future with forebodings of failure, questioning in our hearts if we will be able to walk in the light unto the perfect day. We shall never receive any light that is not life. God is light, and as we receive more light it will only be receiving "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes

of our understanding being enlightened that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (Ephesians 1:17-18)

If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we will have fellowship with Him, (1 John 1:7) and our path will shine more and more with the light of life, for it is His will that we should have life, and have it more abundantly. Although the light condemns evil, it is never sent for condemnation, but, that men might be saved. God does not use His knowledge to condemn us, but "By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many." (Isaiah 53:11)

Without the light we should see nothing of God's works, but the more light we get on them, the more we see "His everlasting power and divinity," and recognize the love that is expressed in the work of creation.

So the more the light of life shines in our own hearts, the further will we be removed from any thought of condemnation or fear. Our prayer will be: "O send out your light and your truth: let them lead me." (Psalm 43:3) "The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." (Numbers 6:25-26)--Present Truth, July 28, 1898.

Chapter 42

The Law is Light

"My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not thelaw of your mother; Bind them continually upon your heart, and tie them about your neck. When you go, it shall lead you; when you sleep, it shall keep you; and when you awake, it shall talk with you. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." (Proverbs 6:20-23)

The law of God is nothing other than His life. It is in no sense to be compared with human laws, for it has nothing in common with them.

Men get together, and after a certain amount of deliberation they decide on certain rules which they will impose on other men. The requirements may in the main be just, but they cannot possibly do equal justice to all, since they cannot take into consideration all the various circumstances and conditions; and even where they are applicable, they give the person to whom they speak no power. They do nothing; they are lifeless; the man to whom they are addressed must supply the action.

Moreover human statutes have no special connection with the men who issue them. The laws and the law-makers are no part of each other, and very often the laws are ignored by the very men who

make them. So for a double reason the laws cannot put any life or goodness into the subjects of them:

1. The men who make them are not themselves perfectly in harmony with them, and

2. They cannot, no matter how good they are, put any of their personality or vitality into the laws which they frame.

Not so with God's law. He himself is all that He requires. He is not only good, but He is Goodness. His own life is the law.

Each plant has what is termed its "law of growth." There are certain general characteristics common to all plant life, and then each plant has certain individual peculiarities. But these "laws" are not certain enactments to which the plant conforms. The plant grows by the Word of God which says now as in the beginning, "Let the earth bring forth grass, etc.," (Genesis 1:11) and that Word of life abiding in each makes it perfect "after its kind." (Genesis 1:12)

God's "everlasting power and Divinity," that is, His own life and personality, are revealed in all the things that He has made. (Romans 1:20) The plant is involuntarily submissive to the life force of God, and so it conforms to law.

In like manner God's law for mankind is His own character-- His life. He wishes men to be good, but He himself is all goodness. There is no goodness but God's goodness, consequently men

conform to His righteous requirements only by voluntarily yielding to His life as implicitly as the plants of the field do involuntarily. He does not require us to be something of ourselves; but He is what He wants us to be, and we become that by accepting His life. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5)

This is the Gospel message. His life is the law, and His life is light. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John 1:4)

So the law is light. This is most literally true. God conveys His life to the earth through agents. He has set His glory in the heavens, and made the sun, together with the stars, the bearer of light to the earth. Mind this, the sun does not originate the light, but is simply the bearer of God's light--God's life to the earth. Thus the sun is, under God, the supporter of all life upon our planet. Whatever we have, whether it be food or clothing, grows from the earth; but there could be no life nor growth without the light coming from God through the sun. Thus we see that light is most emphatically our life.

But this life that comes to us in the light is God's own life of righteousness. Its shining brings the plant of the field to perfection; and if men were only voluntarily as submissive to the life of God as the plants are involuntarily, it would bring them to equal perfection after their kind.

With this knowledge concerning the light, the life, and the law, we can see the force of the 19th Psalm: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto

day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard [or "without these their voice is heard"]. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them has He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heavens, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." (Psalm 19:1-9)

There is no change of subject in verse 7. The law of the Lord is conveyed to us in the light and heat of the sun, which gives life to the earth. If we but recognize God's life in the light, we shall receive it with constant gratitude, and yield to Him, that He may direct His own life in His own way. Thus shall we glorify God in our lives.

We are precluded from making the objection that we cannot see how God can convey righteousness to us in the light of the sun. We cannot tell how He conveys strength and beauty in perfection to the plant by means of the light, but we know the fact; and that fact is ever before us to teach us the possibility of His imparting to us, by the same means, the righteousness for which He designed us.--Present Truth, August 4, 1898.

Chapter 43

The Joyful Sound

God's Voice in Thunder

"The voice of the Lord is upon the earth; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." (Psalm 24:3-4) "When He utters His voice there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain, and brings forth the wind out of His treasures." (Jeremiah 10:13) "Hear attentively the noise of His voice, and the sound that goes out of His mouth. He directs it under the whole heaven, and His lightning unto the ends of the earth. After it a voice roars; He thunders with the voice of His excellency; He will not stay them when His voice is heard. God thunders marvellously with His voice; great things does He which we cannot comprehend. For He says to the snow, Be on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength." (Job 37:2-6)

What a grand thing it would be if every child were taught this truth--this fact of science! If they were taught whenever it thunders to recognize it as the voice of the Lord, "the Lord God merciful all gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Exodus 34:6-7) who speaks peace to His people, (Psalm

85:8) they would never cower in terror at the sound of it. There are many men and women who cannot hear the crashing thunder without fear, because they have not learned that it is the voice of God; and there are doubtless many more who would be still more terrified at its sound if they did know that it is God's own voice, because they do not know the Lord, and have not learned that He is love.

One day when Jesus was talking to a crowd of people He broke out into the prayer, "Father, glorify your name. Then there came a voice from heaven saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (John 12:28)

Jesus understood these words perfectly, because He was thoroughly well acquainted with the voice and words of God; but the people who stood by said that it thundered. There were indeed some who said that an angel spoke to Him, but even they could not distinguish any articulate sounds. To the most it was only ordinary thunder, and that is really what it was; for ordinary thunder is the voice of God speaking words which our dull ears and minds have not learned to comprehend. "How small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?" (Job 26:14,RV)

God does not wish that we should be afraid of His voice. The "everlasting Gospel" of salvation is to be proclaimed "with a loud voice," (Revelation 14:6-7) and that speaks only comfort. Men are simply to take up the call of the Spirit and the bride, and say,

"Come;" (Revelation 22:17) and the loud cry which they are to utter can be nothing but the resounding of the mighty voice with which God first speaks it, for He says, "I have put my words in your mouth." (Isaiah 51:16; see also 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

The Throne in Heaven We are exhorted to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

By the blood of Jesus we have boldness to enter into the holy place where God himself dwells. (Hebrews 10:16; Isaiah 57:15) We may come there as boldly as a little child to its mother, and we shall hear gracious words of life spoken to us, if we can but learn to recognize the loving voice of God in the thunder. For, "The God of glory thunders," (Psalm 29:3) and the throne of grace is the throne of glory (Jeremiah 14:21) where God gives grace, "according to the riches of His glory." (Ephesians 3:16)

John, who was permitted to see into the holy place of God, says, "Out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices; and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." (Revelation 4:5) "In the midst of the throne [whence the thunders proceeded,] stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Revelation 5:6)

So we see that the thunders come from the very place where the crucified and ascended Saviour sends forth the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

On the Cross

When Jesus hung on the cross, "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent." (Matthew 27:51)

There was God's throne. The body of Jesus was the temple of God, and His heart was God's throne. When He was slain, there came forth from that throne blood and water,--which is the Holy Spirit, "For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." (1 John 5:7)

Calvary was the throne of the living God made visible to men; for the throne of God, as the cross of Calvary, contains the slain Lamb; and from that throne, as from Christ on the cross, comes the pure water of life--the Holy Spirit. Yet there are lightnings and thundering and voices from that throne of grace and mercy. What is that but an indication of the fact that God proclaims His grace in tones of thunder, so that none may fail to hear it, and all may know the greatness of His salvation? "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people." (Psalm 85:8)

But all have not been as willing to hear as was the psalmist. The Lord says to His people, "O that you had hearkened to my

commandments! then had your peace been like a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea." (Isaiah 48:16)

Speaking the Law

So we learn that God speaks peace when He speaks His law, and that those who will hearken will find peace. That peace comes from Christ, by the power of His cross; for in the heart of Christ was the law of God, (Psalm 40:8) and it flows out to us in His life. Even so, the law is in the throne of God in heaven; for, "Righteousness and judgment are the foundation of your throne." (Psalm 89:14)

The ark of God, in the most holy place of the tabernacle built by Moses, was a type of the throne of God, because upon it, from between the cherubim, God appeared in glory, and spoke mercy to His people. But within the ark, underneath the mercy seat, were the tables of the law, showing that righteousness, even the righteousness of the law, is the foundation of the throne.

The law was there on dead stone, it is true, because that was only a picture, and not the reality; but it indicated the fact that in the real throne in heaven is the Lamb slain, the Living Stone,--in whose heart is the living law. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the sanctuary." (Psalm 68:17,RV)

Mount Sinai was the sanctuary, the throne, of God, when "He descended upon it in fire," (Exodus 19:18) and proclaimed His law.

"And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice." (Exodus 19:19) "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpets, and the mountain smoking." (Exodus 20:16)

Now when we remember that from this same mountain there was at that very hour living water flowing forth, flowing directly from Christ, the smitten Rock, we see that we have in Sinai the perfect picture of the throne of God in heaven. But that throne is "the throne of grace;" (Hebrews 4:16) yes, and so was Sinai, because "The law entered that sin might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Romans 5:20)

So Sinai, Calvary, and Mount Zion all agree in one; all are the throne of God's glorious grace, where God speaks righteousness and peace.

The People Were Afraid

When the people heard the voice of God as thunder, speaking His law, they said to Moses, "Speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that you sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was." (Exodus 20:19-21)

What was the matter with the people? Ah,

- They didn't know the joyful sound.

- They didn't know that all the commandments of God are promises.

- They did not know that great as are the requirements of God's law, so great is His grace to put the righteousness of the law into and upon us. (Romans 3:22)

- They did not know that God's mercy is as great as His judgments, and that though truth--the law of God, (Psalm 119:142)--goes before His face, mercy accompanies it. (Psalm 89:14)

He had sworn to Abraham, that He would make him and his seed righteous, and this proclamation of the law was but the exhibition of the greatness of His sure promise. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance. In your name shall they rejoice all the day, and in your righteousness shall they be exalted." (Psalm 89:15-16)

Let us learn the joyful sound. Let us know that the thunders that come from Sinai, that are heard on Calvary, and that proceed from the throne of God in heaven, are but the assurances of His grace and mercy, and of the righteousness with which He will fill and refresh

every soul that believes. Let us then come boldly to the throne of grace, not frightened by the thunders, but rejoicing in them as in the voice of a loving Father.

Shaking the Earth

There will come a time when God's voice will shake not only the earth, but also heaven: "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He has promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." (Hebrews 12:26)

That will be "when God arises to shake terribly the earth." (Isaiah 2:19)

At that time many will "go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty." (Isaiah 2:19)

Yet at the same time others will not fear even though the shaking earth be removed. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." (Psalm 46:1-2)

But they will say, "Lo, this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." (Isaiah 25:9)

And why? Because they have learned to know the joyful sound of the thunder of God's power. That thunder which will shake the earth, and strike terror to the hearts of the wicked, will be but the voice of God repeating the covenant of peace to His people. (Isaiah 54:10; For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, says the Lord that has mercy on you)Blessed sound! How fearful to think that any should flee from the God who speaks peace!

Would you be able to rejoice at the coming of the Lord when His thunders shake the earth? Then learn the joyful sound now. Say from the heart, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people." (Psalm 85:8)

Yes; hear Him! "hear, and your soul shall live." (Isaiah 55:3)

Listen to the voice of His law, and learn from it the joy of the Lord, the joy of His salvation.--Present Truth, August 18, 1898.

Chapter 44

The Water of Life

"For with You is the fountain of life: in your light shall we see light." (Psalm 36:9)

With God is the fountain, the well-spring of life. He himself is "the Fountain of living waters." (Jeremiah 2:13)

This is demonstrated to us by the river of water of life, which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. (Revelation 22:1) It is a real stream, as plainly to be seen by the inhabitants of the heavenly country as any earthly stream is by those who dwell on its banks. Nevertheless it is spiritual, it is indeed the Spirit, for the Spirit of God is living water. "He that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this He spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive...)" (John 7:38-39)

But, "spiritual things ... are spiritually discerned;" (2 Corinthians 2:13-14) and the glorified saints, having spiritual bodies, will be able to see the Spirit of God, even as now with our physical eyes we see each other. "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10)

And in the world to come we shall be able to see the Spirit of life proceeding from God in a never-failing stream.

In order to be able to see spiritual things, we must become spiritual. When the Lord comes, and the righteous dead are raised, both dead and living are changed to immortality, and given spiritual bodies. (See 1 Corinthians 15:42-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17) All the change that takes place at that time is in the body, outwardly, and this will take place only with those who have previously been led by the Spirit, and walked in the Spirit, having the mind of the Spirit. "You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Romans 8:9)

The change at the coming of the Lord will be simply the last step in the change from glory to glory. God wishes us now to be filled with the Spirit, and if this be the case, then we shall be able even now to discern spiritual things, even though our eyes cannot see them. The world receives not the Spirit of God, "because it sees Him not." (John 14:17)

But believers are well acquainted with Him, and can discern His presence, although the eyes that they now have are not fitted to see Him.

We have read that God is the Fountain of living waters. In harmony with this is: "A brook, whose waters make glad the city of God, is the Most High in His habitation." (Psalm 46:4,Polychrome rendering)

God himself is the stream of life, for God is Spirit. So we read of the new earth: "There the glorious Lord will be to us a place of broad rivers and streams." (Isaiah 33:21)

The reason for this is that: "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King: He will save us." (Isaiah 33:22)

He saves us by His life,--the cleansing stream,--which flows from the throne, the foundation of which is righteousness and justice, that is, His everlasting law. The Lamb in the midst of the throne leads the redeemed unto "fountains of waters of life." (Revelation 7:17,RV)

That fountain, God's own life, will be our drink, and the life of everything that grows from the earth. Thus will it be as plain to the eyes of the redeemed saints that they live directly from the life of God, as it now is to any man that we live by food and drink.

The good things of God, however, are not reserved for the future. God has given us himself in Christ, and so with Him all things. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup." (Psalm 16:5)

Even now God chooses men, and causes them to approach unto Him, that they may dwell in His courts. "Blessed is the man whom You choose, and cause to approach unto You, that he may dwell in

your courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, even of your holy temple." (Psalm 65:4)

By the blood of Christ we are "made nigh." (Ephesians 2:13)

By that blood,--the stream of life from out God's throne,--we have boldness to enter into the holy place where God dwells. (Hebrews 10:19) "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." (Psalm 92:13) "How excellent is your loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of your wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of your house; and you shall make them drink of the river of your pleasures. For with You is the Fountain of life." (Psalm 36:7-9)

So we see that the river of God's pleasure is the river of life flowing from His throne. The word translated "pleasures" in this text is "Edna," the feminine form of the Hebrew word "Eden." The Garden of Eden is the garden of pleasure, and from its waters God gives us to drink even now. The river that flowed from Eden divided and watered the whole earth. "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: which compasses the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: that compasses the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: which goes toward the

east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates." (Genesis 2:10-14)

Eden is no more in this earth, but God still allows men to drink of its waters. Who may drink?

"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17)

God took the man whom He had made, and (literally) "caused him to rest in the garden of Eden." (For example, see Genesis 2:15, in the Literal Emphasis Translation) In Eden there is rest. "We who have believed do enter into rest ... [for] there remains a rest to the people of God," (Hebrews 4:3,9) a rest that comes to us from Eden. That rest is the Lord's own rest--the Sabbath of the Lord. Rest is delight, and so the Lord says, "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable. ... Then shall you delight yourself in the Lord." (Isaiah 58:13-14)

Those who with all their hearts believe God, worshiping Him as Creator of heaven and earth, rest in His almighty power, and delight their souls in Him. They drink of the water of Eden, and keep the Sabbath that was given to man in Eden.

Just as such ones have passed from death unto life, even while yet in this mortal body, even so they pass from the old earth to the

new, even while inhabiting this sin-cursed earth. To them, "all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

In Christ, who is, and is to come, future things are made present. The Spirit is the first fruits of the inheritance. So everything that they see (that is, everything that God has made) is to them only the image of the invisible. Every gift of God is a medium conveying the Holy Spirit. So in the rain that comes down from heaven and waters the earth, they receive the water of life, the Holy Spirit poured out upon all flesh.

Even now, as in the beginning, the river of Eden waters the earth, and they who know the Lord delight in it. To them heavenly things are not mere speculations nor simply possible future enjoyments, but present living realities. They "sit with Christ in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 2:6) "You visit the earth, and water it; You greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water." (Psalm 65:9)

According to the marginal note this text would read:

"You visit the earth when you have caused it to desire (rain); You greatly enrich it with the river of God."

God creates a desire, a longing, for himself, and then He supplies that desire. He alone can satisfy the desire of every living thing. The reason why all do not consciously take of Him, and delight in Him, is that they do not believe or realize this truth. So

they go on unsatisfied. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness." (Psalm 107:8-9) "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Yes; every shower that falls from heaven, enriching the earth, and causing it to bring forth fruit, is to those who live in constant recognition of God, a rain of righteousness.

God's witness of himself is that He does good, and sends rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, so that men can rejoice in abundance of food. "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." (Acts 14:17) "[He] sends rain on the unjust as well as on the just," (Matthew 5:45) in order that they may accept His righteousness, and turn from their evil ways. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for He has clothed me with the garment of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:10-11)

How does the earth bring forth her bud? It is by drinking in the rain that falls upon it. Even so will the Lord cause righteousness to

spring forth. How? Just as the earth brings forth her fruit, that is, by the rain. The rain from heaven, recognized as coming direct from God's throne, from God himself, and acknowledged as bringing to us the Holy Spirit, will cause us to bring forth the fruits of righteousness.

The same thing that makes the earth to bring forth fruit will also make them bear fruit to holiness, if they truly believe; for belief brings them into the same relation to God--the same state of receptivity--that the earth is.

Then, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near," (Isaiah 55:6) and, "He [will] come and rain righteousness upon you." (Hosea 10:12)--Present Truth, August 25, 1898.

Chapter 45

The Air We Breathe

You know that we keep on breathing every moment of our lives, and if we should stop we should die. But not only is it so important that we should breathe, but also that we should have pure, fresh air to breath.

We have inside us something called lungs, made up of a lot of little cells or bags, which swell out when the air is drawn into them. This is why our bosoms are rising and falling all the time.

When we take the air into our lungs we poison and spoil it. The poison from every part of our bodies is carried by the blood to the lungs, where it passes off into the air that fills the lungs, and the good air passes into our blood and is carried all through our bodies.

So the air that we breathe out is full of poison, and this is why it is so important that we should have our rooms well supplied with the fresh, pure air of heaven, especially when there are many people in them. For if we keep on breathing the same poisoned air over and over, our blood cannot be purified by it, and the poison stays in our bodies and makes us ill.

You will perhaps wonder why it is that if men and animals are poisoning the air in this way all the time, it does not all become spoiled, and the life in it used up. Just see what wonderful provision

God has made for this. Did you know that the trees and plants are breathing the air in and out all the time just as we are? The leaves are the lungs of the plants, and they breathe in the poisoned air which comes from men and animals, and breathe out again the fresh, pure air that we need to keep us alive.

Man is not the only "temple of God," but all created things are His dwelling place. He is "the Life," not of men only, but of all living things. So it is God who through the plant is taking away the poison from the air, and breathing out His pure, sweet life for us. He has made the plants not only to delight our eyes with His beauty, but that through them He may give life to us continually.

Nature itself is a parable, showing forth the law of love:

"There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself. No bird that cleaves the air, no animal that moves upon the ground, but ministers to some other life. There is no leaf of the forest, or lowly blade of grass, but has its ministry. Every tree and shrub and leaf pours forth that element of life without which neither man nor animal could live; and man and animal, in turn, minister to the life of tree and shrub and leaf."--The Desire of Ages, p. 20.

Can we not, then, read in the plants "the Gospel of our salvation?" (Ephesians 1:13)

Does not this teach us how God takes upon himself the curse and poison of our sin, and destroying it, pours out His life for us instead, that we may be saved by it?

The crowded cities do not have many trees and plants to purify the air for the great number of people who poison it. But God sends the wind to carry the poisoned air to the country, where it is made pure, and carried back by the wind to the cities again.

It was into man's nostrils that God breathed. We can learn from this the proper way to breathe,--not through the mouth, but through the nose. In this way the air is warmed and freed from dust before it reaches our lungs. If we breathe the air out through the mouth, we are likely to take the poisoned air in again, as it is right before us. But the nostrils, when we breathe in the proper way, send the poisoned air down out of our way, so that we can take fresh air at each breath.

Think of the wonderful love and wisdom shown in all the works of God, and you will love and praise Him who "has done all things well." (Mark 7:37)--Present Truth, July 28, 1898.

Chapter 46

The Reality of the Spiritual: Seeing the Invisible

That which most stands in the way of people's living the Christian life, next to an unyielding will, is the difficulty they find in conceiving of spiritual things as real. This difficulty is not necessary, but is a result of the false ideas diffused among the people by religious teachers who devoted themselves far more to theology than to the Bible.

That spiritual things are almost universally considered as intangible and unreal, is shown by the fact that even most people who argue strenuously for the personality of the Holy Spirit, will yet make a distinction between the literal and the spiritual. Thus they will speak of the literal and the spiritual meaning of the Bible, and of the difference between the literal and the spiritual seed of Abraham, and will talk about "literal Israel" and "spiritual Israel" as though they were two different peoples.

Now it is evident that just to the extent that spiritual things are considered as unreal, will they fail to have any effect upon one's practical life. When one considers his literal, everyday, practical life as something apart from the spiritual life, then it is plain that his everyday life will not be spiritual, or, in other words, it will not be a Christian life.

But when one realizes that spiritual things are even more real than the things that we see everyday, and he lives as in the invisible world, the spiritual life will be his ordinary, everyday life. The secret of the strength of Moses was that "he endured as seeing the invisible." (Hebrews 11:27)

In previous numbers we have spoken of the water of life, which Jesus said was the Holy Spirit.--See "The River of Life," in The Everlasting Gospel series, and "The Water of Life," in Related Articles. The Word of the Lord is Spirit, (John 6:8) and the Spirit and the water and the blood agree in one, (1 John 5:8) and all are life. The river of living water flowing from the throne of God, from which we are now invited to take freely, (Revelation 22:1,17) is the Spirit of God. The reality of this river is made known to us in: "You visit the earth, and water it: You greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water: You prepare them corn, when You have so provided for it. You water the ridges thereof abundantly: You settle the furrows thereof: You make it soft with showers: You bless the springing thereof." (Psalm 65:9-10)

Here we read that the earth is watered and made ready for the harvest by showers from the river of God, which is full of water. Thus every shower makes known to us the fullness and the freedom of the Holy Spirit. With every refreshing draught of the drink which God provides us, we may and should consciously receive the Holy Ghost; and so also with every breath of heaven's air that we breathe.

There is nothing with which we are well acquainted that more nearly represents the Holy Spirit than the air we breathe. Indeed, the Lord used the wind in its unseen motion as an illustration of the spiritual birth. (John 3:8) "Who makes His angels spirits," (Psalm 104:4) is rendered in the Revised Version, "Who makes winds His messengers."

Indeed, the same Hebrew word is rendered in different places "Spirit," "breath," and "wind," as for instance in Genesis 1:2; 6:3; 7:15; 8:1. Scores of other instances might be cited.

Air is invisible, yet it is real. For a long time scientists and philosophers thought that the air was immaterial, and had no weight, although thousands of years ago Job wrote of the weight of the wind; (Job 28:28) and everyone who has seen the trees bend and break in a storm, or has seen things floating in the air as in water, might have known that it had weight.

But now that scientists have discovered that the air has weight, and are all agreed upon it, we may believe the Word of God and the evidence of our senses without fear of being called old-fogyish.

But now a new thing has been discovered, which makes the invisible actually visible. This is the fact that the air under certain conditions becomes liquid, like water, and can be seen and handled just the same as the latter substance. We have already noted this interesting fact; but the following further description of liquefied air,

by William Henry Hail, Ph.D., comes in very aptly in this connection:

Liquid air is a clear, colorless liquid, when filtered, resembling water. It is intensely cold, the temperature being three hundred and twelve degrees below zero. It is constantly boiling, as it absorbs heat from the surrounding objects, and thus it gradually resumes the gaseous condition. If enclosed in vessels thickly surrounded with a non-conductor, however, it boils very slowly, and may be kept thus in an open vessel for many hours, and may be transported from place to place.

I visited Mr. Tripler's laboratory, March 24, He had just sent off a quantity of liquid air to John Hopkins University, a distance of one hundred and ninety miles, to be used by Prof. George F. Barker in a lecture there.

At the time of my visit to the laboratory, Mr. Tripler was entertaining a party of friends by exhibiting the properties of liquid air. When poured upon any surface, it breaks into drops, which immediately volatilize. So rapidly does it absorb heat from all surrounding substances, that when poured into a glass tube standing in water or whiskey, the liquid surrounding the tube is soon frozen. As the liquid air boils away, the nitrogen first evaporates, because the boiling-point of nitrogen is lower than that of oxygen. After a while nearly pure liquid oxygen remains. A cup of ice was removed from the outside of one of these tubes. Inside it liquid oxygen was poured; then steel was burned in the oxygen.

In another experiment a blowpipe was extemporized by putting liquid air into a vessel to which a tube was attached; and the vaporization of the air forced air through the tube so as to blow to red heat an ignited hard carbon, which was then plunged into liquid oxygen, and burned intensely in the middle of the surrounding cold liquid. The characteristic odor of ozone was noticeable.

The air, as it vaporizes, does so in a white cloud, like the vapor of water. Some liquid air was enclosed in a bottle in which a tube was fitted; and the pressure of the boiling air caused a fountain of vaporized air to issue from the tube.

A bung [plug] pounded into a bottle containing liquid air, was blown to the ceiling with a loud pop.

Liquid oxygen is somewhat heavier than water. Liquid air was poured upon water. After the nitrogen had boiled off, the oxygen would sink into the water in little globes, which descended till they reached a depth of water where the ebullition of the descending globe became so violent as to raise it again to the surface.

The cold of the liquid air is so intense that india-rubber, immersed in it, became brittle, and broke like glass, as did also a tin cup containing liquid air.

An exhaust pump was attached to a glass tube containing liquid air, and the vaporized air was drawn off, causing violent ebullition

in the tube. So great a degree of cold was thus produced as to cause a liquefaction of the air of the room outside of the tube, and even some crystals of frozen air were formed, the temperature requisite to freeze air being about four hundred degrees below zero. (To be exact: -215.2 °C; -355.3 °F)

Such is the avidity of liquid oxygen for some hydrocarbons, that violent explosions are caused by burning such substances as alcohol or cotton waste in the oxygen. An iron pipe, open at both ends, and a copper pipe, open at one end, were shown at the laboratory, both of which had been shattered by explosions thus caused, the energy of chemical combination being so enormous that the resulting gases broke their way through the tube, instead of escaping through the open end, only a few inches distant.

Although men stumble upon these discoveries, it is not an accident that they are allowed to come to light. God will make it plain to the most obtuse that the unseen is real, and that when the proper conditions are obtained, that which is now invisible may be seen. In the world to come, nothing will be invisible to the saints of God. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight." (Hebrews 4:13-14) "When that which is perfect is come, ... we also shall know even as we are known." (1 Corinthians 13:10,12)

Then will the Spirit of God be seen proceeding from the Father as a stream of living water. Happy are those who now learn to know

the reality of the spiritual, and to endure as seeing the invisible. In that world they shall dwell in the presence of Him "whom no man has seen, neither can see," (1 Timothy 6:16) "And they shall see His face." (Revelation 22:4)--Present Truth, September 1, 1898.

Chapter 47

Breathing God's Righteousness

Man lives by the breath of God. When we read that "He gives to all life, and breath, and all things," (Acts 17:25) we are not to understand that these things are something apart by themselves, but that God gives us himself in His gifts. It is God's presence, and that alone, that makes any gift of value. So the breath by which we live is God's own breath, the breath or life--God's own life. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7)

The physical structure of man has not changed since the creation. Mankind live now by the same means as then. We breathe in the same way that Adam did, and the same air, too. The first breath that a man draws is no different from every subsequent one. The same thing that was done for Adam, is done for every soul that is born into the world: God breathes into its nostrils the breath of life.

But that which we breathe, as well as that which Adam breathed from his first breath till the close of this life, is there. The breath of life is the air that surrounds us. This we know without being told; for if the air be shut away from us, so that we cannot breathe, we quickly die. But it is God who breathes into our nostrils this breath

of life. Thus we see very plainly that the air that surrounds us is God's breath.

We have grown so accustomed to putting the Lord far away from us, that first it seems almost like sacrilege to say that He is so near and so real that the air is His breath. In fact, we have never in our lives, at least a majority of us have not, been accustomed to thinking of God as near at hand, as the One in whom we actually live. The statement, "in Him we live, and move, and have our being," (Acts 17:28) is very familiar, but to most people it is only a form of words. When we come to consider it as an actual fact, then many begin to shake their heads. They would limit the meeting and force of the Scripture by their own previous conceptions. Let us remember that the Word of God "is true from the beginning," (Psalm 119:160) and that it is "the truth." (John 17:17)

There is no exaggeration in God's Word. God says just what He means, and means all that He says.

What is air? From childhood we have been taught that it is a gaseous substance composed of a combination (not chemical) of two gases: oxygen and nitrogen. But that didn't tell us anything as to what it is. Even though it had been correctly analyzed, the mere naming of these two gases does not really add to our knowledge. The name is not inherent in the thing. The names by which the gases are known are simply arbitrary designations given by men.

But new scientists tell us that there are still other elements in the air, which they have never known before. We now have "argon" and "krypton," and still other things said to be constituents of the air. All this simply shows that human science really knows nothing as to what air is. This is aptly, though not very ingenuously, confessed in the name "krypton," given to one of the supposed elements of the air. It is not, as some might think, the name of anything whatever, but means hidden, concealed, unknown. It indicates that there is something there which the philosophers know nothing about.

Let us now take a little rest from these various "elements," which for all that anybody can tell, are different manifestations of one and the same thing, and come to a simple statement of what the air is. What is air? It is life. There is no doubt about it. To know that indeed is of more value than to know all the fictitious names which scientists have given to the supposed constituents of the air. It is the great agent by which God conveys to us His life. If we remember this, it will lead us to the possession of greater wisdom than can be learned in all the schools on this earth.

We have already seen that the breath that we breathe is God's breath, and thus that the air is the breath of God. Let us note two other texts which state this very explicitly. When Israel came to the Red Sea, "The Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided." (Exodus 14:21)

What was this "strong east wind" by which the waters were divided? In the song which Moses sang when filled with the Holy Ghost, we are told. Addressing the Lord, he said: "With the blast of your nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as a heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea." (Exodus 15:8)

The east wind that drove the waters back, was an ordinary wind, the same as we are so well acquainted with; but nevertheless it was the breath of God's nostrils. How much more we can appreciate the air, when we realize that it comes direct from God, and how this truth should teach us not to shut it out, and not to contaminate it with tobacco smoke and other vile odors.

And now to see that God is continually doing for us just what He did for Adam in the beginning--breathing into our nostrils the breath of life. How little we think about breathing when we are in health. If we had to think about our breath in order to keep it going, we should have no time to think of anything else. And we should not dare to go to sleep.

But we do go to sleep, and lose all consciousness, yet we breathe all the time. The breath comes as regularly as when we are awake, although not so often, because it is not needed so much. We do not do it ourselves. Who does? It is God. "He that keeps you will not slumber. Behold He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper." (Psalm 121:3-5)

Because the Lord does not sleep, we can lay us down in peace and sleep. And what is more, we can awake, for the Lord sustains us. "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." (Psalm 3:5)

What a sense of the marvelous greatness God gives, to know that for the life and breath of every individual on earth God is personally responsible. How near we are to Him, when we receive the breath of His nostrils! Truly, He is not far from everyone of us.

Our life therefore is not our own. It belongs to God. Not merely in the sense that He has a claim upon it, but it is His own life. Because He lives, we live. In Him we live, because He is our life. This solves the problem of right living. We know that God gives us His own life. This shows that it is possible for Him to dwell in us. How easy then to see that if we but yield to Him, that He may direct His own life in His own way, we shall live righteous lives, because "as for God, His way is perfect." (Psalm 18:30)

Let God use His own breath in His own way, and our breath will be righteousness to us. We shall breathe in righteousness with every breath.

Can God make a man good simply by breathing on him? Certainly; that is what He did in the beginning. Adam was formed of the dust of the ground. He was man, but he was good for nothing as man. He was utterly useless. He knew nothing, and could do nothing. Then God breathed into his nostrils. That was God's last act

in creation; and when God had done that, "[He] saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)

That is to say, that breath of God changed man from a good-fornothing man into a very good man. As long as Adam received his breath as coming direct from the Lord, and was content to be simply the instrument through which God's breath should play, everything was harmony and peace and goodness. But as soon as Adam thought that he could live on his own account, all was discord. God can and does breathe righteousness into all who acknowledge Him in their every breath.

We live by breathing. But, "the just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17)

That is, the man who lives by faith is a righteous man. Now since we live by breathing, and by faith our life is made righteous, it is evident that we shall be righteous if we breathe by faith. It cannot be otherwise. If with every breath we were acknowledging God as the giver of every good and perfect gift, we could not fail to be righteous; for we breathe several times every minute, and if in all our ways we acknowledge God, He will surely make our ways right. "In all you ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:6)

Then, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." (Psalm 150:6)

And as the breath of God comes upon us moment by moment, let us remember that with every inspiration comes the blessed words, "Receive the Holy Ghost!" (John 20:22)--Present Truth, September 8, 1898.

Chapter 48

Praise the Lord

Praise to the holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His works most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways.
--John Henry Newman, Hymn: Praise to the Holiest, 1865.

"Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord." (Psalm 150:6)

That is what breath is for,--to praise the Lord with. It is the breath that God gives that makes man a living soul; and man was formed only for the glory of God.

But we see that the call to praise God is not limited to man. It includes everything that has breath, and the lower animals have breath as well as man. They, too, are to praise the Lord.

Can dumb brutes praise the Lord? Most assuredly, else they would not be called on to do so. There is no exception; everything that has breath ought to praise the Lord. If there is anything that does not praise Him, there is no use for its existence. The lower animals cannot speak; how then can they praise God? In the same way that the heavens do, which also have no voice, namely, by fulfilling the object of their creation.

Breath gives life, and since it comes from God, it is to be used only in His service. So it is not merely with our tongues that we are to praise the Lord, but with every organ of the body that is quickened by the breath of life.

There is stronger evidence of the worthiness of God to be praised, than the charges that men bring against Him, and the blasphemies that are uttered. Remember that no man provides his own breath. The breath that we breathe is a gift from God, which He bestows upon us fresh every moment. What man is there who would patiently and uncomplainingly continue to heap benefits upon those who persistently and unceasingly slandered and reviled him?

Such goodness is not found among men; but it is the goodness and forbearance of God. No stronger proof of His worthiness to be praised is needed than kindness in giving breath to those who hate and revile Him, and who use the breath that He gives them in denying His goodness.

Praise is an evidence of life. Hezekiah said, "The grave cannot praise You, death cannot celebrate You; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for your truth. The living, the living, he shall praise You as I do this day." (Isaiah 38:18-19)

If a man does not praise the Lord, that is a sign that he is practically dead. It is just the same as though he had no breath at all, for he does not use it to any real purpose. What wonder if God at

length leaves off giving breath to one who shows no appreciation of its value? Are you alive?--Present Truth, October 13, 1898.

Chapter 49

Washing in the Word

Every reader of the Bible will see at a glance that this picture is intended as a representation of the incident recorded in the 9th chapter of John.

The story is quickly told. Jesus passed by, and saw a man who was blind from his birth, and, after saying, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12) "He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." (John 9:6-7)

The cut represents the washing in the pool, and also the young man before the neighbors and the Pharisees, to whom he recounted the story of his cure, in these simple words: "A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight." (John 9:11)

There is scarcely any limit to the number of lessons to be learned from this incident, with all the conversation that grew out of it; but that which specially presents itself to us at this time is the fact that the Word of the Lord is living water, and that it has healing and

cleansing power. Would that this lesson might be indelibly impressed on the mind and heart of every reader!

In the first place we must know that water comes from God's Word,--the Word itself is water. "The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King. ... When He utters His voice there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth." (Jeremiah 10:10,13)

Since He is the living God, from Him comes the living water. He is "the Fountain of living waters." (Jeremiah 2:13)

His word is a living word, yea, it is life itself, "the Word of life." (1 John 1:1) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John 1:1,4)

Life is light, so that the Word of life is the Word of light. This was demonstrated in the case of the blind man; for when he obeyed the Word of the Lord, he saw. "The entrance of your words gives light." (Psalm 119:130)

By the entrance of the Word of the Lord is meant acceptance of that Word and yielding to it; for since the Word is life, its entrance must impart its own life to the receiver. If the young man had objected that he couldn't see how going and washing would do him any good, he would never have seen. Of course he couldn't see, for he was blind; but when he yielded to the Word, he saw light in it.

Even so it is folly for anyone to refuse to obey the Word of the Lord, because he cannot see it. Sight comes with acceptance of it. We do not need to see in order to accept the Word, but we need to accept the Word in order to see.

The visible water in which the young man washed was simply a representation of the invisible water of life--the Word. Another instance of this is found in the case of Naaman. When he came to Elisha, the prophet sent word to him, saying: "Go wash in Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall come again to you, and you shall be clean." (2 Kings 5:10)

Naaman was angry at first, but his wrath was appeased by his servants, who said, "My father, if the prophet had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it? how much rather, then, when he says to you, Wash, and be clean?" (2 Kings 5:13)

This gentle entreaty and sound sense had its effect, and Naaman washed and was cleansed from his leprosy. Was the water of Jordan really better than the water of the rivers of Damascus? Not a particle; but Elisha spoke the word of the Lord, "Wash, and be clean," and the acceptance of that word brought cleansing, even as it brought sight to the blind man.

But the case is not yet complete. We must see that the Word of the Lord is indeed the water of life, with power in itself to cleanse

and give sight, without any visible agent. So we take the case of another leper. One came to Jesus, full of leprosy, and said,

"Lord, if You will, You can make me clean. And Jesus put forth His hand, and touched him, saying, I will, Be clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." (Matthew 8:2-3)

The same thing was accomplished in this case as in the case of Naaman, and by the same means, viz., the Word of the Lord. Both are recorded in order that we might know of a surety that the Word of God is water, and has cleansing power.

What is the value of this lesson for us? Is it purely theoretical? Far from it. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isaiah 64:6)

We are full of the leprosy of sin. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." (Isaiah 1:5-6)

Now to all who are in that deplorable condition, the Lord says, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." (Isaiah 1:16)

And then follows the assurance that, as the result of this washing, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as

snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18)

Take notice that the very same thing is here said to the sinner that was said to Naaman the leper: "Wash, and be clean." It is the same Word that was spoken to the leper who came to Christ. Jesus said, "Be clean." Here was a definite command, "Be clean," to each of these lepers, yet neither one of them understood it to mean that he was to make himself clean.

When the command, "Be clean" was accepted, the cleansing came. The words, "Be clean," carried cleansing with them. Even so it is when the Lord says to wretched sinners, "Wash you; make you clean." The acceptance of the commandment brings the cleansing, showing us that "His commandment is life everlasting." (John 12:50)

Everyone of the ten commandments is a promise of the righteousness which God will give us if we accept it. "[Christ] loved the church, and gave himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word." (Ephesians 5:25-26)

Literally, "That He might sanctify and cleanse it by a water-bath in the Word."

To those who receive His Word, He says, "Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3)

Oh, then let us receive the Word with gladness! How much better it is to be clean than to be filthy! How much better clean garments feel than filthy garments. Why should anyone be unclean and blind also, when he can find cleansing and sight in the Word which the Lord has spoken?

Surely everyone who loves cleanliness, and finds pleasure in the light of the sun, should make haste to accept the word of the Lord, omitting not one jot.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in You to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
--Charlotte Elliott, Hymn: Just as I Am, 1835.

--Present Truth, September 8, 1898.

Chapter 50

Strength in Weakness

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep." (Psalm 107:23-24)

What are the works of the Lord, and the wonders in the deep, which are seen in the great waters? The answer is given in the next verses: "For He commands and raises the stormy wind, which lifts up the waves thereof." (Psalm 107:25)

The mighty power of God is seen by those who go to sea. God rules in the sea. When Jonah sought to flee from the presence of the Lord, and took a ship bound for Tarshish, "The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." (Jonah 1:4)

But as soon as Jonah was out of the boat "the sea ceased from her raging." (Jonah 1:15) "He rules the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, He stills them." (Psalm 89:9)

An example of this is seen in the stilling of the tempest by Christ on the sea of Galilee. "He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." (Mark 4:39)

The word here rendered "peace" is the same that a mother would use in quieting a boisterous child: "Hush; quiet," she will say; and just as with a restless infant did Jesus deal with the tempestuous sea. For Jesus was Immanuel, "God with us," (Matthew 1:23) and: "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." (Psalm 93:4)

There is nothing more awful than the sea when lashed to fury by a violent wind. The destruction that it can work is beyond all description. The strongest works of man are unable to resist its force. No other created thing can equal the sea in power and grandeur; yet it is to God no more than the tiniest infant. See how strikingly this is set forth by the Lord in His instruction to Job: "Who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth, as if it had issued out of the womb; When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, And prescribed for it my decree, and set bars and doors, And said, Thus far shall you come, but no further; and here shall your proud waves be stayed." (Job 38:8-11,RV)

The sea with all the might of its proud waves, is to the Lord only as a newly-born infant in swaddling bands. And this God is the God of our salvation. Nor only do the wonders of God in the deep show "the power of God unto salvation of those who believe," (Romans 1:16) but they are cited as encouragement to those who labor for the salvation of others. Read: "I, even I, am He that comforts you; who are you, that you are afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; And have forgotten the Lord

your Maker, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth; and fear continually all the day because of the fury of the oppressor, when he makes ready to destroy. ... I am the Lord your God, which stirred up the sea, that the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name. And I have put my words in your mouth, and have covered youin the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion, You are my people." (Isaiah 51:12-13,15-16)

The God who can stir up the sea, so that it will roar, and then still it again with a whisper, is the God who put His Word in the mouths of those who will be ambassadors for Christ. Nay, more, the very word that can do this, is the word which He puts into the mouths of those who will yield themselves to Him, to obey and speak only His Word, and no words of their own.

In God's dealing with the sea we have still further encouragement as "laborers together with God." (1 Corinthians 3:9) "[God has] placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it." (Jeremiah 5:23)

Yet this same sand is unstable and shifting. He who builds on it is sure to come to destruction. "And everyone that hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended,

and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7:26-27)

"A rope of sand" is an expression for weakness; yet this same sand serves in the hands of God to restrain the raging sea, and keep it in bounds. So although man is weakness itself, and worse than useless to build upon, the word which God puts in his mouth will build a new heavens and a new earth. "God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." (1 Corinthians 1:27)

Faith in God will manufacture strength out of weakness. "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." (Hebrews 11:33-34)

The sea itself, which rages so furiously, is but water, which is unstable and weak. The strength that it exhibits is the strength of God. "Trust in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" (Isaiah 26:4)--Present Truth, September 15, 1898.

Chapter 51

The Living Bread

In recent studies we have learned that the rain which comes down from heaven and waters the earth is the life of God.--See the article "Rain and Righteousness" in The Everlasting Gospel series. "You visit the earth, and water it. You greatly enrich it with the river of God, which is full of water." (Psalm 65:9)

How greatly, beyond our utmost thought, God enriches the earth in thus visiting it, we do not know, but we are told of some things that He does for it by means of the rain, and these we should believe and receive as from Him.

God's life poured out upon us in the form of rain is not different from His life, as it is revealed in Christ, or as the angels behold it in heaven. It is not strained off before it is poured from heaven, therefore all the righteousness and power that is comprised in the Divine life, indeed "all things that pertain to life and godliness," (2 Peter 1:3) are shed freely upon the earth in the rain. "Drop down, you heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness." (Isaiah 45:8)

The earth, being without power of choice, has to receive the rain as what it is, and consequently, that which springs from the earth as the result of the rain, is identical with it in quality and virtue. "Let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let

righteousness spring up together: I the Lord have created it." (Isaiah 45:8)

If a man will recognize the fruit of the earth as the life of God he will know in eating food that he is a partaker of the Divine life and nature. Such a one will grow strong on the nurture of the Lord. It is a well-known fact that to be strong and well a man must eat strength-giving food, and the measure of his strength will be determined by the quality of his nutriment. Whosoever eats of the Lord will be "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." (Ephesians 6:10)

Israel had a great work to do when they came out of Egypt. It was no less than is committed to the church of Christ to-day,--to be co-workers with God. But God does not ask men to do anything in their own strength, and so He fed Israel with food that was able to impart abundant strength, sufficient for the easy and successful accomplishment of every duty that lay in their path. They had "the corn of harvest; Man did eat angels' food." (Psalm 78:24-25)

But Israel did not receive the wonderful strength that there was in the manna. They even despised it, and in so doing, "They believed not in God, and trusted not in His salvation." (Psalm 78:22)

They were eating and drinking of Christ, but they did not believe it, and so they only ate and drank condemnation to themselves. (1 Corinthians 11:29,34) Still the earth brings forth salvation and righteousness. "[Christ] is the bread which comes

down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die." (John 6:50)

He says: "As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eats me, even he shall live by me." (John 6:57)

Israel failed to discern the Lord's body in the food that was given them, and so, not receiving Christ in it, their diet was too poor for the task before them. It overtaxed their strength, and they fell by the way. Christ had an infinitely more trying journey before Him, but He received so much strength in living by the Father that, all the way, He was more than conqueror. (Romans 8:37)

In the same way, if we eat His flesh and drink His blood, (John 6:54) where He has put these for our use, we will triumph always. (2 Corinthians 2:14) If we do not, we will fail like Israel to enter in, and the simple and only cause of our failure will be unbelief, (Hebrews 3:19) that is, refusing to admit that God speaks the truth.

It was literally true that Christ lived by the Father. (John 6:57) He had meat to eat that His disciples knew not of. (John 4:32) Yet He was "made ... in all things ... like unto His brethren," (Hebrews 2:17) and had no secret channel of communication with the Father that was denied to them. He said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me." (John 4:34)

He ate and drank what they did, but not as they did. The will of God was perfectly assimilated into Christ's life, just as everyone is

made of what he eats and drinks. His testimony was, "I delight to do your will, O my God, yea, your law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8)

Since He lived by the will of God, as His meat and drink, it must be that this was conveyed to Him in the partaking of material food. There was so high a quality of nourishment in His diet, as He took it, recognizing God's life, or will in it, that it could sustain Him when others, who had last eaten at the same time as himself, were quite exhausted. At one time, He went in the strength of it, forty days and nights, and it was only afterwards that He was hungry.

It is evident that there is more strength in receiving the will, or word, of God without bread, than there is in eating bread without receiving in it the life of God. The Lord "suffered Israel to hunger, and fed them with manna,...that He might make them know that man does not live by bread alone." (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Christ could say, "I know that His commandment is life." (John 12:50)

Just as the Divine life does not deteriorate when it comes down from heaven and comes forth in vegetable life with unimpaired vitality, nor when taken into the body of man does it change for the worse. It remains in every stage the life of God, and while the observer of nature sees in its different manifestations what he calls, at one stage, the law of plant life, and at another, the law of human development, it remains, all through, the law of the Divine life.

In thus imparting His life, God communicates in it the law of His own being, His own personal character and attributes. Thus the man who acknowledges that His whole life is derived from God, will also know that in his heart, in his very being, is the law of the Divine life, the instincts of the Divine nature. This is what God promises in the new covenant: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. ... And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me." (Hebrews 8:10-11)

This covenant is fulfilled to everyone who recognizes God's life in his food, and receives it with thankfulness. It was to fulfill the everlasting covenant, made with Abraham and his seed, that God gave the Israelites manna in the wilderness. "[He] satisfied them with the bread of heaven. He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out. ... For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant." (Psalm 105:40-42)

Christ, giving His disciples the juice of the grape, said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (1 Corinthians 11:25)

Through Isaiah, God calls us to "Eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness "and I will make an everlasting covenant with you." (Isaiah 55:2-3)

Thus we see how it is that when we acknowledge God in all our ways, He will direct our paths. He writes His law in our hearts,

putting it into us as the law of our being, just as it is the law of His own existence. "And the Lord shall guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and make fat your bones." (Isaiah 58:11)

God declared His covenant of life and peace to Israel on Sinai, but the people did not see the grace that was abounding there, flowing from Sinai to them in living streams of water. We are come unto Mount Zion, to the city of the living God. "The Lord's throne is in heaven." (Psalm 11:4) "Clouds and darkness are round about Him." (Psalm 97:2)

But always from the cloud comes the stream of the water of life, in the form of rain, dropping down righteousness on the earth, that the earth may bring forth salvation for the service of man. God speaks His living law from the midst of the cloud, and those who receive it in the water of life and the bread from heaven, live by it, and find it life everlasting.

To such the law is not a code of regulations, which one man can teach to another, but the life of Christ, His flesh and blood, which He gives for the life of the world. All who partake of this wonderful nutriment are "strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man, [And] Christ dwells in their hearts by faith," (Ephesians 3:16-17) so that they, in Him, are "filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:19)

No work is too difficult for them, for "[They] can do all things through Christ who strengthens [them];" (Philippians 4:13) and God has no secrets from them, for the Spirit, which is their life, the Divine law of their being, "searches all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Corinthians 2:10)--Present Truth, September 15, 1898.

Chapter 52

Christ the Seed

"To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your Seed, which is Christ." (Galatians 3:16) "For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the yea; wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us." (2 Corinthians 1:20) "He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:17)

Christ is "the Beginning;" (Revelation 1:8) He is the source of all creation, visible and invisible, whether in heaven or on earth. Oh, that men would realize the absolute reality of this fact! Without Him there is not one thing. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

Most people accept these Scripture statements, but in an accommodated, unreal sense. They do not realize that they are literally true, and that there is no material thing in existence outside of Christ; that outside of Him there is no existence whatever. He is; His name is "I Am;" and He is the only One who is. That which is not in Him, is not at all.

If Scripture statements were taken as literally true, spiritual life would be a practical experience, instead of the abstraction that it so often is. Nothing is more true than that the religious life of many consists largely in the repetition of certain phrases, the meaning of

which they do not comprehend, and which very often have no meaning.

All this comes from the habit of making a distinction between the literal and the spiritual,--of separating the ordinary, practical, everyday life from the spiritual, religious life. As a matter of fact, the spiritual is the only reality there is. That which is seen only with the natural eyes is temporal; only the unseen is eternal.

Christ, the Word, is the Seed to whom the promise of God is made. (Galatians 3:16) All who "put on Christ," (Galatians 3:27) are the seed in Him. When seed is sown it multiplies. That is why it is sown. So Christ, the Word, being received into human hearts and lives, as He comes in the person of the Holy Spirit, multiplies himself. Everyone in whom He thus dwells is transformed, and lives a new life. He can say, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

This is the new birth, which is accomplished by the Word of truth. "Of His own will He begat us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures." (James 1:18) "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever." (1 Peter 1:23)

Christ becomes the ruling factor in the life. The life is no longer ours, but His: He takes complete possession, so that He thinks and

acts through us, using the organs of our body for the accomplishment of His will.

Just here comes in the trouble with many people who would gladly live this perfect Christian life, or rather, allow Christ to live it in them, that the thing seems so intangible; they cannot sufficiently grasp the idea that Christ can dwell personally in them. It seems to them a name, a theory, rather than a fact.

Now the Lord has anticipated this difficulty, and has put the Gospel into visible form, so that we may continually have an object lesson before us. In the seed that the gardener sows, God has provided us a lesson concerning the reality of the Seed by which we are begotten anew, and in the fruits of the earth He teaches us of the fruits of righteousness.

We cannot see the life that is in the seed which is sown, neither can we see it in the corn that we eat, no matter at what stage we view it. But we can see that the corn grows. We place a single seed in the ground, and we see that it multiplies, and produces thirty, sixty, or even a hundred grains. Each one of these grains has the same life that the original seed had, and just as much of it.

We take the corn, and make it into bread, and eat it, although we can see no life in it; but we know that there is life in it, for we receive life from it. The life of the corn becomes our life. All this is a common, everyday occurrence. We have been familiar with it all our lives. We cannot understand the secret of the life in the

seemingly lifeless grains of corn, nor can we understand how the life becomes ours; but we know the fact, and are content with that.

Now it is just as easy for us to comprehend how Christ can dwell in us, so that His life becomes ours, as it is to comprehend the fact that we can get our life from the food which we eat. Indeed, the comprehension of the one is the comprehension of the other.

Remember that Christ is the Seed, the origin of all things. He is the Word of God, by whom all things came into existence. In Him is life. God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth." (Genesis 1:11)

He sowed the seed whence all things come. That seed was the Word. It was the life of Christ, the Word, that made the earth fruitful. There is no life but His, for He is the life. "Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

So when we eat the grain and fruits which the earth brings forth, and get life from them day by day, we are literally receiving the life of Christ. The life which we assimilate, and which becomes ours, is none other than the life of the Word of God, which was in the beginning, is now, and is to come.

With this simple, easily recognized fact in mind, we can see how literal were Christ's words when He took bread in His hands, and said, "this is my body." (Matthew 26:26)

In eating bread, we are partaking of the life of the Lord. The Israelites in the desert of Sinai ate bread, which they called "manna." (Exodus 16:15) It was their daily food for nearly forty years. It was "bread from heaven," (Exodus 16:4) yet just as literal food as that which we eat every day. But it was "spiritual meat." (1 Corinthians 10:3)

They did not eat by faith, hence they died; but if they had eaten by faith, discerning the body of Christ, they would not have died. "This is the bread which comes 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 for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:50-51) "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17)

By living faith, men become transformed into the perfect image of Christ. "With the heart man believes unto righteousness." (Romans 10:10)

We live by eating. If now men ate by faith, they would live by faith, and so be righteous. And how eat by faith? Simply recognizing the fact that the body of Christ is the substance of all reality; that His Divine life is that which we get in the food that He

gives us. Then just as a person assimilates his food, and by that very process, would he assimilate Christ.

Consciously yielding to Christ, that He might live in His own way the life which He gives us, our life would be not simply modeled after, but the actual reproduction of His life. The Seed abiding in us, would keep us from sin. "Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for his seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 John 3:9)

How easy and plain is the way of life! It consists simply in the constant recognition of the great fact that Christ is the Seed, and consciously eating of Him. "O, taste and see that the Lord is good!" (Psalm 34:8)--Present Truth, September 22, 1898.

Chapter 53

Fruit Bearing

What gives the strawberries and the cherries their color and flavor? Whence do the flowers derive their beauty?

We see a score of different fruits and flowers growing in the same soil, within a very small space, all receiving the same amount of attention, the same amount of moisture, and the same sunshine; yet all differ in appearance and taste, and each one is perfect after its kind. What is the source of this variety and perfection? The Scriptures give the answer: "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth: And it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed, after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind. And God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:11-12) "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. ... Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God so clothe the grass of the field, shall He not much more clothe you?" (Matthew 6:28-30)

Thus we see that the fitness and beauty of the plants of the earth are the product of the Word of life. That life is infinite, so that it can present itself in an infinite variety of forms, each one perfect after its kind.

The same Word that made the plants of the field, each after its kind, made man after his kind. Each plant was made to bear its own particular kind of fruit, and the fruit which man was made to bear, is righteousness. Jesus said, "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go forth and bear much fruit, and that your fruit should remain. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that you should bear much fruit." (John 15:1) "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Philippians 1:11)

How is this fruit--the fruit of righteousness--to be brought forth? This is really the same question as the one at the beginning, and the answer is the same, for we have read: "As the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth in the sight of all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11) "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." (Isaiah 27:6)

There is therefore no more ground for doubting the possibility of God's working righteousness in man, than the possibility of His creating flavor, strength and beauty, in the plants of the field. Of this latter we have positive evidence. We see it. We do not know how it is done; that is God's business; but we know the fact. He who works perfection in the one will do so in the other, if the same submission be present.

The true nature of man is the Divine nature. Christ is the representative Man. It is God who makes man's way perfect, for His

way is perfect. Whatsoever He does is good. Let Him have His own way, and we shall be likewise good.

If man would but accept the truth that "All flesh is grass" (Isaiah 40:6) and would be content to be grass, their ways would be as perfect as was all creation in the beginning. "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us." (Psalm 90:17)--Present Truth, July 21, 1898.

Chapter 54

The Vine and the Lily

When we read that "all flesh is grass," (Isaiah 40:6) we must not fail to couple with that statement the words of Christ, which show that the lilies of the field are included in the classification. (Matthew 6:28-30) The righteous are also often called trees. (Isaiah 61:3; Psalm 1:3) These things teach us that from everything that grows out of the ground we are to learn something concerning our life in Christ. Jesus says: "I am the true Vine." (John 15:1)

This was a part of the last instruction that He gave to His disciples before He was crucified. He had told them that in eating the bread they were eating His body; the supper was over, and the closing hymn had been sung; and now they were on their way to the garden, or possibly were in the garden itself. (Matthew 26:26-36)

A vine growing in the garden by the side of the path as they walked, would easily and naturally serve to give point to the Saviour's words. They had just drank of the fruit of the vine; here was one growing before their eyes, such as they had seen thousands of times. How many times we have seen the vine growing. What is it? It is a vine, nothing more; its object is to bear fruit for the service of man; that is the end of the matter.

Oh, no; that is only the beginning; that is not the real vine; it is only an object lesson. Jesus says, "I am the true Vine." (John 15:1)

These vines that we see growing are designed to teach us lessons of Christ and of Christian living. If we have seen them, and eaten of them, and have not learned these lessons, our seeing and eating have been in vain. God's purpose for us is that we should bear fruit. Jesus says, "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. ... Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit." (John 15:16,8)

We are to bear much fruit, and the fruit is not to be unsound, and wither, but is to remain. The nature of the fruit to be borne is described: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance." (Galatians 5:22-23)

And these fruits are, like the fruit of all trees, to come from within, and not to be put on from the outside: "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Philippians 1:11)

The fruit, being in us, is to be brought forth, and thus will God be glorified. We see, therefore, that although the fruit is to come from within, as we are full of it, it is not the product of our own life, but of the Spirit of God, so that the praise and glory are all due to Him. But how are we to bear these fruits of righteousness, since "in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing?" (Romans 7:18)

Ah, they are the fruits of the Spirit, whom the Lord has given to us, that He may abide with us for ever. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." (John 14:16)

The Spirit is the bond of union between me and Christ. The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of adoption," (Romans 8:15) showing us to be children of God, "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." (Romans 8:17)

We need not question how the Spirit can dwell in us, for that does not concern us. All we have to do is to yield our assent; He who has the work to do will attend to it himself. The mystery of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the unsolvable mystery of the self-existence of God, and of the incarnation of Christ. It is enough for us to know the fact. Read again the words of the Saviour: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. He that abides in me, and Iin him, the same brings forth much fruit; for severed from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5-6,margin)

The branch bears fruit because it shares the life of the vine. There is no difference between the vine and its branches. They have one life. As is the vine, so are the branches. "If the root be holy, so are the branches." (Romans 11:16)

The life of the vine is the sap. That is the blood of the vine or the tree. The same sap that nourishes the vine, goes out to the uttermost branch, so long as the branch remains a part of the vine. Jesus says, "As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eats me, even he shall live by me." (John 6:57)

He whom God has sent receives the Spirit without measure, (John 3:34) and, "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10)

The life of Christ, therefore, is the Holy Spirit of God, and the life of those who live by Him is that same Holy Spirit. What the sap is to the vine and its branches, which we see, that the Holy Spirit is to Christ and those who are in Him.

Now let no one lose sight of the object of this study. It is not vain curiosity, and therefore we have not indulged in any speculations. We have held strictly to the text of Scripture. The lesson that we are to learn is the possibility and the reality of the Spirit's dwelling in us and producing in us the same fruits that manifested themselves in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

We are familiar with the fact that sap circulates through the vine and its branches, and produces fruit; what the Lord would teach us is that through faith in His Word we have just as real and intimate a connection with Him as the branch of the grape vine has with the vine itself. The Spirit of God, the life of Christ, can pass from Christ to us as freely and as constantly as the sap does from the root and

the stock to the outermost branches, and this is the case so long as we by faith maintain the connection. Is there not life in the very thought?

This is what the Apostle speaks of when he says that by the exceeding great and precious promises of God we are made partakers of the Divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4) We do not become partakers of the Divine nature by an occasional look at the exceeding great and precious promises, but by a continual feeding on them. The life of faith must be as continuous as the natural life, which comes by eating and breathing. It is not by occasional breathing that we live; even so it is not by occasional thoughts of God and His promises that we live the Divine life.

But when the faith is constant and steadfast, the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, must follow as naturally as do the works of sin when we are out of Christ. The Divine nature is not less active and powerful than the carnal nature. Therefore when we are partakers of the Divine nature, it must be as natural to do right as it is to do wrong when we are controlled by the carnal nature. "As you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. What fruit had you then in those things whereof you are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." (Romans 6:19-22)

The one necessary condition is by living faith to abide in the true Vine. There is infinite power in the Word of God. By it we are made clean. (John 15:3) Here is infinite comfort and encouragement for the believer. The way of life is not hard, but easy. Jesus says, "My yoke is easy." (Matthew 11:30)

It is the way of the transgressor that is hard. "Good understanding gives favor: but the way of transgressors is hard." (Proverbs 13:15)

The Lord in His infinite mercy has made it as easy to do right as to do wrong, provided we trust Him absolutely; yea, far easier, inasmuch as His power is infinitely greater than all the power of sin. Well may this be spoken of as a "great salvation." (Hebrews 2:3)

We do not need to know the how, but the fact is ever before us in the fruit-bearing vine and trees. Christ is not only the true Vine; He is a tree of life, since He is the wisdom of God. (Proverbs 3:13-18) "I [Christ] am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." (Song of Solomon 2:1) "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." (Matthew 6:28) "[Israel] shall grow as the lily." (Hosea 14:5)

Growth means flower and fruit, so we have it, "[He] shall blossom as the lily." (Hosea 14:5,margin) "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and

as a bride adorns herself with jewels. For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causesthe things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:10-11)

Just as the lily is clothed with beauty, even so will those who trust in the Lord be clothed with righteousness. Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like a lily. (Matthew 6:29) His magnificent clothing was wrought by man, and put on from the outside. It was no part of himself, and when it was taken off, as it had to be, he had no more glory than the humblest peasant.

But the beauteous clothing of the lily comes from within. It is wrought by God, and not by man. Although the work of God, and the lily's own work, yet it is a part of the lily itself. It belongs to it, and cannot be laid aside without the destruction of the lily.

Even so shall it be with those who trust the Lord. He will clothe them with the beautiful garments of righteousness in just the same way that He clothes the lily.

This is the Christian's assurance not only of the life to come, but also of all that he needs for this life. For He who does that which is greatest will also do that which is least. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

"All things" leaves nothing out. In accepting Christ, the believer receives all things that pertain to life and godliness. He receives everything that he can possibly need in time and in eternity. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Timothy 4:8) "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15)--Present Truth, October 6, 1898.

Chapter 55

Strength for Service

The power of God, manifested in all creation, is the power in which the Gospel is to go as a witness to all people. This was the encouragement with which Christ sent forth His disciples. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore, and teach all nations." (Matthew 28:18-19)

It was in this confidence that the early church bore its testimony. When opposed by earthly rulers their only appeal was to God, "which has made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is." (Acts 4:24)

Paul so taught and labored that the faith of his converts "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Corinthians 2:5)

As the churches have failed to rely to the full on the strong arm of God for efficiency, weakness has come in, but instead of returning to the Lord, recourse has too often been had to the world. Protection and favor are sought from earthly governments, but these, while ministering to carnal pride and the desire for worldly standing, are found poor substitutes for "the exceeding greatness of God's power" (Ephesians 1:19)

Dr. Fairbairn is about to visit India for the purpose of delivering a series of lectures on the Christian religion, for the Haskell Trust. The duty of the trust is to provide distinguished men to discuss with representatives of the leading religions their different forms of faith, to show the points in which they agreed and differed, and to enable those who followed each, better to understand the feelings of the other.

Dr. Fairbairn is considered to be pre-eminently fitted for such work, and his approaching visit to India was made the occasion of a complimentary dinner at the Holborn Restaurant.

After the company had drunk to the success of his mission, Dr. Fairbairn, in replying, expressed himself as feeling the responsibility rather than the pleasure associated with his undertaking. It would have been easy to go to learn, but the puzzle was how to go to teach. Religion in a sense was but an incident in the life of our people. We were an imperious race, if not imperial. It was very difficult for a religion of peace to be carried out by a people of dominion; it was very difficult for the people who were ruled to receive the religion of the rulers as a religion that was a religion of peace and humility. Christianity would have a far better chance in India if it came in its own right, to speak in its own name in absolute dissociation from the imperial power.

These words are true. Christ's kingdom "is not of this world." (John 18:36)

Its sole concern with the world is to save out of it all that will be saved, and "imperial power," connected with its work, is only a source of weakness. Those who plead that the church is helped by the money and influence of the world should remember what God said to Amaziah, when he hired a hundred thousand mighty men of valor out of Israel for a hundred talents of silver.

"There came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with you; for the Lord is not with Israel. ... And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? and the man of God answered, The Lord is able to give you much more than this." (2 Chronicles 25:7,9)--Present Truth, October 13, 1898.

Chapter 56

God's Thought in Plants

The Scriptures tell us that "all flesh is grass." (Isaiah 40:6) This we are bound to accept as absolutely true. It may at first seem too humiliating a thought; but if we look at the truth as it is, we shall see that it is a most glorious thing to know that we stand in the same relation to the Lord that the grass of the field does.

Not that we are of no more value in His eyes than is the grass of the field; far from it. But we are as absolutely dependent on Him as the grass of the field is; and when we recognize and confess this dependence, He works in us in the same way that He does in the grass of the field, only to as much greater a degree as we are of more value than that grass, and are created for a higher destiny.

Let us now for a few moments forget entirely about ourselves, and give undivided and impartial attention to some of the things that are growing. Let us consider them, "how they grow." (Matthew 6:28)

A Life History

We will begin at the very beginning, the very lowest and simplest form of plant life. We will take the life history of a water plant, the scientific name of which is of no special consequence.

To the naked eye it appears like a dense plexus of dark--green irregularly branched and matted filaments. These filaments, when magnified, are seen to be tubular cells which wither and die away at the base while growing at the apex, and developing sac-like branches laterally.

Now there comes a time in the life of everyone of these filaments when its extremity swells and becomes more or less club shaped. The moment this occurs, the dark-green contents withdraw somewhat from the extremity, leaving it hyaline (glassy) and transparent. Almost simultaneously the contents of the swollen part of the tube nearest the apex become transparent, while further down the color becomes very dark.

Twelve hours after the commencement of this change, that portion of the tube's contents which occupies the club-shaped end separates itself entirely from the rest. A little later the cell-wall at the apex of the tube suddenly splits, the edges of the slit fold back, and the enclosed mass travels through the aperture.

This, jelly-like ball, having a greater diameter than the hole, is at first strangulated as is struggles forward, so that it assumes the shape of an hour-glass, and looks for an instant as if it would remain stuck fast. There now arises, however, in the entire mass of green jelly an abrupt movement of rotation combined with forward straining and in another instant it has escaped through the narrow aperture and is swimming freely about in the surrounding water.

The entire phenomenon of the escape of these bodies takes place between 8 and 9 A.M., and in any one case, in less than two minutes.--The Natural History of Plants, from the German of Anton Kerner von Marilaun, by F. W. Oliver, Vol. 1, p. 23, 1894.

Let us stop here just long enough to let our minds grasp the fact that we have been witnessing the birth of a new plant. Another living thing, humble as it is, has begun a separate existence. Shall we follow it in its short career?

Guided in the Right Way

At first the ball rises to the surface of the water towards the light, but soon after it sinks deep down, often turning suddenly half way round and pursues for a time a horizontal course. In all these movements it avoids coming into collision with the stationary objects which lie in its path, and also carefully eludes all the creatures swimming about in the same water with it.

At length the swimmer attains permanent rest. He lands on some place or other, preferably on the shady side of any object that may be floating or stationary in the water....So long as it is in motion, the gelatinous body has no definite wall. Its outermost layer is, no doubt, denser than the rest; but no distinct boundary is to be recognized, and we cannot properly speak of a special enveloping coat.

No sooner, however, is the ball stranded, no sooner has its movement ceased and its shape become spherical, than a substance is secreted at its periphery; and this substance, even at the moment of secretion, takes the form of a firm, colorless, and transparent membrane. Twenty-six hours afterwards, very shortbranched tubes begin to push out from the interior, and these become organs of attachment. In the opposite direction the cell stretches into a long tube which divides into branches and floats on the water.

After fourteen days the free ends of this tube and of its branches swell once more and become club-shaped; a portion of their slimy contents is, as before, separated from the rest and liberated as a motile body, and the whole performance described above is repeated."--Ibid., p. 24

This little jelly-like cell, whose entire life history we have followed, is the very simplest form of matter. It has no organs whatever, least of all has it a brain, yet no one can deny that there is intelligence manifested in its action, all the intelligence that is needed for its well-being. Whence comes that intelligence?

Let each one answer the question for himself, while we pass to notice the action, not of a single cell, but of a multitude of primitive forms of life working together to build up a plant. We consider simple facts, apart from any speculation, and the extracts are from the above-named work.

Methodical Action

When one considers the unanimous cooperation of protoplasts living together as a colony, and observes how neighboring individuals, though produced from one end the same mother-cell, yet exercise different functions according to their position; and, further, how universally there is the division of labor most conducive to the well-being of the whole community, it is not easy to deny to a society, which works so harmoniously, the possession of unity of organization. The individual members of a colony have community of feeling and a mutual understanding, and stimuli must be propagated from one part to another.--Ibid., p. 48.

But the great puzzle lies, as before remarked, in the circumstance that the atomic and molecular disturbances occasioned by such stimuli and transmitted through the connecting filaments are not only different in the protoplasm of different kinds of plants, but even in the same plant they are of such a nature, according to the temporary requirement, that each one of the aggregated protoplasts in a community of cells undertakes the particular avocation which is most useful to the whole, the effect of this joint labor conveying the impression of the presence of a single governing power of definite design and of methodical action. Ibid., p. 49.

And that is exactly what there is, but "the governing power of definite design" does not originate in the cells themselves. "The way of man is not in himself."

Neither is the way of a plant of the field in itself. It is God that works in the grass of the field "both to will and to do of His good pleasure," (Philippians 2:13) thereby showing us how perfectly He will do the same in us when we will consent to occupy the same humble position before Him that the grass of the field does. But let us a little further "consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." (Matthew 6:28)

Intelligence

Were we to designate as instinctive those actions of the vital force which are manifested by movements purposely adapted in some manner advantageous to the whole organism, nothing could be urged against it. For what is instinct but an unconscious and purposeful action on the part of a living organism? Plants, then, possess instinct. We have instances of its operation in every swarm-spore in search of the best place to settle in, and in every pollen-tube as it grows down through the entrance to an ovary and applies itself to one definite spot of an ovule, never failing of its object.--Ibid., p. 52053.

Linaria Cymbalaria (toadwort) raises its flower-stalk from the stone wall over which it creeps toward the light, but as soon as fertilization has taken place, these same stalks, in that very place and amidst unchanged external conditions, curve in the opposite direction, so as to deposit their seeds in a dark crevice.--Ibid., p. 53.

Selection of Food

The very salts that are needed by most plants are among the most widely distributed on the earth's surface....At the same time it is very striking that these mineral food-salts are not introduced into plants by any means in proportion to the quantity in which they are contained in the soil, but that, on the contrary, plants possess the power of selecting from the abundance of provisions at their disposal only those that are good for them, and in such quantity as is serviceable.--Ibid., p. 68.

Having now seen that land plants take in food-salts by means of special absorptive cells, it is natural to find that each of these plants develops its absorption-cells, projects them, and sets them to work in a place where there is a source of nutritive matter. The parts that bear absorptive cells will accordingly grow where there are food salts and water, which is so necessary for their absorption.

The Marchantias and fern prothalli spread themselves flat upon the ground, molding themselves to its contour. From their under surface they read rhizoids (root-like projections) with absorptive cells into the interstices of the soil. Roots provided with root hairs behave similarly. If a foliage leaf of the Pepper plant or of a Begonia be cut up, and the pieces laid flat on damp earth, roots are formed from them in a very short time. The roots on each piece of leaf proceed from veins near the edge, which is turned away from the incident light, and grow vertically downwards into the ground.

It is a matter of common knowledge that roots which arise upon subterranean parts of stems, like those formed on parts growing above ground, grow downward with a force not to be accounted for by their weight alone.--Ibid., p. 88.

It is sometimes claimed that the growth of roots downward is but "an effect of gravitation." It is strange that those who give this "explanation" do not tell us why the branches of the same plant, which are much heavier, do not also grow downward by the same force. That it is not a matter of weight is shown by the facts which follow.

Adaptation to Circumstances

It is noteworthy that if bits of willow twigs are inserted upside down in the earth, or in damp moss, the roots formed from them, chiefly on the shady aide, after bursting through the bark, grow downwards in the moist ground, pushing aside with considerable force the grains of earth which they encounter.

The appearance of a willow branch thus reversed in the ground is all the more curious inasmuch as the shoots, which are developed simultaneously with roots from the leaf-buds, do not grow in the general direction of the buds and branches, but turn away immediately and bend upwards. Thus the direction of growth of roots and shoots produced on willow-cuttings always remains the same, whether the base or the top of the twig used as a cutting is inserted in the earth.--Ibid., p. 88.

If seeds of the garden cress are placed on the face of a wall of clay which is kept moist, the rootlets, after bursting out of the seeds, grow at first downwards, but later they enter the wall in a lateral direction.--Ibid., p. 89.

The direction taken by roots in their search for food is dependent upon the presence of that food, and the fact that the roots grow towards places that afford supplies of nutritious material, are strikingly exhibited, also, by epiphytes growing on the bark of trees, such as tropical orchids.--Ibid., p. 89.

The growing rootlets which spring from the seed, and the absorptive cells produced from minute tubercles, grow upwards if placed on the under surface of a branch, horizontally if placed on the side, and downwards if on the upper surface. Thus, whatever the direction, they grow towards the moist bark which affords them nourishment.--Ibid., p. 90.

Finding the Best Place for a Living

The movements of roots, as they grow in earth, suggest that they are seeking for nutriment. The root-tip traces, as it progresses, a spiral course, and this revolving motion has been compared to a constant palpitation or feeling. Spots in the earth which are found to be unfavorable to progression are avoided with care. If the root sustains injury, a stimulus is immediately transmitted to the growing part, and the root bends away from the quarter where the wound was

inflicted. When the exploring root-tip comes near a spot where water occurs with food-salts in solution, it at once turns in that direction, and, when it reaches the place, develops such absorptive cells as are adapted to the circumstances.--Ibid., p. 90.

Identity of Plant and Animal Life

Let one read carefully all the foregoing statements of fact, and add to them instances from his own observation, and he cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that in plants all the phenomena of animal life are manifested, although of course within a narrower range. Intelligent action is manifested at every step of growth. No false motions are made. Nothing is done in a haphazard manner.

These things can be accounted for only by "the presence of a single governing power of definite design." The Bible tells us what this is. The everlasting power and Divinity of God are clearly seen in the things that are made. (Romans 1:20)

When a man perceives a good opening, and occupies it, he is said to exercise good judgment. When a man avoids a place where he has met with danger, it is called the exercise of memory and reason. What shall the same things be called in plants? It is evident that they must be called by the same name as in man; but it is also equally evident that the plant itself has no power to remember or to reason; therefore we are shut up to the conclusion that God himself exercises these functions in the plant; and this being so, since all

flesh is grass, it is evident that these faculties in man are simply manifestations of the Lord's presence and working.

Erratic movements in man, poor memory and poor judgment, are simply the result of lack of submission or positive opposition to God's Spirit. The blessed assurance is, "Behold, your servant shall deal prudently." (Isaiah 52:13)

Sure and Well-Directed Effort

Note with what precision and certainty the plant proceeds to procure its necessary sustenance. Out of a vast mass of matter at hand, it selects only that which is good for it, and only in such quantity as it needs.

No one needs to be told that human plants do not by any means exhibit the same wisdom and prudence. How few there are who know what are the very best things for them to eat,--what is best adapted to their constitution,--and who do not make frequent mistakes in the quantity taken. And yet man boasts of his superior wisdom! Does he do well to boast when he does not exhibit in the most vitally essential things the intelligence that is manifested in the despised plant of the ground?

Take note also of how surely the plant sends out its rootlets to places where there is moisture and nourishment. It makes no mistakes. It does not make any experiments. If water is to the east of it, we do not find it sending out its water carriers to the west. It goes

at once and in the most direct manner to the very place where it can make its living.

Ah, how often we find men making bad investments! How often a man settles down in a place where there is no possibility of his earning a living, and then is obliged to go elsewhere. Indeed the whole life of very many men is little else than speculation, and too often only failure.

Why is it that the man who has a brain, and who claims as his essential characteristic that he is a "reasoning being," so often acts with less evidence of calculation than the grass of the field?

God's Word Given Free Course

The answer is not far to seek. It is because in the plants of the ground the Word of God is allowed free course, while the human plant imagines that wisdom originated in himself, and that he is in himself capable of directing his own affairs. If the man would unreservedly acknowledge God in all his ways, and not lean to his own understanding, which is nothing at all, he would make no more mistakes than the plant does.

We have the word of the Lord for this. The man who makes the law of God his meditation day and night shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water; he will bring forth fruit in its season, and whatsoever he does shall prosper. "Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,nor stands in the way of sinners, nor

sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3)

Would it not be far better to be humble enough to acknowledge that we have of ourselves no more wisdom than the grass of the field, and always do the right thing at the right time, than to trust in our own supposed wisdom and be continually making failures?

We have our choice,--either to boast of our own ability, and make failures, or to confess our ignorance and have true prosperity. But when we come to think of it, there is nothing in failure to boast of, so that boasting is really excluded in every case. We have our boasting for nothing; we might better refrain from boasting, even in our innermost thought, and have something substantial.

The Lesson for Us

The great lesson to be learned is this, that God can and will manifest His own wisdom and strength in those who absolutely depend on Him. We may say if we wish to, that He gives wisdom and strength; the Bible uses those terms; but we must bear in mind that He himself must direct them.

"It is God that works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)

We are not to work the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit of God is to work us. In the plant of the earth we have an object lesson of how completely the Spirit of God can and will use our organs, if we will but receive Him indeed. With no will but God's will, no Spirit but God's Spirit, no life but the life of God, even mortal flesh could exhibit power and wisdom that are beyond human comprehension. Only under such conditions can John 14:12 be fulfilled. (John 14:12; Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believes 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) That means the humility of Jesus, and perfect and unquestioning acceptance of every word of God. Is not the result worth the cost? "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." (Colossians 3:16)--Present Truth, October 20, 1898.

Chapter 57

Harvest Time

Now is the time of harvest. Wherever one goes throughout the land, there is to be seen the standing grain even now over-ripe, here the reaper with his sickle busily laying the corn in bundles, while the gleaner follows on behind, there the more modern reaping machine swiftly laying low a whole field, and now we see shocks of corn waiting the gathering into the barn.

It is a busy season, the season for which the farmer has been laboring and waiting all the year, for it determines the value of what he has done. It is, in fact, the judgment time of the year. The nature of the sowing appears in the reaping; and upon the harvest depends the farmer's future. If it is good, he can rejoice in his prosperity; if it is poor, it may mean bankruptcy.

Who thinks of the real significance of the harvest, as it comes year after year? It has a lesson, and a most important one, which should be impressed upon us more and more deeply by its regular recurrence; but such is the perversity of human nature, that instead of learning the lesson better by its constant repetition, we become entirely unconscious of it, even as we do of the ticking of the clock. Let us see if we cannot stir up our slumbering senses to appreciate the instruction and warning that God never wearies of giving us.

Jesus was one day teaching His disciples, and He said, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth, And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knows not how. The earth bears fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear, But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he puts forth the sickle, because the harvest is come." (Mark 4:26-29,RV)

By the seen, the Lord teaches us of the unseen. That is, from what is apparent, He teaches us of the real, "For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:18)

And only that which is lasting is real. Each year, therefore, we have a complete picture of the kingdom of God. The whole work of the Gospel, from its beginning till its consummation, is annually set forth in living pictures before the eyes of all men.

For a more detailed account of the matter, read the parable of the wheat and tares, and its interpretation, in Matthew 13:24-30, 37-43, together with Scripture already quoted. Seed is sown; it germinates and grows, but no one knows how. This we do know, however, that the seed must die in order to bear fruit. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit." (John 12:24)

It must die in order to live. "That which you sow is not quickened, except it die." (1 Corinthians 15:36)

And the work is wholly of God. "God gives it a body as it has pleased Him, and to every seed his own body." (1 Corinthians 15:38)

Sad to say, an enemy is also working, among the wheat, and tares spring up among the wheat. "The good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one. The field is the world." (Matthew 13:38-39)

The good seed, as we also learn from other scriptures, is the Word of God. (Matthew 13:19-23) Those who receive the Word, the incorruptible seed, into their hearts are born of it, thus being transformed into the same substance. This is the new birth, the passing from death to life. He who is not willing to die, cannot hope to live. The farmer who should refuse to cast seed upon the ground, seemingly throwing it away, would never reap anything. The harvest would surely come, but his hands would be empty. "He that saves his life, shall lose it." (Matthew 16:25)

In the growth of the grain we have an illustration of the Christian's growth in grace. "For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

In the first place, the work is wholly of God. The showers that fall upon the earth show the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; the

sunshine which warms the seed into life, shows us how "the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in His wings." (Malachi 4:2)

So the grain grows, because under the favorable conditions which God provides, it cannot do otherwise. We also, if we are consciously as passive in the hands of God as the corn is involuntarily, and as willingly receive the things that pertain to life and godliness, which His Divine power gives in perfection, will as surely bring forth fruit to the glory of God throughout eternity, as the corn ripens to the harvest. For the harvest will surely come, and "the harvest is the end of the world." (Matthew 13:39)

Each recurring harvest is but a sign of the coming end of the world, when "every man's work shall be made manifest." (1 Corinthians 3:13)

The real harvest is yet to come; these yearly harvests are but the assurances of it. We allow them to come and go without giving them a thought beyond the pounds, shillings, and pence which they bring; their regularity makes us indifferent to the lesson they teach, whereas each returning harvest should but deepen our sense of the coming judgment.

The Jews had each year a round of service in their sanctuary, designed to teach them the truths of the closing act in the yearly service, which was the Day of Atonement. This came in the autumn, when the year ended. It was to them the day of judgment. It was their unbelief that made that typical service necessary.

If we will allow the veil of unbelief to be taken away from our eyes, we shall see the Gospel of the kingdom set forth even more vividly and really than it was in the Levitical yearly service. Their ceremonies were but dead forms; our lesson, which they also had, is the working of the living Word. Each harvest tells us that God will bring every work into judgment, and "the day shall declare it." (1 Corinthians 3:13) "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Galatians 6:7-8)

What shall the harvest be in your case? You may know now as surely as when it comes, for the sowing determines the reaping. The harvest will surely come; it is even now upon us. Then, "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." (Galatians 6:9)--Present Truth, September 1, 1898.

Chapter 58

The Glory of the Lord

"Lord, our Lord, how excellent is your name in all the earth! Who has set your glory above the heavens." (Psalm 8:1)

The first occurrence of the Hebrew word rendered "above" in this text is: "Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:2)

In the Revised Version the text reads, "Who has set your glory upon the heavens." (Psalm 8:1,RV)

Both renderings are correct, for the original word has the idea of: nearness, over, upon, against. The glory of God is far above all heavens, but it rests upon them. One thing is taught by the text, and that is that the glory that shines in the heavens is the glory of God. The latest translation, the "Polychrome," gives the verse thus: "How glorious is your name over all the earth! And in the heavens, how your glory shines!" "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork." (Psalm 19:1)

There is no real glory either in heaven or earth, except the glory of God, just as He is the only real King in the universe, and the only One who has power. His is "the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." (Matthew 6:13)

It is all His, no matter how much anybody else may claim, or how little He is recognized in His works. The heavens did not create themselves, neither do they manufacture their own light. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." (Genesis 1:1-3)

Darkness, absolute darkness, without one suggestion of light, was upon all things when they were first created. With the earth in chaos, the heavens were dark. "I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light." (Jeremiah 4:23)

So we know that the light is not originated by any created thing. In the shining of the heavens, they are simply showing forth the excellencies of Him who is light and in whom there is no darkness at all. But the darkness was not darkness to God. "The darkness hides not from You; but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You." (Psalm 139:12)

He is light, and the entrance of His Word gives light; so when He sent His Word into the darkness, light immediately shone forth.

Bodies of Light

Although it is a fact that none of the heavenly bodies evolve light from themselves, it is nevertheless true that they are bodies of

light. Light existed, as we have seen, before the sun was formed; "And God saw the light, that it was good." (Genesis 1:4)

This was on the first day, and it was not until the fourth day that the sun was made to be a light. In some way, which only the Creator can comprehend, things which before were dark became light. They were not merely shone upon, but they were caused to shine forth. They do not originate light, but they emit from themselves the light which existed before they were formed. Although nothing but darkness in themselves, they are actually bodies of light.

Last of all God's works, man was created and was crowned with glory and honor, and set over the works of God's hands. "What is man, that You are mindful of him? and the son of man, that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and have crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas." (Psalm 8:4-8)

Man was made of the dust of the earth, and had in himself no more glory than the dust that still remained on the face of the earth; yet God made him in His own image, "crowned him with glory and honor," and caused him to have dominion over the works of His hands.

Since God is light, it was but natural that the being who was to be His representative on the earth, should bear His glory, even to a higher degree than the heavens, over which he was given dominion. "We are His workmanship," (Ephesians 2:10) even as the heavens are, and were created for His glory. He who made the heavenly orbs to be bodies of light, could most easily make their lord likewise a light bearer. We do not see it so now, because. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

Through sin man lost the dominion, and likewise the glory; but "the first dominion" (Micah 4:8) shall yet be restored, and to this end God has chosen us to be "a royal priesthood, a holy nation,...that you should show forth the praises [virtues, or excellencies] of Him that called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9)

It is evident, therefore, that "in the ages to come," (Ephesians 2:7) even as at the beginning, God's people will be crowned with His own glory. This is very clear from the fact that: "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 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." (Hebrews 2:9-10)

Jesus is the second Adam; as man, in every respect like other men, He has gained back the dominion which the first Adam lost,

and so, as Adam was, He is crowned with glory and honor. That glory is glory that surpasses the brightness of the sun.

God Manifested in the Flesh

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

In the very beginning of His ministry, Jesus turned the water into wine in Cana of Galilee, "and manifested forth His glory." (John 2:11)

Mark this: He manifested forth His glory. The glory was there all the time, only veiled. So on the mount with Peter, James and John, "[He] was transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." (Matthew 17:2)

The light did not shine upon Him, but shone forth from Him. Jesus was on earth an ordinary man, with nothing in His appearance to distinguish Him from other men. "He has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." (Isaiah 53:3)

Yet He was full of the glory of God. That glory was in the form of grace and truth; it manifested itself in good works and kind deeds. His was the glory of God, which is the glory of a perfect character.

Said Christ of His disciples, "And the glory which You gave me, I have given them." (John 17:22)

When "Christ dwells in the heart by faith, [we are] ... strengthened with might by the Spirit of God, ... according to the riches of His glory." (Ephesians 3:17,16)

As the image of God is renewed in the soul by the indwelling of the Spirit, the glory of God is revealed, yet not in a form that appeals to the eyes of the world, who are attracted by that which is gaudy, and which dazzles.

Preparing the Way

"The voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." (Isaiah 40:3-5)

This is the preparation for the second coming of Christ. The only thing that hinders His coming at once, is the lack of preparation on the part of people. The way of the Lord is thus prepared by His forerunner: "He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17)

God's way must be prepared in the hearts of His people. This preparation is humility of heart, the acknowledgment that "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." (Isaiah 40:6)

When the heart is thus brought low, the way is prepared for the Lord to manifest himself. But God is light, so that whenever He appears in the way, His glory is revealed. That way is in His people; so that the glory of the Lord is to be revealed in the hearts and lives of men, and all are to see it there, even if they do not recognize it as God's glory. Some will see it, and will rejoice in the light. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto your name give glory, for your mercy, and for your truth's sake." (Psalm 115:1)

The heavens make no claim for themselves, consequently they show forth God's glory, and are themselves glory. So when we are willing that self shall sink out of sight, confess that we are nothing, and make no claim to distinction, we also may be "to the praise of His glory." (Ephesians 1:12)

The glory will manifest itself as good works wrought by God in us, and will be nothing to attract people to us. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2)

Wonderful thought! that these poor, frail, mortal bodies are to shine with the brightness of the heavens. But so it is. "Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20-21,RV

When Christ comes, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:43) "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Daniel 12:3)

Truly, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

What is the object of telling us about this wonderful glory? Is it merely that we may congratulate ourselves on the display we are one day to make? Far from it; for when that glory is revealed, we shall individually be as unconscious of it as we now are. Each will see the glory of the others, and delight in the sight, but like Moses, will not know that his own face sends forth rays of light. (Exodus 34:29) It is written for our encouragement.

Mark this: The glory is to be revealed in us; the righteous are to shine forth. God tells us of the future glory, in order that we may

know what He gives to us in this present time. It is the power by which we are to overcome; for power is glory. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, (Romans 6:4) yet it was the working of God's "mighty power." (Ephesians 1:19-20) And this same power works in all who believe.

That glory is power will appear more fully in the article entitled, "The Fruit of the Light,"--See the next article. and the power that God gives us in the conflict with sin, is "according to the riches of His glory." (Ephesians 3:16)

The power and the glory that the heavens reveal is only a portion of that which God now gives to us by His Spirit. "We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as the Lord the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:18,RV) "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves." (2 Corinthians 4:7,RV)--Present Truth, August 11, 1898.

Chapter 59

The Fruit of the Light

Jesus is the Light of the world. (John 1:9, 8:12) This is no figurative expression, but the statement of an actual fact. The light by which we see to work or read, is that which shines from the Lord. "God is light," and Christ is the shining of His glory, (Hebrews 1:3) so that all the light that shines upon this earth comes from His person. Evidence of this is seen in the fact that, after saying, "I am the Light of the world," (John 8:12) He immediately made a blind man see. Further evidence of the reality of the light that shines from the person of Christ is found in the fact that in the New Jerusalem the city has no need of the sun or moon; for "the Lamb is the light thereof." (Revelation 21:23)

What a glorious thing to realize, that we are even now walking in the light of the countenance of God! Perhaps it seems unreal to you. Well, if you will but believe the Word, you will soon find it very real; and in familiarity with the thought is there strength and salvation. Recognizing that God's real presence is in the light, we shall "walk in the light as He is in the light," (1 John 1:7) and shall know the blessedness of the truth that ... "the blood of Jesus Christ ... cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7)

The sun is the source of all the light and heat that this earth has. But the sun has nothing except what it receives from the Lord. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John 1:4)

All the life, therefore, upon the earth is the life of Christ. He is "the Life." (John 14:6) There is no other. Since the light that shines from the sun is the life of the Word, we can see how true it is that "The life was manifested, and we have seen it." (1 John 1:2)

But we do not always recognize light when we see it. Jesus was full of glory when He was on earth, yet very few knew it, simply because they were blind. (John 1:5,10) Even today there are very many "foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not," (Jeremiah 5:21) so that they do not perceive God in His works. Light is life. This is true of men and of all the plant creation. No plant can grow without sunlight. See how the tree reaches out its branches in every direction, to take in the sunshine. It grows symmetrically, and thrives, because it never rejects a ray of light. It longs for the light, and rejoices in it. Without the light, it would droop and die.

Year after year the tree stores up the light. Because it never shuts the light out, it is full of light. You don't see the light in the tree? That is because you have not your eyes open. If you are as yet unable to recognize it in the growing tree, wait until it has been cut down and is used as fuel. What a bright light shines from the grate. Where does it come from? Oh, the tree is now giving out the sunlight that it stored up during all the years of its life.

If you are burning coal, the same thing is seen. The coal that you burn was once growing timber. It became buried in the earth, and

lay there for centuries, becoming harder and more compact, and undergoing certain chemical changes, waiting the time when it should be brought forth to serve man with the light that it received from the sun ages ago. If we burn gas or oil, which come from coal, it is nothing but condensed, concentrated sunshine. In an hour we get the benefit of the sunlight of years.

We can see the light when it shines from the grate or the lamp. But it was in the tree before it was given up for our use. Light a torch of wood. Now you see the light coming directly from the wood itself. That is positive evidence that the light is there, only we are so blind that we do not usually recognize light until it strikes us in the eye almost hard enough to blind us.

Light is power. Put the fuel into the furnace, under a boiler of water, and see what force is let loose. The railway train speeding across the country, and the vast steamship ploughing its way through the waters, carrying the load of a hundred railway trains, are both driven by the light of the sun. Men harness up the sun, and use it to drive all the machinery that is in existence, never once thinking that the force that serves them is the power of God's own light.

Perhaps we can now see the glory in the growing plant. The power by which it grows is the light of the sun, which we must never forget is the light of God's countenance. What marvelous glory the meadow reveals! Is not a forest, or even a single tree, in full leaf, a glorious sight? Ah, we do sometimes use that term, which shows that we recognize the fact that there is glory there; the trouble

is, that we do not stop to think whose the glory is, and to give glory to Him who made all these things.

A tree however has something besides leaves; it has fruit. The ripened fruit is but the expression of the life power of the plant. The sun warmed the earth, it caused the water to mount up through the rootlets and the stock to the leaves and blossoms, and when the energy of the plant manifested itself in fruit, it was the sun that brought it to perfection, and gave its cheek its beautiful tint, which is so beautiful simply because it is not painted from the outside, but is the flush of life.

So all the good things that come to our table, which the earth brings forth abundantly, are but the fruit of the light. And that light is the life of the Lord of heaven and earth. Then we eat the light! Why, yes, the light is our life, just as it is also the life of all other plants; for "all flesh is grass." (Isaiah 40:6)

If we eat and drink to the glory of God, (1 Corinthians 10:31) recognizing His life in

His gifts, we shall eat and drink righteousness; for the promise is, "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:6)

Of God's servant it is said, "He shall blossom as the lily." (Hosea 14:5,RV) "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." (Isaiah 27:6) "For as the earth brings forth her

bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

That which the plants do involuntarily, we must do voluntarily and consciously. They take in all the light that comes to them, and thus glorify God. If we do the same, then we shall be called "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." (Isaiah 61:3) "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." (Ephesians 5:9)

The very same light that brings the fruits of earth to perfection, shines upon us, to make us bring forth fruit after our kind, and to cause us to bear much fruit, that God may be glorified. The fact that the light will do this for us, if we accept it, is shown to us every day in the gardens and fields, in the forests and meadows.

Let us therefore walk in the light, that we may be "Filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Philippians 1:11)--Present Truth, August 11, 1898.

Chapter 60

The Witness of the Heavens

"The heavens declare the glory of God." (Psalm 19:1)

In their ever-changing beauty, the sunny days and starry nights show forth "the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge." (Job 37:16)

Nor does the firmament reveal Him only as a Being of infinite power, at the thought of whom the inhabitants of the earth should tremble. "Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds." (Psalm 36:5) "Your faithfulness shall You establish in the very heavens." (Psalm 89:2)

So morning by morning as we rise from our sleep, and behold the rays of the sun once more, its beams bring the glad message that "the mercy of the Lord endures" still. What a blessed thought with which to begin the day! That which smites upon our eyelids in the summer mornings and gently calls us from slumber is the greeting of the heavens, bidding us be of good cheer, whatever the day may bring, for since God's mercy is over us still, "as your days, so shall your strength be." (Deuteronomy 33:25) "His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23)

If we be conscious of unworthiness, of sinful deeds and stubborn hearts, still the sun shines even to us, and thereby we learn that the mercy and faithfulness which the heavens reveal, are not yet worn out for us. "He is kind unto the unthankful." (Luke 6:35) "He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good." (Matthew 5:45)

And therein, Christ taught, He loves them that hate Him.

Now when the sun gets on the horizon, may we think that the powers of darkness prevail, and the evidence of His faithfulness grows dim. But throughout the twenty-four hours He leaves not himself without witness. To those who fear that their way is hid from the Lord, and that His watch-care is withdrawn, He says: "Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these, that brings out their host by number: He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking." (Isaiah 40:26)

As far as the lights of heaven shine, so far goes the message of God's mercy. As unsearchable as the expanse of heaven is the length and breadth and height and depth of His infinite love; and as free as is the vision of God's glory to the eyes of men, is the free gift of "the righteousness [which is the glory of God], ... unto all and upon all them that believe." (Romans 3:22) "Thus says the Lord, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night. ... If those ordinances depart from before me, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. 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." (Jeremiah 31:35-37) "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." (Romans 9:8)

Those who have believed God's promise and trust Him for salvation, need never fear that He will suffer His faithfulness to fail, nor alter the thing that is gone out of His lips, (Psalm 89:33-34) so long as they can see the sun and moon in the heavens; for "His seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun beforeme. It shall be established for ever as the moon." (Psalm 89:36-37)

Then so long as men have reason to think that the morning will bring them the sunlight, and night be made beautiful with stars, they have no less reason to be confident that He whom they have believed, will keep that which they have committed unto Him.--Present Truth, July 7, 1898.

Chapter 61

God's Beautiful Preachers

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace; that brings good tidings of good, that publishes salvation; that says unto Zion, your God reigns." (Isaiah 52:7)

There is more than one preacher of this class, for when the Apostle Paul quotes this scripture, he uses the plural, saying, "It is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:15)

It is true that the text speaks only of the feet of these preachers, calling them beautiful, while we are talking about God's beautiful preachers; but since the feet are the most humble members of the body, it necessarily follows that if the feet are beautiful, the whole body must be beautiful also.

May we know who these beautiful preachers are? Certainly, or else we cannot know the message that they bear. Let us see what the Scriptures have to say about them, and we shall learn something valuable about preaching the Gospel, as well as something of the glory of the Gospel. In Romans, we have the statement that "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Isaiah 52:13)

Then follow some questions, designed to emphasize the fact that all have had an opportunity to know the Lord, and to call upon Him. Thus: "How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Isaiah 52:14-15)

All these questions suggest their own answer. But some have been sent, as is shown by what follows: "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:15)

So since some have been sent, it is evident that there are preachers; and since there are preachers, it follows that people have heard; and since they have heard, they have had a chance to believe, and to call upon the name of the Lord. Passing by the statement that "They have not all obeyed the Gospel," (Romans 10:16) and that "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," (Romans 10:17) we come to the question, "But I say, Have they not all heard?" (Romans 10:18) Heard what? The Word of the Gospel, of course, for that is the only thing under consideration. "Yes, verily," (Romans 10:18) they have all heard the Gospel, but they have not all believed it. Now for the proof that all have heard it: "Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Romans 10:18)

Whose words went unto the ends of the world? The words of the beautiful preachers of whom the Apostle has just spoken as

preaching the Gospel of peace, and bringing glad tidings of good things.

So far it is all very clear. Now who are these beautiful preachers of the Gospel, whose words have gone unto the ends of the world? The answer is found in the scripture from which the Apostle has quoted. It is Psalm 19:4. It is the bodies which God created to be in the firmament of the heavens, to give light upon the earth: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handywork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." (Psalm 19:1-4)

The sun, moon, and stars, and the firmament itself, are the preachers whose feet are so beautiful upon the mountains, as they come preaching the Gospel of peace. And truly their feet are beautiful. Who has not been filled with ecstasy as he has seen the sun lighting up the hilltops, or the soft light of the moon upon the mountains? Beautiful preachers they are indeed.

Glory is power: "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." (Romans 6:4)

We also read in Ephesians that the resurrection of Christ was a manifestation of the working of the mighty power of God: "According to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead." (Ephesians 1:19-20)

Therefore the heavens, in declaring the glory of God, are proclaiming His power. And the power of God is salvation, for "the Gospel ... is the power of God unto salvation," (Romans 1:16) and "His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3)

So the heavens proclaim the salvation of the Lord. Thus, as rendered in the best translations: "Jehovah has made bare His holy arm in the sight of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." (Isaiah 52:10)

Take notice that this statement directly follows the verse first quoted, about the beautiful messengers of good tidings, publishing salvation. So the heavenly bodies are God's model preachers. They preach by simply shining. That is the way that Jesus himself preached. He was the light of the world. It was the shining of His life that taught men. "[He is the] Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:9) "[Whosoever] follows Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12) even of His life. Would you be one of God's beautiful preachers? You do not need to be eloquent. It is not actually necessary that you be able to speak at all. You have only to let Christ shine upon you, and to allow God to make your heart His sanctuary, and then He "that sits between the cherubim [will] shine forth." (Psalm 80:1,RV) "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:43) "It is God which works in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)

The one thing that the world needs is to see God in His works, that they may learn His ways. Then, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)--Present Truth, October 27, 1898.

Chapter 62

Revealing the Glory

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

Other versions give the verse something like this: "For God, who said that light should shine out of darkness, has let it shine into our hearts."

This is not perhaps so exactly literal a rendering, but it makes emphatic the fact that is contained in the text, that the light which in the beginning God caused to shine out of darkness, is the same light that He lets shine in our hearts. And why does He let it shine into our hearts? "To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

One may read this text very many times without getting the full benefit of it. It is only when we consider it in relation to what goes before, and remember what the general subject of these chapters is that we can get the force of these words.

One ordinarily thinks that God has shined this light into our hearts, in order to give us the light of the knowledge of His glory. It is true that this result will follow as a matter of course; but what the text teaches is that the light shines into our hearts for the sake of

others, to give to others the light of God's glory. God makes His people the light of the world, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of others.

If anyone will read carefully from the latter part of the 2nd chapter of 2 Corinthians to the first part of the 6th chapter, paying no attention to the chapter divisions, but reading all as one connected letter, he will see what is meant. In the latter part of the 2nd chapter we read, that God "makes manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place." (2 Corinthians 2:14)

Compare this with the text first quoted. Then in the 3rd chapter we read that God has made us able to be ministers of the new covenant, that is, ministers of the Spirit: "Who also has made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:6)

And so follows a statement of the glory of this ministration. It is the glory which transfigured the face of Moses, as he talked face to face with the Lord. The children of Israel would not look upon this glory, and so they remained in darkness; but we, beholding this glory with unveiled face, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory. (2 Corinthians 3:7-18) Here we learn what effect the glory has upon us personally when it shines upon us. "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not." (2 Corinthians 4:1)

Here we learn that this shining of the glory upon us is not simply for our sakes, but it is that we may minister it to others. "But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:3-6)

Then passing on into the 5th chapter we read that we are ambassadors for Christ, since God has put the word and ministry of reconciliation into us, and beseeches sinners by us even as He did by Him. "And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:18-20) "We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you that you receive not the grace of God in vain." (2 Corinthians 6:1)

Surely no one can fail to see that God designs that everyone of His people should shine the light of His glory forth to the world, even as the heavens do and as Christ did. "For so has He commanded us, saying, I have set you to be a light of the Gentiles,

that you should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." (Acts 13:47)

The glory which God has given to Christ, He has given to us, and for the same purpose that He has it, namely, that we may shine as lights in the world, and thus glorify God. "Glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify You." (John 17:1) "Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit." (John 15:8) "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." (Romans 8:18,28-30)

God has glorified His Son Jesus, and has given us the same glory that He has given Him. By beholding Him we are conformed to His image, so that we are His brethren, He being the firstborn. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2)

The glory that God has given us does not appear to the eyes of the world, even as the glory of Christ did not. Yet those who were

enlightened by the Spirit, saw the glory of Christ, "the glory as of the only begotten full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

So the glory which God gives us is now in the form of grace and truth; but when the Lord will come it will shine forth so that all may recognize it as glory. What is the measure of that glory? "Unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7)

When Christ was on the mount of transfiguration, the glory that was in Him as grace and truth shone forth, so that "His face did shine as the sun." (Matthew 17:2)

Therefore, when He comes, and we appear like Him, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:43)

That is, the glory which God even now gives us, is the glory of the sun. But glory is power, the power of grace, so that the power which God gives us now, not simply to enable us to be saved, but to bring others to salvation, is the power that is manifested in the whole heavens. " They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Daniel 12:3)

Therefore, "Arise, shine!" (Isaiah 60:1)--Present Truth, October 27, 1898.

Chapter 63

God's Faithfulness

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known your faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, mercy shall be built up forever; your faithfulness shall You establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant, Your Seed will I establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations." (Psalm 89:1-4)

Christ is God's Chosen, in whom His soul delights, (Isaiah 42:1) and He is the Seed of David. (Romans 1:3) He is "the Root and the Offspring of David." (Revelation 22:16)

The tabernacle of David, that is fallen down, is to be built up (Amos 9:11) by the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: "Simeon has declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, says the Lord, who does all these things." (Acts 15:14-17)

And the throne of David is to be perpetuated to all generations through the resurrection of Christ: "Men and brethren, let me freely

speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." (Acts 2:29-31)

But by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead all who believe are begotten unto a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away. (1 Peter 1:3-5) Therefore the covenant with David, unto which God swore, is the covenant that assures us an "inheritance among the saints in light;" (Colossians 1:12) and so we see that it is identical with the covenant with Abraham, to which God swore by himself, and which gives us strong consolation and hope of salvation through Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 6:13,20) The Seed of David is the Seed of Abraham, and if we are Christ's we are a part of this Seed, and heirs according to the promise. "And if you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:29)

So we find in the following scripture the direct promise of eternal life to us: "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His Seed shall endure for ever, and His throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon and as a faithful witness in heaven." (Psalm 89:35-37)

As surely as the sun and moon endure, so surely will God give eternal life to everyone who trusts Him. His faithfulness is written in the heavens. The sun and moon are witnesses to it. "When God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by himself." (Hebrews 6:13)

This was not for Abraham's sake, but for our sake. Abraham did not need the oath for confirmation, because his faith was perfect before the oath was made; but it was given that "We might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. ... God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed himself by an oath." (Hebrews 6:18,17)

Do you realize what is involved in the oath of God? how strong the consolation is? Think of it a moment, and when you have grasped its meaning, you may continue to think of it forever.

He promised salvation to everyone who would accept it in faith; to all who would simply trust Him to save them. Then He pledged himself its surety for the fulfillment of the promise. He interposed himself between us and the possibility of failure, staking His own existence upon the result.

When one pledges anything, it is well known that the thing pledged is lost if the price is not paid, or the vow performed. So in swearing by himself God put himself in the position where He would forfeit His own existence if His promise should fail.

Let us in passing remember that this promise is to all: "Whosoever will, let him come. God has chosen the poor of this world:" (Revelation 22:17) "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him?" (James 2:5) "And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen." (1 Corinthians 1:28)

If God's promise should fail in the case of the poorest or the most insignificant and despised of human beings, that would be a failure just the same as if He should reject the whole world. If one poor soul should come to Him and fail to find forgiveness for a sin confessed, or help in time of need, that would be a failure of God's promise, to which He swore by himself, and therefore that very moment God would cease to exist.

Does someone say that it is irreverent to talk about God's ceasing to exist? It is no more irreverent than it is to talk about His not being able or willing to forgive any sin that is acknowledged, or to provide all the help that any soul needs. Would that all men might see that to doubt God's willingness to forgive is to deny His existence, so that it is the rankest infidelity not to accept pardon, or to doubt that God helps in every time of need.

And now what constant assurance have we before our eyes that God lives, and that therefore His promise is sure? His faithfulness is written in the very heavens. "Lift up your eyes on high, and see who

has created these, that brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name; by the greatness of His might, and for that He is strong in power, not one is lacking." (Isaiah 40:26)

The whole universe depends on God. If He should cease to exist, everything would that instant cease to exist. God made the sun, moon, and stars, "for signs, and for seasons, and days, and years." (Genesis 1:14)

That thing of which they exist as a sign is the faithfulness of God. The sun, moon, and stars are evidences that God still lives, and as surely as He lives, may we come with boldness to the throne of grace, with perfect confidence that we shall "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16) "Forever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness is unto all generations." (Psalm 119:89-90)--Present Truth, October 27, 1898.

Chapter 64

A Lesson from the Lark

In the Natural History of Birds of Germany, we find the following interesting fact:

Larks, a feeble race of birds, rise higher in the air than any rapacious bird, and this is often a cause of safety. Their greatest enemy is the Hobby. They fear him greatly, so that as soon as one appears singing ceases, and each suddenly closes his wings, falls to the earth, and hides against the soil.

But some have mounted so high to pour out their clear song that they cannot hope to reach the earth before being seized. Then, knowing that the bird of prey is to be feared when he occupies a more elevated position from which he can throw himself on them, they endeavor to remain always above him. They mount higher and higher. The enemy seeks to pass them, but they mount still, until at last the Hobby, heavier, and little accustomed to this rarified air, grows tired, and gives up the pursuit.

This suggests a lesson for us. Our enemy, Satan, seeks to destroy us, but if we can keep above him, it is plain that he can have no power over us. Jesus, our Saviour, has been raised to the right hand of God in the heavenly places, "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion." (Ephesians 1:21)

And since we are by faith raised to the heavenly places with Him, (Ephesians 2:4-6) it follows that this is our rightful place. If then when our enemy assails us, and that is constantly, we "seek those things which are above," (Colossians 3:1) we shall escape him; for that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, has been cast out of heaven, so that he can find no place there any more. (Revelation 12:7-9) He cannot endure its atmosphere. There we can from full hearts sing thanks unto God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57)--Present Truth, August 4, 1898.

Chapter 65

Great Lessons by Humble Masters

"Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you; Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you." (Job 12:7-8)

What is it that these creatures can teach us? They can teach us the one thing that it is necessary for you to know, namely, that the power of God is manifested in everything that exists.

"Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; But let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth." (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

Most valuable lessons are given to everybody every day, and are ignored. Men are constantly mourning their lack of advantages for education, when if they would improve the opportunities freely provided, they might obtain knowledge that cannot be found in any school on earth that is conducted by man. The most valuable things are to be had for free. It is only for second-rate things that we have to pay money. "Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knows not the price thereof; neither is

it found in the land of the living. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of corals or pearls; for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold." (Job 28:12-13,15-19)

Since wisdom cannot be obtained for gold, and no jewels of earth are equal to it in value, it follows that whoever gets it must get it freely. It comes from God without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1) "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and upbraids not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5)

The wisdom which He gives to man is greater than that which He gives to the beasts of the field and "[He] makes us wiser than the fowls of the heaven," (Job 35:11) provided we but accept His Word, and do not imagine ourselves to be any wiser, in ourselves, than the beasts and the birds are.

Out of the almost infinite number of facts that might be cited, we will instance only a few, from authentic books of natural history, as well as from personal observation, which show what marvelous wisdom God has given to creatures with the tiniest bodies and brains. Let us first take a look at.

The Californian Wood-Pecker

This bird nourishes himself upon ants and other insects, but at the same time that he is hunting these, he is engaged in storing up acorns for future use. Whether he eats these acorns, or only the worms that may breed in them, is a question among naturalists, but that is immaterial to our present study. What concerns us at present is the manner in which he stores them up.

He chooses a tree, and hollows out in its trunk a cavity just large enough to receive a single acorn. Then he brings an acorn, and inserts it into the hole, so that it cannot fall out, nor can any other bird or animal get it out. In this way he stores up a vast number. I have seen a fir tree so filled from the bottom to the top of its trunk with the acorns which this industrious little worker had gathered, that from a little distance it looked as though it had been shot full of rifle bullets. It is said that a wood-pecker will carry an acorn thirty miles to store it in its larder.

The acorns which are thus gathered are long and slender, very much like a modern rifle bullet. Of course they vary in size, just as any other nuts; but the remarkable thing is that in no case is the hole made a particle too large for the acorn which is designed for it. Each acorn fits its cavity as perfectly as if it were a piece of iron that had been driven in with a hammer.

So, as already stated, no animal can get one of them out. Only the wood-pecker with its strong beak, can pierce the hard, polished

extremity of the acorn. Man can dig them out with a knife, but in no other way. It is worthy of note that the holes are never made too shallow, so that the ends of the acorns project beyond the bark of the tree. In every case they are exactly even with the surface. How long would a man have to practice before he would be able to do such perfect mortising?

The Tailor Bird

This bird is not only a tailor, but a spinner and weaver, as well.

They place their nests in a large leaf, which they prepare to this end. With their beaks they pierce two rows of holes along the two edges of the leaf; they then pass a stout thread from one side to the other alternately. With this leaf, at first flat, they form a horn in which they weave their nest with cotton or hair. These labors of weaving and sewing are preceded by the spinning of the thread. The bird makes it itself by twisting in its beak spiders' webs, bits of cotton, and little ends of wool. Sykes found that the threads used for sewing were knotted at the ends. It is impossible not to admire animals who have skillfully triumphed over all the obstacles met within the course of these complicated operations.--Frederic Houssay, The Industries of Animals, Chapter VI ""Dwellings".

Yes; and one may well say, It is impossible not to admire the God who teaches these creatures to do such perfect work.

Not Blind Instinct

But someone will say, "Yes, it is very interesting and amusing; but the bird is born with that instinct, and cannot really do any other way."

Even if this were true, it would not in the least diminish the honor due to God for thus providing it with that sense; but it is not true.

Certain birds change the form of their dwelling according to the climate, or according to the season in which they inhabit it. For example, the Crossbill does not build its nest according to the same rules in Sweden as in France. It builds in every season. The winter shelter is spherical, constructed with dry lichens, and is very large. A very narrow opening, just sufficient for the passage of the owner, prevents the external cold from penetrating within. The summer nests are much smaller, in consequence of a reduction of the thickness in the walls. There is no longer need to fear that the cold will come, and the animal gives itself no superfluous trouble.

Again, the Baltimore Oriole, which inhabits both the Northern and the Southern States of North America, knows very well how to adapt his manner of work to the external circumstances in which he lives. Thus, in the Southern States the nest is woven of delicate materials united in a rather loose fashion, so that the air can circulate freely and keep the interior fresh; it is lined with no warm substance, and the entrance is turned to the west, so that the sun only sends into

it the oblique evening rays. In the North, on the contrary, the nest is oriented to the south, to profit by all the warm sunshine; the walls are thick, without interstices, and the dwelling is carpeted in the warmest and softest manner. Even in the same region there is the greatest diversity in the style, neatness, and finish of the nests, as well as in the materials used.--Ibid.

It is a common idea that birds and animals never improve their methods of labor, but that the young one knows of itself how to go to work, and that it does as well the first time as ever afterwards. This is a mistake, as is already shown. Other instances which may be cited, will show that the brains of these laborers are actively engaged in planning and inventing.

The Popular Science Monthly gives the missionary Moffat as authority for the statement that when lions were yet numerous in South Africa, they were often seen instructing one another in leaping to catch prey, using a bush in their practice, instead of an animal. In one case a lion, which had missed a zebra, through miscalculating the distance, repeated the jump several times, for his own instruction. While he was engaged in this exercise, two other lions came along, and he led them round the rock, to explain the case to them, and then, turning to the starting point, completed the lesson by making a final leap. The animals kept roaring during the whole of the curious scene, "talking together," as a native who watched them said.

By the aid of individual training of this kind, birds become clever with age, old birds building more artistic nests than young ones.

In Constantinople, where the life of the street dogs depends upon their ability to protect the morsel that they have secured, against all intruders, the writer has been amused by watching an old dog teaching her pups to fight, and training them to secure their food.

Bees in Their Dwellings

In a hive full of active bees the temperature rises considerably and the air becomes vitiated. Accordingly, means are adopted to secure ventilation.

Bees ranged in files one above the other in the interior agitate their wings with a feverish movement; this movement causes a current of air which can be felt by holding the hand before the opening of the hive. When the workers of the corps are fatigued, comrades who have been resting come to take their place. These acts are not the result of a stupid instinct which the hymenoptera obey without understanding. If we place a swarm, as Huber did, in a roomy position where there is plenty of air, they do not devote themselves to an aimless exercise.--Frederic Houssay, Industries of Animals, Chapter VII "The Defense and Sanitation of Dwellings".

The stores of bees often suffer from the raids of a large moth called the "Death's Head Moth."

Protected by the long and fluffy hairs which cover him, he has little to fear from stings, and gorges himself with the greatest freedom on the stores of the swarm. Huber, in his admirable investigations, narrates that one year in Switzerland numbers of hives were emptied, and contained no more honey in summer than in the spring. During that year Death's Head Moths were very numerous. The illustrious naturalist soon became certain that this moth was guilty of the thefts in question. While he was reflecting as to what should be done, the bees, who were more directly interested, had invented several modes of procedure. Some closed the entrance with wax, leaving only a narrow opening through which the great robber could not penetrate.--Ibid.

Others built up before the opening a series of parallel walls, leaving between them a zigzag corridor through which the bees themselves were able to enter; but which would not admit the long body of the moth. In the same way man constructs a turnstile, which will allow him to pass, but which excludes the long body of a cow. The bees set up the barricades only in the years when the Death's Head Moth is numerous. In years when it is rare, they leave their doors wide open, for their own greater convenience.

Gardening Ants

Whole numbers of this paper could be filled with authentic stories of the wisdom of this little insect, but we must be content with one or two facts. The Leaf-cutting ants of tropical America are often referred to by travelers on account of their ravages on vegetation.

They climb a tree, station themselves on the edge of a leaf, and make a circular incision with their scissor-like jaws; the piece of leaf, about the size of a sixpence, held vertically between the jaws, is then borne off to their house.--Idem., Chapter IV "Provisions and Domestic Animals".

It is said that they are capable of destroying whole plantations of orange, mango, and lemon trees. But the ants do not eat these leaves. If they did, their performance would not be so wonderful.

These ants are in reality mushroom growers and eaters, for "the real use of the leaves is as manure on which to grow a minute species of fungus."--Ibid.

Great care is taken that the nest should be neither too dry nor; too damp. If a sudden shower comes on, the leaves are left near the entrance, and carried down only when nearly dry. During very hot weather, on the other hand, when the leaves would be parched in a very short time the ants work only in the cool of the day, and during the night.

Occasionally, inexperienced ants carry in grass and unsuitable leaves; these are invariably brought out again, and thrown away.--Ibid.

Harvesting Ants

In spite of Solomon, (Proverbs 6:6-8) naturalists for a long time asserted that ants do not store up food in barns for the winter; but it is now admitted that they spoke from too meager data.

Nearly all ants may therefore be called harvesters, but there is one species which specially deserves this name. They procure various kinds of grain towards the end of autumn, collecting them from the ground, or even climbing the stalks and gathering them.

But they have not completed their task when they have the grain safely in their storehouses. The conditions of heat and moisture in the interior of the ant-hill are such that the grain, if left to itself, would soon begin to grow. But this the ants do not desire, at least not until it suits their convenience.

How they prevent the grain from germinating is a secret not known to man; but it is certain that they do it, for as long as the ants have access to the grain it does not germinate, but if from any cause they are denied access to one of the chambers where the grain is stored, it immediately begins to grow.

But although they thus hinder germination in the grain, they do not render it impossible, and when the time has come for utilizing the accumulated stores, they allow the grain to follow the natural course. The radicle and stalk of the plant soon come to light.

But the ants do not allow the development of the plant to go too far. As soon as the starch in the grain has been, in the process of growth, converted into sugar for the use of the growing plant, the young stalk is cut off before it has an opportunity to consume the food thus prepared for it. Then the ants bring out their stores to the sun, dry them, take them back to their barns, and thus through the winter have a supply of sweet flour.

Here we have the manifestation of wisdom that is not merely wonderful as exhibited in ants, but which is beyond the understanding of man.

Topographical Knowledge

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knows her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming." (Jeremiah 8:7)

When the season comes for these birds to migrate, they go; but they do not go at the same time every season. If warm summer weather continues till late in autumn, the birds remain; and what is more remarkable, they do not, except in single instances, anticipate

the return of warm weather in the spring, even though its coming be delayed beyond the usual time. How do they know the right time?

But there is something even yet more remarkable connected with the migration of birds. It is the fact that they will cross the ocean and come back to the very spot from which they started, building their nests year after year in the very same tree or house.

When we stand on the deck of a steamship in mid-ocean, with a trackless waste of waters on every side, we wonder at the human skill which guides the great vessel across the waters, and brings it straight to its destination, even though the place be one to which the master has never before sailed. But he could not do it at first. It took years of study to enable him to accomplish the feat, and when he undertakes the task he has charts and maps of the entire route, and the most delicate instruments, besides his Compass, to enable him to mark his course.

But the bird will make the same trip without compass or chart. If this be attributed to "instinct," then the question arises: "Isn't instinct better than reason? Wouldn't it be a good thing for man if he had instinct?"

The Source of Wisdom

Where do the birds get this knowledge? The answer is indicated by the Lord in His question to Job, "Does the hawk fly by your wisdom?" (Job 39:26)

And by His statement concerning the ostrich, "God has deprived her of wisdom, neither has He imparted to her understanding." (Job 39:17)

Now, "[God] teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the fowls of heaven." (Job 35:11)

Why then do not men invariably know more than these creatures do? Here is the answer: "The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?" (Jeremiah 8:9)

Someone will ask, "Do you mean to say that if men were wholly controlled by the Word of the Lord, they would be able to cross the ocean without chart or compass?"

To that we have no answer to make; but we are to learn from the birds and beasts not merely to do the same things that they do, but that dependence on God which will make us proportionately wiser than they are, in the things which are necessary for us to do.

One thing is certain, and that is, if men were wholly yielded to the Word and Spirit of God, they would make no mistakes in whatever they undertook. (See Psalm 1:1-3) The degree of knowledge that a man would possess if he were wholly guided by the Lord, is incalculable.

That in the world to come man will be able to go to all parts of the Lord's dominions, and not get lost, there is not the slightest doubt. Every Sabbath day, and every new moon, all flesh will appear in the temple of God to worship. (Isaiah 66:22-23) From every quarter of the globe they will make the journey, and each one will by the most direct route come to the Holy City.

Who dare say that even in this present world a man wholly led by the Spirit of God could not do the same thing, if it were necessary in the service of God? When God's ways are in a man's heart, God will direct his paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

When we study the life of Christ we can see what wonderful wisdom can be attained by one who takes counsel of God alone. Remember that Christ was here on earth in man's place, so that "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." (Hebrews 2:17)

He had access to no wisdom that is not open to mankind. He never went to the schools, which taught the wisdom of the day, but He had wisdom even as a child, that caused the wisest doctors of the law to marvel. Here is the secret of His wisdom: "The Lord God has given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should know how to sustain with words him that is weary; He wakens morning by morning, He wakens my ear to hear as they that are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward." (Isaiah 50:4-5)

Strength in Helplessness: Wisdom in Simplicity

In this connection let us learn another lesson from the ant. In "Glimpses of Nature," in the Strand Magazine, Grant Allen has the following in a little treatise on ants:

It takes the insects three or four weeks, in the pupa form, to develop into full-grown ants and even when they have finished, they are as helpless as babies, and could not escape from the cocoon but for the kind offices of the worker attendants. It is pretty to see the older ants helping them to extricate themselves, carefully unfolding the legs and smoothing out the wings of the males and females, with truly feminine tenderness and delicacy.

This utter helplessness of the young ant is very interesting for comparison with the case of man; for it is now known that nothing conduces to the final intellectual and moral supremacy of a race so much as the need for tending and carefully guarding the young; the more complete the dependence of the offspring upon their elders, the finer and higher the ultimate development.

Make special note of the words we have placed in italics. They let us into the secret of wisdom and strength, although the naturalists who note the fact, do not carry it out to the proper conclusion.

We are the offspring of God. (Acts 17:28) God deals with us as with children, if we do not get so wise in our conceits (Romans 11:25,12:16) that we imagine we can get along without instruction

from Him. No other animal that is born into the world is so ignorant and helpless as the human infant. And no matter how long we live, we are always little children--babes--in the eyes of God. He says, "Hearken unto to me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Isaiah 46:3-4) "As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you." (Isaiah 66:13)

Jesus Christ was born a helpless infant, and was wrapped in swaddling clothes, in which even a man would be helpless, and laid in a manger. He was a perfect picture of human helplessness and foolishness. But He was cast upon God from the womb, 227 and so in Him we have the full demonstration of the fact that "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (1 Corinthians 1:25) "[In Him] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:3) "[He] is made unto us wisdom." (1 Corinthians 1:30) "[His] strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9) "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." (1 Corinthians 3:18) "Happy is he that has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God: Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is." (Psalm 146:5-6)--Present Truth, November 3, 1898.

Chapter 66

A New Man

As the last and crowning act of creation, "God created man in His own image." (Genesis 1:27) The process is thus briefly described: "And the Lord God made man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7)

Man is therefore animated dust; but the life which animates him is the life of God. If men would but keep those two facts in mind, and not be ashamed to acknowledge them, they would be just what God wishes them to be; for when man had been made, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31)

The expression is the strongest that could be used. God himself could find no fault in man, and that means perfection.

When man forgot that he was but dust, and began to act as though he were God, he fell, and the image of God was shattered. It is in this condition that we all find ourselves in this world, as sons of the fallen Adam. God's purpose in Christ is to "restore all things," (Matthew 17:11) and therefore, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [or, "there is a new creation"]." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The work of Christ, in whom all things were created in the beginning, (Colossians 1:16) is to make man over again, in the image of God, so that, as in the beginning, God can look at him and say, "very good."

Only one thing stands in the way of this new creation, and that is man's unwillingness to believe that he is nothing but dust. The thought is too humiliating. Dust has no power in itself, and if man were to confess himself to be but dust, that would be an admission that of himself he can do nothing; and that he does not like.

The natural man is continually boasting of his own powers,--"power of intellect," "power of body," etc., forgetting that the higher degree he makes out for himself, the more of a lie he is, (Psalm 62:9) since "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity." (Psalm 39:5)

That this refusal to acknowledge himself to be but dust stands in the way of the new creation, appears from this, that since man deliberately chose his present condition, God leaves it to him to choose if he will accept the original condition again. And since man in the first instance was made in the image of God out of the dust, it follows that it is only as dust that he can become a new man again. Man has nothing more to do with his new creation than Adam had in the beginning; but every man can choose to be made new. God alone can do the work.

Although man is for the most part quite indifferent as to his condition, except as expressed by the commonly-declared desire to "better his own condition," God is not indifferent. His great desire is to see man as good as man was when the breath of the Almighty first gave him life and understanding, and no one knows so well as God that this change is impossible as long as man entertains the high notions of himself that he does. Therefore God's attention is directed towards causing man to see and realize that he is but dust, and that "life, and breath, and all things," (Acts 17:25) come from Him alone. This is shown in the prayer of Moses, which is in part as follows: "Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting You are God. You turn man to destruction, and say, Return, you children of men. For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." (Psalm 90:1-4)

Looking at the margin of the Revised Version, we find a better reading of the word rendered "destruction." It is "dust," or "crushing." The Jewish version, by Rabbi Leeser, gives the proper word, "contrition." "Contrite" means "ground together," as the chemist reduces a substance to powder in the mortar.

Another form of the same word that occurs in the 90th Psalm is found in: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." (Psalm 51:17)

That is, a heart, broken to pieces, and ground up to dust. It is true that man is only dust, no matter how high he exalts himself in his pride, so that the work of God in turning him to dust, or contrition, is to make him see his condition.

When we are by the Spirit of God made conscious of our sinfulness, pride at once departs. God has many ways of bringing men to this condition, none of them pleasing to the natural man; but we are at present concerned only with the fact that God brings us low for our good.

In ancient times, when men were more picturesque and vivid in their representation of things, they put dust on their heads, (Joshua 7:6; Job 2:12) or sat in the dust, (Isaiah 47:1; Lamentations 2:10) as an indication of their low state. That was a sign of repentance, for it showed that they recognized that they were nothing but dust. That is all that God wants. He does not desire to humiliate man, but only to get him to recognize the facts as they exist, in order that He may lift him up.

Nothing is too hard for the Lord. He does not despise a broken and a contrite heart, because out of it He can create a new heart. It suits His purpose much better than anything else could. What He did in the beginning He can do again. All that anyone needs in order to be saved, is to recognize that he is but dust, and then implicitly to believe the story of creation. Wonderful things God can do with dust, as the Bible narratives plainly show. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

To be in Christ plainly means to be of the same nature, and the first thing necessary to this is the acknowledgment, "I can of my own self do nothing." (John 5:30)

Christ, in whom we have redemption, "is the image of the invisible God." (Colossians 1:15)

Such a one is "created in righteousness and true holiness," (Ephesians 4:24) and day by day "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." (Colossians 3:10)

The first man was made faultless. God looked him over, and could not detect a single flaw. He was pronounced "very good." (Genesis 1:31)

Of Jesus Christ, in whom the new creation is effected, it is said, "in Him is no sin." (1 John 3:5) "There is no unrighteousness in Him." (John 7:18)

This is why the first man was made perfect, because "in Him were all things created." (Colossians 1:16,RV)

Therefore He is able to take us when we are but dust, and present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." (Jude:24)

Who will humble himself, that he may be thus exalted?--Present Truth, November 10, 1898.

Chapter 67

The Power of the Resurrection

The prophet Isaiah sang thus to God's people concerning the resurrection:

"Your dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust: for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (Isaiah 26:19)

The power by which this will be accomplished, is the power by which men are now made alive, who are "dead in trespasses and sins." (Ephesians 2:1)

Jesus set it forth in these words: "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 has life in himself; so has He given to the Sonto have life in himself; And has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." (John 5:25-28, Compare with Isaiah 55:3)

No one who believes in the resurrection of the dead, can have any doubt as to Christ's power to raise any man from the death of sin

to the life of righteousness; and no one can doubt His power to raise the dead, if he but reads the story of His life in the four Gospels.

Man is but dust, and unto dust he returns again. (Genesis 3:19) His breath is only in his nostrils, and therefore he is nothing to be accounted of, (Isaiah 2:33) for "His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." (Psalm 146:4)

But the same God who in the beginning made man of the dust of the ground, can of the dust bring him forth to life and glory; and that which makes us know this, is the new creation which takes place with everyone who is in Christ. Out of the dust of repentance God takes man, and makes him over entirely new, so that although he is still in mortal, sinful flesh, the perfect life of

Jesus is manifested in him. God turns man to dust, and says, "Return, you children of men." (Psalm 90:3)

All have gone astray like lost sheep, but God calls them back, and is very patient and long-suffering with them, waiting long for them to hear His voice, "Return!" But when they hear, their return is as certain as is the resurrection of the dead. God will say to His people who are in the graves, "Come!" and they will "come again from the land of the enemy." (Jeremiah 31:16)

So it really makes no difference whether we consider Psalm 90:3 as referring to conversion or the resurrection, for both are identical. Conversion is resurrection from the dead, and has in it the

assurance of the final resurrection at the coming of Christ. Christ says, "To him that overcomes will I give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." (Revelation 3:21)

So John, speaking of the resurrection, says: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." (Revelation 20:4)

These are they who have been raised from the dust of the grave. That will be a glorious time; but God has nothing for us in the future of which He does not now give us a taste; so "[He] has quickened us together with Christ (by grace you are saved;) And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ." (Ephesians 2:5-6) "You may know ... the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 1:18-20)

This power is that by which we are thus quickened now from our death in trespasses and sins. "He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." (1 Samuel 2:8)

What a blessed thing it is, then, to remember that we are dust, for God remembers it too, and He has not forgotten how to make a

man of the dust and crown him with glory and honor.--Present Truth, November 10, 1898.

Chapter 68

Everlasting Power

According to the Shastras, or religious code, of the Hindus, the sanctity of the Ganges is shortly to cease. They are not clear as to the precise date, but it will be somewhere about six months from the present time.

It is to be hoped that many who now worship the river, will be led to consider what kind of a god it can be whose power and sacredness depart with the lapse of time, and that the Gospel of a Saviour who, because He continues ever, is able to save unto the uttermost, (Hebrews 7:24-25) will gain new value in their eyes by contrast with their own decaying deities.

Why is it that men all over the world have come to worship "the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever?" (Romans 1:25)

The answer is given: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful." (Romans 1:31)

If thankfulness is involved in glorifying the Creator, it is evident that to know Him as God is to know Him as giving occasion for thankfulness. Nor is the thankfulness to be on a small scale, but on a divinely infinite one. Therefore to know Him as God is to know Him as blessing men to an infinite extent.

This must be true still of God, or men would now be justified in not glorifying Him as God; but all who do not "are without excuse." (Romans 1:20)

Therefore God is still giving infinitely to every man. If He were not, ingratitude would cease to be a sin. "That which may be known of God is manifest in them." (Romans 1:19)

The creation reveals eternal power and divinity. These may be clearly seen. Take the Ganges for instance. Why does it flow on and on for centuries, carrying down to the ocean a vast volume of water without cessation? Why does the sun pour out unreservedly every moment the fullness of its light and heat, yet have as much today as it had ages ago? These things reveal the everlasting power of God. Men who think more of the creature than the Creator predict a distant time when the sun will have parted with all its light, because they do not recognize in the working of all nature the everlasting power of God.

It is this power which keeps the heathen alive, and which keeps up the uninterrupted flow of the Ganges. But does not God know that His precious gifts will be perverted, that the Ganges will get the honor due to himself, and that the men whom He has made will pervert His life, and change the truth of God into a lie? Yes, He knows it perfectly, and it grieves Him at His heart, as did the wickedness of the world before the flood. Yet the current of blessing given in His life flows with unabated volume, because not only is

His power everlasting, (1 Timothy 6:16) but His mercy also endures forever. (1 Chronicles 16:34)

In God's hand is the soul of every living thing. (Job 12:10) No one can go anywhere in the universe out of the presence of God. No matter where he may be "even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:10)

So God is trying to lead the heathen. They will not be guided by Him, but He does not therefore give them up. "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." (Hebrews 12:3)

Because He loves them with an everlasting love, He draws them everlastingly to himself with loving-kindness. "The Lord has appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn you." (Jeremiah 31:3)

The more determinedly a man resists this love, the more wonderful it is seen to be. Truly it is love that "hopes all things, endures all things;" (1 Corinthians 13:7) and thus, even where God is rejected by men, they cannot hinder that which may be known of God being manifested in them. The more they do despite to the Spirit of grace, the more they bring out its wonderful long-suffering, its patient, Godlike endurance. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Romans 5:20)

Every man who does not recognize that he receives his life and breath and all things direct from God, and that God's hand is leading and upholding him every moment, is in the same condition as the Hindu worshipers of the Ganges. Indeed he is worse, for to the extent that he has more light than they, his ingratitude is the baser. He is serving the creature rather than the Creator.

What is the way out of this deplorable condition? Be thankful. Glorify Him as God. We may not see very much to be thankful for at first, but if we give thanks for that, "the righteousness of God [will be] revealed from faith to faith," (Romans 1:17) and the occasion for gratitude will be seen to greatly increase. We will not then glorify ourselves as God, but Him, and know that He has all things, while we in ourselves have nothing.

In this humility lies the only hope of our exaltation. While we glorify ourselves we will trust in self for everything, and having no power in ourselves will never make any advancement. When we know ourselves helpless, and know that God has all power, we will look to Him for help, and He will not leave us helpless. "He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." (1 Samuel 2:8)

God's princes dwell in His palaces, and in those palaces God is known. "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." (Psalm 48:3)

He is known as what He is, a refuge. So knowing Him as God, and glorifying Him as God, His people find infinite occasion for thankfulness. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God." (Psalm 48:1)--Present Truth, November 24, 1898.

Chapter 69

Trust in Man or God?

"Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isaiah 2:22) "Thus says the Lord: Cursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the Lord." (Jeremiah 17:5)

Why this curse? Is it an arbitrary punishment from the Lord, pronounced upon the one who trusts in man? Not at all; it is simply a statement of fact. The man who trusts in man, whether it be himself or some other man, is under a curse, because he is putting his trust in that which cannot deliver. How little is man "to be accounted of"? The Lord tells us: "[He has] weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." (Isaiah 40:12)

But all the nations of men who dwell on the earth "are counted as the small dust of the balance." (Isaiah 40:15)

That is, the dust that goes to make all nations of men is so small an amount in comparison with all the dust even of this earth alone, that it makes no appreciable difference in the balance. If all the men were off, the weight of the earth would not be sensibly lightened, so that in weighing the mountains and hills the men upon them are not taken into account.

So much for man in comparison with the earth alone. But look up now to the heavens, and see the shining suns that light up an infinite number of worlds, the number of which is known only to the infinite God. When we consider these wondrous works of God's fingers, then we must exclaim with the Psalmist: "What is man, that You are mindful of him? and the son of man that You visit him?" (Psalm 8:4)

Plainly, then, to trust in man for help, is to trust in nothing. Help would utterly fail, if it were not for the fact that the God who made the heavens and the earth, upholds all things by the Word of His power. Think how easily He can do it. "He takes up the isles as a very little thing." (Isaiah 40:15)

Then the burden of all mankind is as nothing to Him. To carry all men in His arms makes no additional tax upon His strength. Yet, insignificant a part of creation as man is, he is not despised, nor forgotten, nor neglected of the Lord. "All nations are before Him as nothing" (Isaiah 40:17) in comparison with the great universe, yet He knows the number of hairs upon the head of every single individual. "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matthew 10:30)

So we have at once evidence of God's thoughtfulness for us, and of His ability to carry into effect the thoughts of peace which He thinks toward us. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says Jehovah, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope in your latter end." (Jeremiah 29:11,RV)

The only thing that burdens the Lord is sin. The weight of all nations is nothing to Him, but sin makes Him weary. "you have made me to serve with your sins, you have wearied me with your iniquities." (Isaiah 43:24)

This, however, is no reason why any sinner should hesitate to come to Him. Quite the contrary; for whether we trust Him or not, He has us all, and the burden of all our sins, upon Him. The Lord "bears the sin of the world." (John 1:29,RV,margin)

Then since sin is a burden to Him, and He has all our sins upon Him, (1 Peter 2:24) the thing that we should haste to do is to let Him take the sins away from us, so that He may be relieved of that burden. He can easily bury the sins in the depths of the sea; (Micah 7:19) but He does not wish to cast men there also; therefore He asks us to let Him separate the sin from us, in order that, in casting off that burden, He may not be obliged to fling us off with it.

What marvelous long-suffering and compassion God exhibits for man! For our sake He endures the heavy load of sin which we compel Him to carry. He is compelled to carry it, simply because His love for us will not allow Him to throw us aside. If we would but yield to Him, He would remove the sin from us, and from himself also, and then it would be unalloyed joy for Him to continue to carry us.

And this removal of the sin would be our salvation, for sin is death. (Genesis 2:17; 1 Corinthians 15:56) With what confidence can we trust the Lord to save us from sin, when we know that He wishes to do it in order to relieve himself of the one thing that burdens Him. "Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." (Jeremiah 17:7)--Present Truth, November 24, 1898.

Chapter 70

Imagination Against Knowledge

"Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom." (Jeremiah 9:23)

Why not? Because "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." (1 Corinthians 3:20)

The result of men's boasting of their own wisdom, and trusting to it, is set forth in: "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and to creeping things." (Romans 1:21-23)

The verb from which the noun rendered "imaginations" is derived, is the one that is translated "to reason," so that the word, as suggested in the margin of 2 Corinthians 10:5, might well be rendered "reasonings," instead of "imaginations." That is to say, the so-called reasonings of men who leave God out of the account, are only vain imaginations.

How true this is may be clearly seen from a few short extracts from one of the latest and really most scientific works on the subject

of botany. It is a work which confines itself largely to statements of actually observed facts, without venturing much in the way of theory, and therein it is truly scientific. What we quote is from the introduction.

Ever Seeking, Never Finding

Even though the ultimate sources of vital phenomena remain unrevealed, the desire to represent all processes as effects, and to demonstrate the causes of such effects--a desire which is at the very root of modern research--finds at least partial gratification in tracing a phenomenon back to its approximate cause.

In the mere act of linking ascertained facts together, and in the creation of ideas involving interdependence among the phenomena observed, there lies an irresistible charm which is a continual stimulus to fresh investigation. Even though we be sure that we shall never be able to fathom the truth completely, we shall still go on seeking to approach it.

The more imaginative an investigator, the more keenly is he goaded to discovery by this craving for an explanation of things, and for a solution of the mute riddle which is presented to us by the forms of plants. It is impossible to overrate the value and efficiency of the transcendent gift of imagination when applied to questions of Natural History.

The Bible student will, on reading this, at once involuntarily think of men who are `"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," (2 Timothy 3:7) which was the case with those described in Romans 1:21-23; but we will pass on to note the author's own statement as to the real value of this "transcendent gift of imagination."

Conjecture Upon Conjecture

After mentioning certain objects of research, he says: "In all these and similar investigations imagination plays a predominant part. Experiment itself is really a result of the exercise of that faculty. Every experiment is a question addressed to nature. But each interrogation must be preceded by a conjecture as to the probable state of the case; and the object of the experiment is to decide which of the preliminary hypotheses is the right one, or at least which of them approaches nearest to the true solution."

The History of Theories

Everyone of our theories has its history. In the first place a few puzzling facts are observed, and gradually others come to be associated with them. A general survey of the phenomena in question suggests the existence of a definite uniformity underlying them; and attempts are made to grasp the nature of such uniformity and to define it in words.

Whilst the question thus raised is in suspense, botanists strive with more or less success to answer it, until a master mind appears. He collates the observed facts, gathers from them the law of their harmony, generalizes it, and announces the solution of the enigma.

But observations continue to multiply; scientific instruments become more delicate, and some of the newly-observed facts will not adapt themselves to the scheme of the earlier generalization. At first they are held to be exceptions to the rule. By degrees, however, these exceptions accumulate; the law has lost its universality and must undergo expansion, or else it has become quite obsolete, and must be replaced by another.

So it has been in all past times, and so it will be in the future. Only a narrow mind is capable of claiming infallibility and permanence for the ideas which the present age lays down as laws of nature.

Master or Tinker

To be always traveling towards a place and never getting there is highly unsatisfactory; but to have no hope of ever getting there is most discouraging. From the foregoing it would seem that many great thinkers are at the best only tinkers. An architect who built houses that would fall down almost as soon as he had finished them, would hardly be called a master builder; so a mind that frames a law that is not even expected to be permanent cannot be called a master mind.

There is only one master mind in the universe, and that is the mind of God. Imagining is not thinking. So-called ideas which are the product of imagination, are not ideas at all; they are only shadows. Only God can create ideas. When men are willing to acknowledge this, then they will think to some purpose, for their thoughts will be God's thoughts.

"The counsel of the Lord stands for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations." (Psalm 33:11)

Truth Not Uncertainty

Jesus said: "If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32)

He himself is the truth, because He is the fullness of the God of truth. (Colossians 1:19; 2:9) It is possible for men to know the truth. (John 8:32) The Holy Spirit is given in order "that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Corinthians 2:12)

Is it not a most humiliating confession, to be obliged to say that the work of even a "master mind" in science must necessarily in a few years, or even months, be thrown aside, that no one can be sure that any theory he advances is the truth? Can there be any more humiliating confession than the acknowledgment that one has no hope of reaching the object which he is seeking? and to be obliged

to say that the foundation which he has laid for his followers to build upon is not a foundation, but only a weak, floating raft that will soon go to pieces? Is not that in reality a confession that one knows nothing?

How much better, then, to make that confession to God, and at the same time to confess Him, and to accept His thought, that we may be sure of our ground. He has laid in Zion a tried stone, a sure foundation, and whoever believes shall not be confounded. (1 Peter 2:6; Isaiah 28:16)

When each experiment is preceded by conjecture, then it is evident that one has only conjecture by which to test his work. True it is stated that: "The object of the experiment is to decide which of the preliminary hypotheses is the right one, or at least which of them approaches nearest to the true solution."

But when one starts out without knowing where he is going, how can he possibly tell when he gets there? To make a lot of preliminary guesses (for an hypothesis is only a guess), and then to guess which of the guesses is the correct one, is labor spent to no profit. One can never arrive at any definite conclusion that way, and that is what is admitted.

Truth a Matter of Primary Revelation

But the truth may be known, and the lesson to be learned from this study is that we must know the truth to begin with. Truth is

revealed by God in His Word. No man can by searching can find out God, (Job 11:7) and He alone is the truth. God must reveal himself to us, and then we know the truth; and this He has done even to babes. (Psalm 8:2)

The truth is most wonderfully simple. A little child can grasp it, because it has only to be believed to be known. When one knows the truth, then study may be carried on to eternity, and with positive certainty at every step. For we are to grow in the knowledge of the truth.

We are not to be studying all our lives to find out what the truth is, but we are to begin with the truth, and to spend all time and eternity as well in exploring it. The knowledge of the truth must precede all observation of phenomena or gathering of facts, if our work is to be to any real profit. Then every fact that is observed can at once be referred to its proper place in the building of God's truth.

Imagination is Idolatry

Imagination is not a gift of God. It is the perversion of God's gift. It is the result of refusing to let God himself direct the faculties which He has given us, and trying to direct them ourselves. One has no right to imagine anything. Imagination is but an ignis fatuus--Ignis fatuus: something deceptive or deluding. that leads men into a fog.

The 1st chapter of Romans tells what it does for men. They had the knowledge of God, that is, of the truth, for God had showed it unto them. But they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. They did not like to admit that they were not wise in themselves. So they proceeded to find out the truth by their own "reason."

But God is the only source of reason, and "reasoning" without Him is only vain imagination. They saw wisdom and power displayed in the things that are made, and which are growing. But they would not acknowledge that it was God's power and wisdom that were manifested there, for in that case they would have been obliged to acknowledge that it was only by His power and wisdom that they themselves lived and acted and thought.

This they would not do, for they professed themselves to be wise; they put themselves in the place of God. Then there was nothing left for them but to say that the things that were made were God, thus changing the truth of God into a lie. Instead of seeing God in everything, they imagined that everything was God, because they rejected the truth to begin with.

The truth is that God's power and Divinity are to be seen working in everything that is made; the lie is to say that the power and wisdom originate in the things that are made whether it be men or the grass of the field. When men substituted their own imaginations for pure reason, it naturally followed that they gave those imaginations visible form, and so image worship was the result.

Imagination is simply the forming of an image in one's own mind. The image that is formed is only the imagination of the heart made visible. To make images is idolatry, whether they be formed by the hands, or only retained in the heart. The work of the Gospel is to cast down imaginations: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5)

Imagination has no place in God's work. He deals in facts, not in fancies. The Gospel is a fact. There is no speculation about it. We have only to believe what is real, that which has been done and finished.

Think what heights of knowledge we all might have attained to, even in our short lives, and with our meager advantages, if we had never learned anything but the truth. We might not have been able to make much of a display, but we would have had something of solid value. One bag full of wheat is worth more than a thousand bags full of air.

That which made Jesus of Nazareth superior to all the men of His day was the fact that He held himself rigidly to the truth. Thank God that even though we have turned everyone to his own way, and have filled ourselves with winds of teaching, it is never too late to learn the truth. If we come to Jesus in humility, He will transform us

by the renewing of our minds, (Romans 12:2) even giving us His own perfect mind. 2(1 Corinthians 2:16)

Jesus Christ the Source of Wisdom

Jesus Christ is "the wisdom of God," (1 Corinthians 1:24) and He is "of God made unto us wisdom as well as righteousness." (1 Corinthians 1:30)

God's Word is the only source of wisdom: "For the Lord gives wisdom; out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs 2:6)

Now since imagination is the deadly foe of the truth and of wisdom, it is evident that in dealing with the Scriptures, above all things, every trace of imagination should be rigidly excluded. Nothing of self must be allowed any place. We must hold ourselves as nothing, not bringing to the study of the Word any preconceived ideas, or rather, what men are pleased to call ideas. We must be silent before the Lord, believing that every word of God is absolute truth, and allowing Him to fill us. Then there will be no mistakes. Then there will be no danger that we shall fall into error.

All who do this will see the truth, and will be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10)

Only in this course is there safety. In thus humbly submitting to be taught of God, not presuming to originate a single thought for ourselves, there are possibilities of almost infinite wisdom for the poorest and humblest souls. They who acknowledge God as the One who is all in all, have access to "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:3) "Let no man deceive himself: if any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." (1 Corinthians 3:18)--Present Truth, October 20, 1898.

Chapter 71

Eating Life or Death

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

These words teach us that righteousness may be obtained by eating and drinking; that we are to eat it and drink it. For when one is hungry and thirsty, and then is filled, it is only because he has eaten and drank that for which he hungered and thirsted.

Plain Language

There is not nearly so much figurative language in the Bible as most people suppose. Someone reads a text that is beyond his experience, and because it seems impossible to him he says, "O that is figurative language."

Of what it may he figurative he cannot tell, but it eases his mind to think that it does not mean exactly what it says; for if it does not mean what it says, and he does not know what else it means, it is evident that he is freed from any obligation in the matter. This is the way the Word of God is made of none effect.

We shall get along much better if we settle it in our minds that God knows His own mind; that He knows exactly what He wishes to say, and just how to say what He means; and that when He says a

thing He means it. Surely we cannot go wrong when we take the Lord at His word.

Suppose it should happen on some occasion that He did not mean just what He said, and we should take His words as though He did mean them as He said them, do you not see that He could not condemn us for believing what He himself said? "He that believes is not condemned." (John 3:18)

If a father jokingly tells his child something, and the child confidingly takes the father at his word, and mischief follows, it is clear that it is the father that is to blame, and not the child. It is an honor to the father, that the child didn't think he could mean anything different from what he said; and a disgrace to him, that he abused the child's confidence. But God does not joke with His children. He says to us, "Let your Yea be yea, and your Nay, nay." (James 5:12)

And He does not ask anything of us that He is not himself. Therefore we may believe that "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. So when we read," (Proverbs 30:5) "O taste, and see that the Lord is good," (Psalm 34:8) we may believe that His flesh is true meat, and His blood is true drink. (John 6:55) When we read that the children of Israel in the desert ate spiritual meat, even Christ himself, we are to believe the fact. In believing the statement we shall find knowledge of the utmost value. We do not believe the words of the Lord because we understand them, but we believe them in order to get understanding.

"For the Lord gives wisdom; out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs 2:6)

Eating the Body of Christ

The Lord said to the children of Israel, "I will rain bread from heaven for you." (Exodus 16:4)

And Jesus said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." (John 6:41)

What else can we believe, therefore, but that it was the body of Christ that they ate? We may doubt, and say, "How can this be?" just as the unbelieving Pharisees did; but we shall find that doubt means death. Someone may exclaim, "But Jesus himself shows us that He does not mean that we are actually to eat His flesh and drink His blood, because He says, 'The flesh profits nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.'"

You should read more carefully than that. It is true that Jesus used the words just quoted, and meant just what He said; but it is not true that He said that we were not really to eat His body and drink His blood. He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you." (John 6:53)

He would not immediately deny what He had said. We should see in these words of Christ, not a denial of His former words, but

an evidence that in His words we find His body and His blood. The words of the Lord are not merely empty sound, but they are real things. They are good food, and may be eaten. "Your words were found, and I did eat them; and your word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." (Jeremiah 15:16)

Read with great care the following verses: "And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments, or no. And He humbled you, and suffered you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you knew not, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord does man live." (Deuteronomy 8:2-3)

Too often the words, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God," (Matthew 4:4) are taken as though they meant that bread is in opposition to the Word of God. But the texts tell us that God gave the children of Israel bread in order that they might know that man lives only by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. That is to say, God would teach us that in the bread which He gives us, He gives us His Word.

Bread from Heaven

If we but think of the origin of bread, we shall see that this is so. Bread comes from corn, and corn is grass. "God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, ... and it was so." (Genesis 1:11)

There was nothing in the earth until God spoke, so that the grass came forth from His word. His word was the seed that was sown. Nothing grows but from the word of the Lord. The grain that the farmer sows contains the word of life, else it would never spring up. So when we eat the bread that is made from the grain, we are really and truly eating the word of the Lord.

But the word is life, and Christ is the life; so in the bread which God gives us, He gives us the life of Christ. It was therefore no figure of speech, but an actual truth that Christ uttered, when He said to His disciples as He handed them the bread, "This is my body." (Luke 22:19)

Think what would happen if men recognized every mouthful of food that they ate as being the very body of Christ. Would they not eat with reverence? They would constantly remember and acknowledge that their life comes from God, and that it is His life that they are using, and not their own. This would teach them that they are not their own. (1 Corinthians 6:19) Consequently they would be continually passive in His hands, for Him to live His own life in His own way.

But this would be righteousness, for His life is only righteousness. So by eating and drinking they would be filled with righteousness. We can have only one life at a time, and the life which God expects us to live is the Christian life. But we get our daily life only by eating the daily bread that God gives us. So we see that God expects that by the food which He gives us we are to receive strength to live the Christian life.

Of course it is understood that when we say that we are to live the Christian life, we mean that we are to let Him live it in us; for He alone is our life.

Satisfied with Good

But we are to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Our desires are to be only for that which is good. The Lord gives that which is good. He does not withhold any good thing from His children: "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Psalm 84:11)

From above He sends down every good gift and every perfect gift: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

He says, "Eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." (Isaiah 55:2)

Our natures are corrupt, and our appetites perverted, so that we desire things that are not good. This has been so ever since the fall.

"The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and that it was to be desired to make one wise." (Genesis 3:6)

But it was not so. The tree was not good for food. It brought death. We are therefore to learn that not what we may naturally desire, but what God gives us, is good.

This does not mean that our whole life is to be one continual longing after things that we like, but dare not take. No; the lesson that we should learn from our first parents as well as from the children of Israel is that "we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted." (1 Corinthians 10:6)

Thank the Lord, He satisfies our mouth with good things. He teaches us to desire the good, and to find delight in it. The way of life is not one of unsatisfied longing. The good Father "opens His hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing." (Psalm 145:16)

Receiving It Fresh from God

The sum of all this is that we are to hunger only for those things that convey to us the life of God in its freshness and fullness. We are

to train our appetites to desire only the things that God says are best for us.

There are plants in which the life of God has been so perverted through the curse that they are only death to those who eat. These we should not touch. There are plants, such as tea and coffee, which, while they do not, as ordinarily taken, cause immediate death, yet have no life-giving power. They excite, but do not strengthen. The only power they have is in the line of death.

It is evident that such things cannot be taken to the glory of God, for it is not to the glory of God that His children should be slaves to that which destroys. In taking these things, not to mention tobacco, which is wholly poisonous, and altogether filthy, one is not taking the pure life of the Lord. Consequently they are against the Christian life, for everything that is not of the Lord is against Him.

There are other things that are food, but not the best food. The flesh of animals is food, that is, it will give strength to the body, but it is not perfect food. At the best, it is one degree removed from the food as God prepares it for us. In eating the flesh of animals, we get our food second hand, to say nothing of the defilement from the evil dispositions and the diseases of the animals themselves.

But out of the ground the Lord God makes to grow food that has no taint of evil about it, and when He gives us the best things, it is, to say the least, very ungrateful to pass them by, and take that which is inferior. Not only is it ungrateful, but it shows disregard for His

life. It shows that we would rather gratify our desires than receive the fullness of His life.

Life Only by Faith

Therefore since God gives us food in order that we may have life, and the life which He wishes us to live is His own perfect life of righteousness, it is evident that if we eat only the food which He tells us is the best, and eat it in faith, as coming from Him, and bringing Him to us, we shall have that perfect life from day to day.

But we must remember that the best things taken without recognition of Him are not life, but death. The children of Israel ate food direct from heaven, and yet they died, because they did not eat in faith. So whoever does not discern the Lord's body in his eating and drinking eats and drinks damnation to himself, and not righteousness.

It is evident that no one can discern the Lord's body where it is not, so that it is impossible to eat and drink righteousness in that which is not food nor to get it perfectly in that which is not perfect food; but the mere eating of the best things is not sufficient; we must take them in humble and thankful recognition of God. When this is done, life and righteousness must follow as surely as the word of God is life. "He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (1 Corinthians 11:29)

This is true without any qualification. The Lord's Supper is the model meal, to show us that in eating and drinking pure food we are eating the Lord's body and drinking His blood. It is thus that we get His life. But if we do not take those things in which His life is clearly to be discerned, or do not recognize Him in the good things that we do eat, we eat and drink to no purpose. Our eating and drinking in such case is only to death.

A little thought must make this apparent to everybody. What will be the end of those who know not God? It will be destruction. (See 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, and Psalm 9:17) What does it profit a man to have lived threescore years, if at last he sinks into perdition? Would it not have been better for that man if he had not been born? To what end was all his eating and drinking? To nothing but destruction. If he had recognized the Lord in all his ways, he would have been eating and drinking to life, but since he does not recognize the Lord, he is taking only death, instead of life. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23)

Because of sin, disease and death are in the world. So sickness and death come from rejecting or ignoring the Lord, who is life.

Not a Trivial Matter

Is it not evident that the matter of proper eating and drinking is not a mere fad? It is not a matter of no consequence, for God has not spoken about things that are useless.

And let no one imagine that this means that we are to go into "Jewish bondage." Far from it. The bondage of the Jews did not consist in their obedience to the word of the Lord, but in their disobedience. The Lord would have us free from bondage; but when we do not have the life of His word, we have nothing but bondage. He would have us eat that which is good, and delight in fatness.

"Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfies not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." (Isaiah 55:2)

He would have us delivered from every evil thing that tends to enslave and destroy life. He would have us enjoy the absolutely perfect freedom of His own life. "O taste, and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 34:8)--Present Truth, November 24, 1898.

Chapter 72

Difference Between Food and Stimulants

In the previous article on eating righteousness, it is stated that tea and coffee are not foods, but stimulants, and are poisonous instead of helpful to the body. This will without doubt meet with a strong protest from many, who will say: "I positively know that tea is nourishing and strengthening. Why, I couldn't get through my morning's work without my tea. I must have a cup of tea before I can do anything in the morning, and then in the middle of the forenoon my strength is gone, and I am so faint that I should give out entirely if it were not for the tea; but directly I have had my tea I am fresh and strong for work again."

Exactly, and that statement is in itself the best of evidence that tea does not give strength, but rather deprives one of it. It simply satisfies a craving which it has created for itself, and not any natural desire of the body. In reality it does not satisfy anything, since the more one uses it, the more the desire for it increases.

The difference between food and stimulants may be briefly stated thus: Food supplies a real want of the system. The body is continually using up substances which must be replaced by food, or else the strength will be utterly lost. When this substance is replaced with food, the longing of the system is satisfied.

But the point to be specially noted is that any kind of good food will satisfy this desire. It is true that a hungry person may at a particular time have a preference for a certain kind of food, yet if that is not at hand, any other wholesome food will do as well. When the waste has been repaired, the system does not bother itself about what particular food it was that did the work.

But it is not so with the unnatural appetite that exists for a stimulant. Nothing but the stimulant will answer the demand. If it were a real desire for food, a piece of bread would fully satisfy the desire, but nothing but tea will do. That shows that the tea does not satisfy a legitimate desire of the body, but a fictitious desire which it has created for itself. It is the supply that has created the demand.

Suppose that there were a big strong ruffian who should make a regular practice of picking up a small boy and throwing him into the water, and then plunging in and pulling the lad out just as he was drowning; would you praise that fellow's bravery and humanity? Would you recommend him for a medal on account of his activity in saving life? Of course you would not. You would on the contrary report him to the police, that he might be punished for his brutality.

Now tea is just such a conscienceless ruffian as that. It throws its victim into the ditch, and then pulls him out, and the poor, deluded victim embraces it, and says, "Noble fellow! you have saved my life."

And the more the thing is done, the more the victim falls in love with his tormentor. The trouble is, he does not know that the one who lifts him up temporarily is the one who has pushed him down. Do you not think that we can get along better without such a "benefactor"?

A food is a servant, while stimulants are tyrants. Let the woman who now thinks herself wholly dependent on tea for strength, make a desperate struggle and free herself from its clutches, and it will not be long before she will find that when she depends solely on food she can dispatch her morning's work without that terrible feeling of faintness that she before experienced. Then she will see for herself that her tea was not a food, serving the needs of the body, but a tyrant stimulant, producing a feeling of weakness in order that it might get credit for seeming to undo its own mischief.

Tea and coffee are thieves and robbers, and lying ones at that.--Present Truth, November 24, 1898.

Chapter 73

The Living Word

"The Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12,RV)

The Word of God is not simply living, but it gives life. "My soul cleaves unto the dust; quicken me [make me alive] according to your Word; ... your Word has quickened me." (Psalm 119:25,50) "Hear, and your soul shall live." (Isaiah 55:3)

Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes on Him that sent me, has 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." (John 5:24-25)

God gives to us His Word, in order that we may live; if we but keep the Word, we shall keep the life, for it is "the Word of life." (1 John 1:1)

When man issues a commandment, the one to whom it is addressed is obliged to supply the force necessary to carry it into execution; but when God gives a commandment, the commandment

is itself the living force that will work effectually in those who receive it. "His commandment is life everlasting." (John 12:50)

This is why it is that if we would enter into life, we must keep the commandments. Only in keeping the commandments of God have we life, for they are life. We keep them by faith, and they supply the life and righteousness.

The story of creation is given to show us the reality of these things. There we see the word in action. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made. ... For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." (Psalm 33:6,9)

When He spoke, it was. The earth did not have to go about to make itself, when God spoke; but when He spoke, it existed. The darkness did not have to exert itself to produce light; but God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and it was so. The earth was without form, and void. God desired order, but He did not expect the earth to put itself in order. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light." (Genesis 1:2-3)

That same Word speaks to us. The Gospel is the power that creates, for "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." (2 Corinthians 5:17,RV,margin) "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2

Corinthians 4:6) The Word says to us, "Be filled with the Spirit." (Ephesians 5:18)

If we receive that Word, the Spirit will fill us, and will bring order out of the chaos of our minds and hearts.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. ... That was the true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world." (John 1:1,4,9)

Therefore the same Word which in the beginning caused the light to shine out of darkness, says to us: "Arise, shine; for your Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you." (Isaiah 60:1)

If we will hear that Word, we shall as surely be "light in the Lord," (Ephesians 5:8) as the light in the beginning shone when God said, "Let there be light. ... God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit; ... and it was so." (Genesis 1:3,11)

There was no struggle on the part of the earth to perform the commandment of the Lord; only the reception of the Word of life, which works effectually wherever it finds an opening for it. Now, "As the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

(Isaiah 61:11) "And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, which have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:1-3)

Now how did God suppose that we were to keep that commandment? Israel of old made the mistake of supposing that they themselves must furnish the power to do it, and they did not attain to the righteousness of the law. But God did not expect anything of the kind. Hear what He says, repeating almost the words that are in Exodus 20:1-3: "Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto you; O Israel, if you will hearken unto me, There shall no strange god be in you; neither shall you worship any strange god. I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." (Psalm 81:8-10)

There was to be no straining to manufacture power which they did not have, but a simple yielding to the self-acting Word. Let the people but hear, and continue to hear, the Word of the Lord, and He will take the responsibility upon himself of seeing that strange gods are kept from among them.

The first commandment includes all the ten. The tenth commandment, "You shall not covet," (Exodus 20:1) is only another precept against idolatry, for "covetousness is idolatry." (Colossians 3:5)

The law ends just where it begins, and is as a whole but an exhortation to love God. But, "Love is of God." (1 John 4:7) And ... He sheds His love abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit." (Romans 5:5)

So instead of expecting us to do what the flesh cannot possibly do, God simply asks us to submit to His love, to submit to His righteousness. "His commandments are not grievous," (1 John 5:3) but they are love. Thus we see that the commandments of God are in reality promises of what He will do for us, or rather, statements of what He has already laid up for us ready to our hand. His grace supplies all that His justice demands. He never asks anything of us that He has not first given to us. "How precious also are your thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them." (Psalm 139:17)

How precious is the thought that no matter what God requires us to be, no matter what He tells us to be or do, the very same Word that makes known to us the requirement, supplies the thing required.

Let us read all the commandments of God in the light of the 1st chapter of Genesis, and life will assume a new phase. Then the greater the commandment, the greater will be our thanksgiving for what the Lord has done for us; and even in the midst of the thunders of Sinai we can say, "Come and hear, all you that fear God, and I will declare what He has done for my soul." (Psalm 66:16)--Present Truth, December 1, 1898.

Chapter 74

Knowing God

The greatest good that any man can get in this world is the knowledge of God. This contains in itself all that can be desired, and much more.

The message of glad tidings that Christ brought for all people was simply the revelation of the Father. The world sat in darkness and in the shadow of death (Matthew 4:16; Isaiah 9:2) because it had forgotten what God was. Christ came to light up the darkness, and that which He brought to do it with was the life of God. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:4) "This is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God." (John 17:3)

Men shun this knowledge, fearing that it only gives them a sense of condemnation. Said Christ, "The world has not known You." (John 17:25)

If men would only look upon God as He has revealed himself in His Word and works, they would find it a revelation so wonderful in its nature and effect that in the very beholding they would become changed. "Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth." (Isaiah 45:32)

There is comfort in the knowledge of God. When He commits to His servants a word of comfort for the sinful and troubled, to tell

them that their warfare is accomplished, and their iniquity is pardoned, the glad tidings is given in the message, "Behold your God." (Isaiah 40:9)

The everlasting Gospel which prepares believers to meet the Lord in peace at His appearing bids men to "Fear God and give glory to Him." (Revelation 14:7)

God does not seek fictitious honor, and when He invites men to give glory to Him, it is that they may know the wonderful fullness of the reasons there are for doing so. This call is glad tidings, because the glory of the Lord is that:

• He saves, even to the uttermost;

• He endures the contradiction of sinners against himself;

• He meets all hatred and defiance with an unalterable love;

• And bears for man the curse that man has earned.

He does all this and desires man to give Him credit for it, by joyfully accepting the salvation which infinite love has created. "Give glory to Him," as One who gives His own glory to the unworthy.--Present Truth, October 13, 1898.

Chapter 75

Dwelling in the House of the Lord

That mortal men on this earth may in this present age not only enter the dwelling-place of the Lord, but may actually reside in the Lord's house, is a fact made very plain in the Scriptures. Let us read a few familiar texts. First, we have a blessing on those who dwell in the house of the Lord: "Blessed are they that dwell in your house; they will be still praising You." (Psalm 84:4)

They must praise the Lord, for He inhabits the praises of His people: "But You are holy, O You that inhabit the praises of Israel." (Psalm 22:3)

And, "In His temple everything says, Glory." (Psalm 29:9,RV)

Without wasting any time arguing with those who would deprive themselves of the blessings of the Lord by claiming that they are not real, we read: "How excellent is your loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of your wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of your house; and You shall make them drink of the river of your pleasures." (Psalm 36:7-8)

We are dealing with facts, not theories; therefore we have only to do with the fact that we may and should dwell now in the house of the Lord, and not with any explanation as to how it can be. With

the text last quoted, about resting under the shadow of God's wings, and being satisfied with the fatness of His house, connect the following: "He that dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings shall you trust; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flies by day; Nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness; nor for the destruction that wastes at noonday. A thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you behold, and see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the Lord which is my refuge, even the Most High your habitation; There shall no evil befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling." (Psalm 91:1-10)

Here we see that the safety of God's people during the awful time of trouble just preceding the coming of the Lord, (See Daniel 12:1; Luke 21:26-28) will be due to the fact that they have been and are then dwelling in the house of the Lord. (Psalm 23:6; Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever) The plagues that will be poured out upon the earth cannot touch them, because they will be dwelling safe in the place whence the plagues come.

It is as one who is safe from the shot that comes from a fort, because he is in the fort whence the fire comes. And yet these

people are at the same time on the earth, in the midst of the plagues, with the wicked falling all around them. See also in this connection: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies round about me; therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." (Psalm 27:4-6)

Now we may profitably consider how we may dwell in the house of the Lord, that is, what is necessary on our part. Assuming that every reader desires this privilege, many fail because they do not knew where the Lord lives. With Job they say, "O that I knew where I might find Him!" (Job 23:3)

Read then these few texts, and let them be for ever fastened in your memory: "Thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Isaiah 57:15) "Whither shall I go from your Spirit? or whither shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall your hand lead me, and your right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:7-10) "Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? says the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? says the Lord."

(Jeremiah 23:24) "Thus says the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that you build unto me; and where is the place of my rest?" (Isaiah 66:1)

God's house, then, is the whole universe. That is a fact, and yet there are myriads of people who do not dwell in God's house; they are in it as defilers of it, not recognizing the sacredness of the place where they are.

God dwells everywhere, and since His presence sanctifies, every place is holy. Now holiness becomes His house, and if everybody would but remember this, and recognize all space as God's dwelling place, all men would be holy. The temple sanctifies the gold, (Matthew 23:17) and the altar sanctifies the gift. (Matthew 23:19) Continually to recognize the presence of the Lord, is to make one a constant dweller in His house.

He who thus dwells in the house of the Lord, will behold the beauty of the Lord. He will discern the Lord's body, for he will be dwelling in God, and so he will live indeed. And God will dwell in him, for he will not partake of anything but the perfect life of the Lord.

Thus beholding the beauty and glory of the Lord, he will be changed into the same image, and overcoming the world, he will be made a pillar in the temple of God, to go no more out.

"Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." (Revelation 3:12)

So shall he dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.--Present Truth, December 15, 1898.

Chapter 76

Hidden Wonders

When Professor Huxley was visiting the Highlands of Scotland, one day as he wandered over the moors, he picked up a moss-cup, and began to examine it with his magnifying glass.

A Highland shepherd came near and watched him with interest and curiosity. Mr. Huxley asked the man if he would like to see the moss-cup through the glass. As he looked, his eyes opened wide with wonder; presently he said, "Can this be a moss-cup?"

When he was assured that it was, he asked that he might see it again, and then, handing back the glass and the moss-cup, he said, "O sir, I wish you had never shown it me."

"Why?" asked Mr. Huxley in surprise. "Because I do tread upon thousands of them every day of my life."

Now that his eyes were opened to see what had before been hidden from him in this common, familiar object, it had become such a mystery of wonder that the thought of trampling on it seemed almost like sacrilege.

And so it is with everyone of the works of God's hands. The more we think upon them, and seek them out, and examine them, the more we shall realize that He does indeed "fill heaven and

earth," (Jeremiah 23:24) and, "the whole earth is full of His glory." (Isaiah 6:3)--Present Truth, December 1, 1898.

Chapter 77

Well Dressed

The Saviour prayed for His disciples, "Father, I will that they also whom You have given me be with me where I am, that they may behold your glory." (John 17:24)

And the promise of God to His people is that they shall dwell in His courts, and He will give them places to walk among those that stand by His throne of glory. (Zechariah 3:7)

Those who go to the courts of earthly kings and queens, are very particular about their appearance. When they are "presented at court" they must wear a certain style of dress, every part of which is carefully looked over before they are allowed to pass into the presence of the sovereign.

But what have we in which to appear at the court of the King of kings? How can we stand without fear or shame among the shining angels who surround His throne, and be "presented faultless before the presence of His glory?" (Jude:24)

In the courts of earthly kings many things are very different from what they appear to be. Those who are the most richly and beautifully clothed in the eyes of those who see only the outward appearance, may really be full of wickedness and deceit.

But in the courts of the Lord, in the light of His countenance, everyone appears exactly what he really is. No one there can look beautiful outwardly, who is not "all glorious within." (Psalm 45:13)

The Lord tells us how we all look to Him, when He says that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Isaiah 64:6)

Not rags only,--that would be bad enough,--but filthy rags. But we are not to worry and mourn over this, saying, "Wherewithal shall we be, clothed?" (Matthew 6:31) because, "Our heavenly Father knows that we have need of these things." (Matthew 6:31)

Our Father will see that His children do not disgrace Him by going about in "filthy rags." He says, "I will clothe you with change of raiment." (Zechariah 3:4)

He will not be satisfied with anything but "the best robe" for His children. "But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him." (Luke 15:22)

But in order to change our raiment He must take away the old sinful nature, which is what clothes us in "filthy rags." And so He says, "I have caused your iniquity to pass from you." (Zechariah 3:4)

This He can only do by washing us in His own blood. Then think how much it has cost Him to clothe us with change of raiment! He puts in the place of our iniquity His own purity and beauty of character. He covers us with the "robe of righteousness," (Isaiah

61:10) by putting His own righteous life into us. This shines forth and clothes us like himself with glory and beauty.

A poor old Frenchwoman went one evening to a mission hall in Paris, and listened with great interest to an address on "the robe of righteousness." As she left the hall she said to one of the mission workers, "I believe that this is my last visit here. I am rapidly getting weaker." "I will come to see you," answered the gentleman, "but should God soon call you, have you any fear of appearing before Him?" "Oh no," replied the old Frenchwoman with a bright smile, "I am too well dressed for that--too well dressed to dread the Judgment."

The poor old woman was not trusting in her own righteousness, but in the beautiful garment of salvation which is the free gift of God to all who will receive it. "What are these that are arrayed in white robes? These are they which...have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God." (Revelation 7:13-15)

Jesus, your blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.
--Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Hymn: Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness, 1739, translated by John Wesley.

--Present Truth, June 23, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 1, "Why Was the Creation Story Written?"

Chapter 78

In the Beginning

"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job 38:4)

This question that the Lord asks will bring at once to your minds the first verse in the Bible, which tells us of the time when God did this great work. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

Let us put with this another text which will help us to answer the Lord's question. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning." (Acts 15:18)

We are His works, for "it is He that has made us, and not we ourselves." (Psalm 100:3)

So the Lord says to each one of us, "Before I formed you, I knew you." (Jeremiah 1:5)

How long before? "From the beginning" all His works are known to Him. Then do you not see that your beginning was not, as you have perhaps thought, the time when you came a tiny, helpless baby into this world? Long ages before this, God thought about you; you were in His mind. This is where you began, in the thought of God.

When, therefore, in the beginning, God spoke out the thoughts that were in His mind, when He laid the foundations of the earth and said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," (Genesis 1:26) you were there, in God's thought, and therefore in the word which expressed the thought. Every little child that ever has been or ever will be born into this world, was a part of the great plan of God which He had in mind when He made the world.

The Apostle John heard this song, which was being sung before the throne of God: "You have created all things, and for your pleasure they are, and were created." (Revelation 4:11)

But it is the living and powerful Word of God which He says "shall accomplish that which I please." (Isaiah 55:11)

So all God's work of creation is done by His Word, and all that He hid in His mind in the beginning will be worked out by the Word which He spoke in the beginning.

Read in the 139th Psalm, verses 14 to 18, what the Psalmist David says of the way in which he was thought upon and "fearfully and wonderfully made" by God. Then like him you will exclaim, "How precious also are your thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand." (Psalm 139:17-18)

Study the precious Word of God that you may find out more and more of His precious thoughts of you. Do not make any plans for yourself, but seek only to know what is the plan that He has had in mind for you "from the beginning."

Give yourself fully to Him that His powerful Word may work out in you just that which He pleases. Then will His will be done in you, and you will be made, as He said in the beginning, "in His image, after His likeness." (Genesis 1:26)

Is it not a sweet and wonderful thought that the great God, who created and upholds the heavens and the earth, thinks upon us? And not only so, but that as a loving Father He has been thinking of us and planning for us long before we appeared in this world. All the little things that come in our everyday life have been thought of and ordered by Him.

How precious and important this makes each day of life, and how earnestly we should seek to learn just what He wants to teach us every day, and do just what He would have us. Perhaps some of you know the little poem which begins:

I cannot do much, said a little star,
To make this dark world bright;
But I'll cheerfully do the best I can,
For I am a part of God's great plan.
--Mrs. M. E. Sangster, Poem: The Best That I Can.

--Present Truth, June 30, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 2, "The Beginning".

Chapter 79

Thoughts for the Seaside

"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place ... and it was so. ... and the gathering together of the waters He called seas." (Genesis 1:9-10) "He gathered the waters of the sea together as a heap; He laid up the depths in storehouses." (Psalm 33:7) "Who shut up the sea with doors when it broke forth. ... When I established my decree upon it, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shall you come, but no further, and here shall your proud waves be stayed?" (Job 38:8,10-11) "He gave to the sea His decree that the waters should not pass His commandment." (Proverbs 8:29) "[He has] placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it, and though the waters thereof toss themselves, yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it." (Jeremiah 5:22) "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that has life. ... And God created great whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly. ... And God blessed them and said, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas." (Genesis 1:20-22) "O Lord, how manifold are your works! in wisdom You have made them all, the earth is full of your riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great great beasts. There go the ships: there is that leviathan whom You have made to play therein. These wait all upon You, that You may give them their meat in due season. That which You give them they gather, You

open your hand, they are filled with good." (Psalm 104:24-28) "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in the great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For He commands and raises up the stormy wind, which lifts up the waves thereof. They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths. ... He makes the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." (Psalm 107:23-25,29) "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." (Psalm 93:4) "You rule the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, You still them." (Psalm 89:9)

As the holiday season is here again, many of you are looking joyfully forward to your yearly visit to the seaside. Here you will see "the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep." (Psalm 107:24)

No doubt the beach will be the most attractive place to you, where you will spend most of your time, digging in the sand and hunting for pretty shells and jelly fish and other such treasures with which to fill your little pails.

Perhaps you will notice what it is that makes the beach, that part of the shore that is washed by the sea. It is the tide, which you may see all day either "coming in," or "going out." The beach is the strip of land between high water and low water marks, so that when the tide is at its height the beach is quite covered with water.

In some places where the shore slopes very gently, there is a very wide beach, and at high tide boats can sail where a short time before you have been able to walk. But where the coast is very steep and formed by high cliffs, there is no beach, but the tide only causes the water to rise and fall.

The tide comes in regularly every twelve hours. It is six hours coming in and six hours going out, but if you stay some little time at the seaside you will notice that it does not come in at exactly the same time every day. Yet we can always find out beforehand when it will be "high tide" and "low tide."

This is because there is a close connection between the tide and the movements of the sun, moon, and earth. At the times of the new and full moon the tide rises higher than usual; this is called the "spring tide." The lowest tide, called the "neap tide," is at the second and fourth quarters of the moon.

This earth, which seems to us so large, is but a tiny portion of God's great universe. And God himself fills all the things that He has made.

"Through all created things thrills one pulse of life from the great heart of God."--Ellen G. White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 96.

There is one life in all things, the life of God, and this is why all move together in perfect harmony. He who "appointed the moon for

seasons," (Psalm 104:19) and makes the sun to know "his going down," (Psalm 104:19) has also given "to the waters His decree." (Proverbs 8:29)

It is the powerful word of God which does all His work. He says, "It shall accomplish that which I please." (Isaiah 55:11)

Jesus says that the Word is "Spirit and life." (John 6:63) By filling all things with God's life, His living Word works His will in all His works. So as you watch the constant movement of the waters, you can see the Word of God working, the "Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters," (Genesis 1:2) and keeping them in the place appointed by God, drawing them backwards and forwards according to His will. The waters of the ocean are full of life. In the beginning God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that has life." (Genesis 1:20)

This is why we find in the "great and wide sea ... things creeping innumerable." (Psalm 104:25)

At low tide, you will find on the beach different kinds of shell fish and other tiny living creatures which, by the going out of the tide; are left out of the water. Some of these could not live if they were kept out of the water or in the water all the time. But by the coming in and going out of the tide they are kept a part of the time in the water, and a part of the time out of the water. In this we see how that in all His great works, our Creator is working for the good of the tiniest of His creatures. "The Lord is good to all, and His

tender mercies are over all His works." (Psalm 145:9) "You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all." (Nehemiah 9:6)--Present Truth, July 7, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 3, "Power and Wisdom".

Chapter 80

Our Teacher

Adam, the son of God, was put by his Father into this earth, which was to be not only his home, but also the school in which he was to be educated for the service of God. But he had no books from which to study like those we use in our schools today.

Yet he had a wonderful library written for him and for his family by God himself. All that men need to learn is to know God, and all that can be known of God is clearly seen in the things that He has made. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." (Romans 1:19-20)

So God did not give them a lot of books to teach them about His works, but He wanted them to study the works themselves, that they might teach them to know God. On everything that men could see, in every living thing that He had put into the earth, some message from God was written.

The Spirit of God was teaching them in each thing some precious lesson of God's power. Man could not of himself read what God had written, but the same Spirit which dwelt in all God's works filled him also, to teach him just what these lessons were. The work

of this great Teacher was to teach men to read what God had written for them in all His works.

The patriarch Job, who lived very early in the history of this world, said, "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto you. Who knows not in all these that the hand of the Lord has wrought this?" (Job 12:7-9)

But by degrees, as through sin men departed from God, they lost the Spirit of God out of their hearts, and soon forgot how to read what God was saying to them in all creation. They did not know Jesus Christ, who, we are told in the book of Revelation, is "the Alpha and Omega," (Revelation 1:8) that means the alphabet of God. You know that the first thing in learning to read is to know the alphabet, the A B C. So the Holy Spirit, whom God has appointed for man's Teacher, moved upon men who had not departed from God and forgotten Him, to write the Holy Scriptures. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," (2 Peter 1:21) to bring men again to the knowledge of Jesus, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," (Colossians 2:3) so that they might again be able to see God in His works, and read His lessons there.

Many try to read God's book of Nature before they have learned the alphabet, Jesus Christ; but this is as foolish and useless as for a child to try to read before he knows the A B C. All that he could do

would be to guess at the meaning of what he saw. So God says of those who did this that they "became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Romans 1:21-22)

But when we take the Word of God for our guide in all our study of "The wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge," (Job 37:16) the Holy Spirit will unfold to us the precious lessons that the Creator is teaching us in everything that He has made. This will make us truly "wise unto salvation." (2 Timothy 3:15)

When Jesus, the great Creator of all things, himself became a little human child, He took the Word of God for His text book, and with the Holy Spirit for His Teacher, He carefully studied the lessons that He himself had written in all the earth for the children of men. And you will remember that when He was only twelve years old, the great teachers of Israel, "And all that heard Him, were astonished at His understanding." (Luke 2:47)

When He became a man, and taught the people that which He had learned of God in this way, they said, "Whence has this man this wisdom?" (Matthew 13:54)

"Every child may gain knowledge as Jesus did, from the works of Nature, and the pages of God's Holy Word."--Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, March 14, 1900.

He has given His Holy Spirit to abide with us and teach us "all things." (John 16:15)

He says: "Call upon me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things which you know not." (Jeremiah 33:3)

Then let each little child take Him at His word, and like Jesus learn early to talk with God. Ask Him to make you pure in heart, so that you may see God, and to open your ears that they may be. ...

Alive and quick to hear
Each whisper of His Word.
--James Drummond Burns, Poem: The Child Samuel.

Then as you learn more and more to know His voice and behold His glory, like Jesus you will be able to "speak the things that you have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20) and so bring light and salvation to others by bringing them also to the knowledge of God.--Present Truth, July 14, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 4, "Power and Mercy".

Chapter 81

The Spirit of Life

"Remember your Creator in the days of your youth." (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

We have been thinking lately a great deal of the Creator of the heavens and the earth, "the sea and all that in them is," (Exodus 20:11) but most important of all is it to remember that "It is He that has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people." (Psalm 100:3)

Let us find out first of all just what He made us for. "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)

You will remember that when God made Adam, when the temple of his body was complete, "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." (Genesis 2:7)

That which God breathed into him to give him life, was the air, which man has gone on breathing ever since. So this is the lifegiving Spirit of God.

Each little newborn baby when it comes into the world, is a temple or house, formed by God for himself to dwell in. Then God breathes the air into its nostrils, the breath which gives it life. The

Spirit of God which fills all the things that He has made, rushes in and takes possession of the new house, and the child becomes a temple of God with the Spirit of God dwelling in him.

Did you think your body was a house for you to live in? Oh, no; God made you from the dust of the ground, to be a house for Him to live in. That was what He reminded Adam when Satan tempted him to think that the forbidden tree would make him so wise that he could do without God living in him: "Dust you are, and unto dust shall you return." (Genesis 3:19)

When the breath, which is the Spirit of God, is taken away, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was." (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

Now you will see that we have no life ourselves, but "we live, and move, and have our being," (Acts 17:28) because He who is "the Life" (John 14:6; Deuteronomy 30:20) dwells within us. When Jesus lived on earth, a temple for the Spirit of God, He said, "I can of my own self do nothing." (John 5:30)

"What? Can we really do nothing of ourselves?" you ask. "Can we not see, and hear, and speak, and move, and think, of ourselves?"

Just think for a moment what it is that does all these things. Is it your eyes that see, your ears that hear, and your brain that thinks? If so, why cannot one think and see and hear after the breath has left the body, and he is dead, so long as he has eyes and ears and brain? Adam had a perfect body when he was first formed, but not until

God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life could he think or speak or see or hear.

Then what is it really that does all these things? It is the Spirit of God, which is our life, and truly we can of our own selves do nothing. It is by the power of His life in us that we see and hear, and by the same power that we speak and think and move. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ... And there are differences of workings, but the same God which works all in all." (1 Corinthians 12:4,6)

All the members of our bodies are formed for the use of the Spirit of God, as a means by which He may enter into us and use us. Through our nostrils and our lungs He breathes His life into us, and all our senses are a way for God to give himself to us.

He comes in at our eyes in all the beautiful things that we see around us, that reflect His beauty to us. In all sweet sounds, in the songs of the birds, the music of the sea, the mighty peal of the thunder, and in His Holy Word, He enters at our ears into His own temple.

And then, if we will let Him, He uses our tongues, our hands, our feet, and all our members to do His holy will, and through us gives himself to others.

Take my life, let it be
Consecrated Lord to Thee.

Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.
Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only for my King.

Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, All for Thee.
--Frances Ridley Havergal, Hymn: Take My Life and Let It Be, 1874.

--Present Truth, July 21, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 5, "The Spirit's Work".

Chapter 82

The Breath of Life

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." (Genesis 2:7)

Why was it that God formed man from the dust? It was that he might be "the temple of God, [with] the Spirit of God dwelling in him." (1 Corinthians 3:16)

When one has the privilege of making his own house, he thinks and plans carefully to have everything as perfect and convenient as possible for his own use. He is careful about the doors and windows, and all the entrances to the house, and every room is made just suitable for the use for which he wants it.

And so in making man for His own dwelling place, God formed him just what He needed for this purpose. Every part of his body was planned for the special use of the Spirit of God, to do the work that He wanted to do in and through him. Think of this often, and "Yield ... your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." (Romans 6:13)

Remember that:

I am His house, for Him to go in and out;
He builds me now, and if I cannot see

At any time what He is doing with me
'Tis He that makes the house, for me too grand.

The house is not for me, it is for Him;
His royal thoughts require many a stair,
Many a tower, many an outlook fair,
Of which I have no thought, and need no care.
--George MacDonald, The Diary of an Old Soul: July, 1880.

Now think again how God enters into the temple of the human body; for what He did for the first man, He has done for every child of Adam who has since come into the world,--first formed him from the dust of the ground, and then "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." (Genesis 2:7)

We learned last week that all the organs of our body are useless, until the breath of God, the Holy Spirit, takes possession of it and fills it. So we will think of this a little while, before we talk any more of those wonderful powers that the Spirit brings to the body in which He dwells. Jesus said, "I am ... the Life," (John 14:6) and, "With Him is the fountain of life." (Psalm 36:9)

Not a fountain, but the fountain; the only fountain of life is Jesus. All the life that there is in God's great universe comes from God through Jesus Christ. Then when the breath of life is breathed into us, it is the spirit of Jesus, who is "the Life." Every moment of our lives we are receiving, in the breath that keeps our bodies alive, life from the fountain of life.

Sit still a little while and think of this, as you draw in the lifegiving breath,--that the great God, your Creator and Father, is still breathing into your nostrils the breath of life, and that if He should stop doing this for a single moment you would die, for remember that you have no life of your own.

While you are at your work and play, and not thinking of Him at all, and when you are asleep, and have forgotten all about breathing, He is thinking of you every moment, and gently breathing His life into you.

The life that comes into our lungs in the air, is taken up by the blood as it passes through the tiny blood vessels that cover the lungs, and then the life of God is carried by the blood to every part of our bodies.

You know that what makes the difference between a living and a dead body, is that the dead body does not breathe. God's life no more enters into it, and what very soon takes place? Just what God said, "Unto dust shall you return." (Genesis 3:19)

Strange and wonderful as it may seem to us that these bodies of ours are really formed from the little particles of the dust of the ground, just like that over which we walk every day, this is very clearly seen when the breath of life is taken from them; for they soon fall to pieces, and drop back into the dust out of which they were taken.

What is it then that holds our bodies together in their beautiful and wonderful form? Perhaps you will answer, "the breath of life," but remember that the breath is God's Spirit, and the life is Jesus. So it is the Spirit of Jesus that knits together all the tiny particles of matter that form our bodies, and holds them in their shape, and fills them with His life. And this is just what the Word of God tells us: "In Him all things hold together." (Colossians 1:17)

His Spirit holds together not only our bodies, but all the dust of the ground, and so makes the solid earth for us to live upon, and keeps it also in its shape. And not only in its shape, but in its place, for "[He] hangs the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7)

And what He does in this world, He is doing in all the worlds that He has made, "upholding all things by the Word of His power," (Hebrews 1:3) "The Word [that] was made flesh and dwelt among us," (John 1:14) "Christ, the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:24)--Present Truth, July 28, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 6, "The Power That Draws".

Chapter 83

Light and Sight

"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." (Ecclesiastes 11:7)

Without the sweet sunlight there would be nothing lovely and pleasant in the earth for our eyes to behold; for the light is not only beautiful itself, but it makes beautiful everything that it shines upon. You will remember that Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world." (John 8:12)

The way that He lights this world is through the sun. We cannot look upon the glory of the face of God and live, but in the glorious sun, He sheds upon the earth just as much of the light of His countenance as we can bear. Is it not indeed "sweet" to know that we are walking in the light of His face for, "in His presence is fullness of joy." (Psalm 16:11)

All the beauty and color of the earth is the reflection of the rays of the sun, which is the light shining from the face of God; and so, "The beauty of all created things is but a gleam from the shining of His glory."--Ellen G. White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 96.

But what would all this glory and beauty be to us if God had not given us "eyes to behold" it, and by His Spirit of life within us given

us the power to see? He has made our bodies for His own temple, and our eyes are one way by which His Spirit enters into us. We see Him reflected as in a mirror in all the things that He has made, so that we may learn to know and love and worship Him, and let His Holy Spirit rule our hearts and lives.

But Satan, who wants to put himself in the place of God, is all the time trying to get into our bodies, and make them his temple, instead of the holy temple of God, which He made them to be. So all the ways that God has made for His Spirit to come into our hearts, Satan is trying to use to get himself in instead.

Think how it was that Satan first got into the heart of man. It was through the eyes; for Eve kept looking at the fruit that God had told her not to touch, for if she did she would die. She kept on looking until she "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise." (Genesis 3:6)

This was because Satan, the father of lies, was getting into her eyes, and she did not let the Spirit of God keep him out. When the lying spirit of Satan got into her eyes, it made her see all things wrong; and through this entrance, Satan got right into her heart and made her do the very thing that God had told her not to do.

Oh, will you not give your eyes to God, that the Spirit of Truth may use them, to teach you only what is pure and true and good? Ask Jesus to open your eyes, so that you may "clearly see" Him in

all His works, and to keep and guard them by His Holy Spirit, that no evil thing may find an entrance there.

Let the glory of God that shines upon you in the sunlight stream through your eyes right into your hearts, and make you "all-glorious within." (Psalm 45:13)

And think, if the light, which is but a faint reflection of His glory, is so "sweet" and "pleasant" for our "eyes to behold," what must be the glory and beauty of the face of Him whose smile we see in the glad sunshine.--Present Truth, August 4, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 7, "The Light".

Chapter 84

Light Pictures

"We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

What is this "glass" in which we may "behold the glory of the Lord"? He himself tells us that it is "the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

All the glory of God is reflected in the face of Jesus, and there we may see His perfect image. We have been learning that Jesus is "the Light of the world," (John 8:12) and we may see His glory everywhere, for the whole earth is full of it. It shines forth in the light of the sun, and is reflected to us in all the bright and beautiful things that we see around us everywhere.

Now let us see what this light will do for us, if we really behold in it "the glory of the Lord." Did you ever have your likeness taken? If so, you will remember how careful the photographer was to set you in a good light, in a place where the light would shine full upon you. This was so that you might reflect the light on to the plate that he had prepared, that the light so reflected might paint your image there.

All things that the light shines on, reflect its rays into your eyes when you look at them, and this reflected light paints on the curtain at the back of the eye the picture of the thing itself. You know that when you look right into anyone's eye, you see, in the pupil, a tiny picture of yourself. This is painted in the eye by the light reflected from you.

Think then what will take place if you turn your eyes to the face of Jesus Christ, which will reflect into them all the glory of God. The light shining from His face will paint His image, not in your eyes only, but in the "tables of the heart," (2 Corinthians 3:3) if they are made ready by His Holy Spirit to receive it. And so you may become a living picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

He not only shines upon you in the face of Jesus Christ so that you may see Him there, and learn to know and love Him; but that you, by "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, [may be] changed into the same image." (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Then you will be able to give the light of the knowledge of His glory and beauty to those who have not yet learned to look into the face of Christ for themselves. And as the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shines forth from you, there will be power in that light to change others also into the same glorious image.

Do not forget that you may see God in all the things that He has made,--that the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is shining upon you in all His works. And if in all these things you "behold your God," (Isaiah 40:9) when the image of the thing is blotted from your eye, the image of God whom you have seen there will remain in your heart, and He will:

• shine forth in your eyes, and

• be heard in the kind of gentle tones of your voice, and

• be felt in the loving touch of your hands,

so that in you, one of the things that He has made, others will "behold their God."--Present Truth, August 11, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 8, "The Light of Life".

Chapter 85

The Firmament of His Power

"And God said, Let there be a firmament." (Genesis 1:6)

The firmament is sometimes called the atmosphere. But instead of the "firmament" and the "atmosphere" we usually speak of the "sky" and "air." These are little words easy to say and to remember.

When you look up into the beautiful blue sky you are really looking straight away into the air. Although the air around us seems to have no color, it appears blue as we look up into the sky. In one of his beautiful psalms, David speaks of "the firmament of His power." (Psalm 150:1)

The power of God is in the air, for, as we have learned already, it is His breath or Spirit of life; so all the power of God's own life is in it.

We do not realize the power that there is in the still air about us, but when it is stirred and set in motion by the storm, and rushes over the earth, in mighty wind, tearing up tall trees by their roots, and rolling up the waves of the ocean into great mountains, we can see something of the power that there is in the air.

But this same power of God is in all the air about us, and if you think a little, you will see some ways in which this great power is shown.

What is it that gives you life, and makes you able to move, to run and jump, to see and hear, and talk and work? It is life you say, but where does this life come from? Oh, you breathe it in, in the air, which is the breath of God, the Spirit of power. So the power that works in you and makes you able to do anything at all, is the power of God which is in the firmament, or the air that He breathes into you.

It is the Spirit of God in the air which gives us the power of seeing and hearing. The air conveys to us the light of the sky, and not only carries sounds to us, but also enables us to make them. Without the air we could not make the slightest sound nor hear anything at all.

We have been learning how God has given us eyes so that we may see Him in all His works. He has made our ears also that we may hear Him, that He may speak to us. And just as in the light He enters by our eyes into our hearts, and shines through us to give light to others, so by our ears His Spirit of power, which carries the sound of His words to us, comes into us to give us the power to obey the word that He speaks.

The Word of God tells us that we may receive the Holy Spirit by "the hearing of faith." (Galatians 3:2)

That is, by simply hearing and believing what God says to us. And we can hear His voice not only it, the words of the Holy Scriptures, but in the songs of the birds, in the beautiful music, and in all lovely sounds. If in all these things we hear Him, we shall in them all receive His Holy Spirit to teach us and make us like Him. "He that planted the ear," (Psalm 94:9) is able to give you "the hearing ear" as well as "the seeing eye": "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord has made even both of them." (Proverbs 20:12)

To each of you He says: "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live." (Isaiah 55:3)

Jesus said of the Holy Spirit whom He would send to comfort His disciples: "He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16:15)

This is just what He is doing for us continually by the air which surrounds and fills us. The air reflects the light of His countenance to us, and so enables us to see His beauty; it carries to us the sweetness of His voice in all beautiful sounds, His fragrance in the sweet scent of the flowers, and in other ways reveals Him to us.

Let us think of all these things that He is doing for us by His power in the air, and "Praise Him in the firmament of His power." (Psalm 150:1)

Wonders on earth, and wonders in air,

Wonders around us everywhere,
Wonders which show forth the marvelous plan
Of One who is greater, far greater than man.
--Unknown author.

--Present Truth, August 18, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 9, "Clouds and Rain".

Chapter 86

The Brightness of the Firmament

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork." (Psalm 19:1)

You have learned that on the second day "God made the firmament" by the power of His Word, saying, "Let there be a firmament." And "He divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And God called the firmament, Heaven." (Genesis 1:7-8)

Last week we were thinking about God's power in the firmament; today we will talk about His glory, which the heavens declare,--the beauty of the Lord which we may see in "the waters which are above the firmament." (Genesis 1:7)

For you know that the clouds which float in the blue sky are large masses of water in the form of vapor, which has been drawn up there by the power of God, working through the sun. God draws up to himself the drops of water, and holds them up in the sky, and stretches them like a curtain over the earth, sending them down where they are needed in refreshing showers, to water the thirsty ground, and "make it bring forth and bud." (Isaiah 55:10)

Of the cloud that rested over the tabernacle that was with the children of Israel in the wilderness, we are told that "The glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud." (Exodus 16:10)

This is true, not of that particular cloud only, but of all the clouds that are in the sky. Have you ever watched with delight the glorious sunrise? When:

Far eastward in the heaven
You see at last the sign,--
Along the far horizon
A single silver line.

It broadens and it deepens
To a sea of red and gold,
With clouds of rosy amber
Around its glory rolled.
--J. R. MacDuff, quoted in the book Brighter than the Sun; or Christ the Light of the World, 1878.

Or, more glorious still, the splendor of the sunset sky, when the ruler of the day "seems to lay down his head upon a pillow of crimson and gold,"--Ibid. and:

Bright clouds are gathering one by one,
And sweeping in pomp round the setting sun,
With crimson banner and golden pall,
Like a host to their chieftain's funeral.

--Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, Poem: Radiant Clouds at Sunset.

Where does all this brightness in beauty come from,--the delicate soft tints of pink and amber, and the magnificent glowing crimson and gold? It is the glory of the Lord appearing in the clouds. His glory which the sun reveals is reflected by the clouds before the sun rises and after it sets.

The glory would be there just the same if there were no clouds reflecting it to us; but through the clouds it is made visible so that we are able to see in "the brightness of the firmament," the glory of the Lord.

And then, you will remember, that after the flood of waters which destroyed the earth, God said, "I do put my bow in the cloud." (Genesis 9:13)

The rainbow simply shows us all the beautiful colors that are in the light, which is the glory of God shining from the face of Jesus Christ. But this glory is the shining forth of His love and goodness, so we may really see in the rainbow, when His Holy Spirit opens our eyes, the beauty of God's character.

A little while ago, while walking one morning in a large park, I watched one of the gardeners watering the plants with a large hose. As the water shot from the hose in a cloud of fine spray which fell gently to the earth, I saw reflected in it a beautiful rainbow. And I knew that this beauty of the Lord was all about me in the light,

although unseen, and that like the cloud of spray I might reflect it so that others could see it, by revealing His character, His grace and loveliness.

And this is just what God has promised that His children shall do, for He says that they "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." (Daniel 12:3)

Think of this whenever you see the beauty of the heavens, and ask God to let His glory shine into your heart, so that you may reveal the beauty of His love, that when He comes its beauty may "shine forth" from you forever in "the kingdom of your Father." "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:43)--Present Truth, August 25, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 10, "Rain and Righteousness".

Chapter 87

The Circle of Blessing

Water,--what is it? Where does it all come from? Where does it all go to? Did you ever wonder, as you watched the rain pouring down upon the earth, and in a few hours perhaps could not find a trace of it anywhere?

Water is the life-blood of the world. Without it there could be no life at all upon the earth. You know that the blood is the life of your body, but it is not enough for you to have blood in you; it must flow all through you, to keep your body pure and healthy, and carry food and life to every part of it. And so we have what is called the "circulation of the blood" through the body.

And there is also a circulation of the water all over the world; it is through this that life and blessing are carried to every part of it, and to all things that are upon it.

You have already learned a little about the vapors, how by His power in the sun God is drawing up into the air the water from the seas, lakes, and rivers, and all over the surface of the earth. This is God's way of "distilling," or purifying the water, for no matter how dirty and muddy may be the place from which it comes, all its impurity is left behind, and that which is drawn up into the clouds is perfectly pure.

But the cloud does not keep this moisture for itself; it receives and holds it only that it may carry it to the place where it is needed and pour it out in showers of blessing. See how God, who works through the sun to draw up the water, is working through the clouds to give it in blessing to the earth. "He leads the thick cloud with moisture, and spreads abroad the cloud of His light: And it is turned round about by His guidance, that they may do whatsoever He commands them upon the face of the habitable world." (Job 37:11-12,RV)

Guided by the hand of God the clouds are carried to the place where He wants them, and then "He says to the snow, and likewise to the rain, Be on the earth!" (Job 37:6,RV)

And so, "The rain comes down and the snow from heaven, and ... waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud." (Isaiah 55:10)

As the rain falls through the air it washes out its impurities, taking with it some of the little particles of dust and other substances, and also some of the poisonous gas which is in the air. These things are not good for us to breathe, but they are needed by the plants, to which they are carried by the rain.

When the air is so cold that the water freezes as it falls, and comes to the earth in the form of snow, it makes a warm covering for the ground which keeps the earth from freezing and protects the plants and keeps them alive until the warm sun melts the snow which is no longer needed to keep the earth warm.

Now let us see what becomes of the rain and snow that fall, and how they continue their work of carrying blessing and life. The earth does not keep the rain that falls upon it to itself any more than the clouds do.

Some of the rain runs into the soil, and gathers up the food that the plants need and carries it to their roots, which suck it up in the water. Then they give out the blessings that they have received, in fresh green leaves, beautiful blossoms, sweet fragrance, and life-giving grains and fruits.

Some of the rain runs off the surface of the ground and forms brooks which swell, as they are fed by other streams, into great rivers which water the land through which they flow, give drink to man and beast, and are a blessing in many other ways.

The rest of the rain runs down deep into the earth until it comes to rock or some substance through which it cannot pass. Then it flows along underground until it comes to an opening, and gushes out, a living spring. The hand which guides the clouds also "sends forth springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. By them the fowl of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches." (Psalm 104:10-12)

Truly, "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." (Psalm 145:9)

But the water that gushes out of the springs is not the same pure soft water that fell upon the earth. In its journey through the earth and among the rocks it has gathered a quantity of chalk, lime, and other minerals, which it carries with it as it flows into the rivers, and it is thus swept into the sea. These salts and different minerals are needed by the animals which live in the sea, for food to make their bones and hard shells.

So the water that the sea gives up in vapors to carry blessing to the world, returns to it at last bringing a blessing.

Now I am sure that you have already thought of one great lesson that God is teaching us by all this. Read the poem on the next page called "The Wayside Spring," and you will find the same lesson there. Think over it through the week, and next week we will talk more about it.

Oh! a sacred thing is the wayside spring,
That runs so clear and bright,
That flows along, a gladsome thing,
Nor stays by day or night;
Where the thirsty reaper laves his brow
When the harvest time is nigh,
And the herdsman leads his kine to bow
Where its waters sparkling lie.

Were you a gem in the mystic clime
Of some hidden cave of earth?
Was not the sun of the bright springtime
Shining upon your birth?
For in winter you flow as clear and free
As beneath the summer sky--
A king, if one upon earth may be,
Of immortality.

A blessing be on you, wayside spring,
That gives pure health to all--
To the flowers that spring--the leaves that cling,
Where your crystal waters fall:
Your pebbly grit makes glad the spot
When summer flowers are fled;
Fount of the greensward, that dies not
In your clear and pearly bed!
--The Wayside Spring by J. E. Carpenter

--Present Truth, September 1, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 11, "The River of Life".

Chapter 88

Freely Give

Very many lessons we could learn last week from the "circulation of the water." We did not have space to talk about them then, but if I should ask you to tell me what the great lesson is, I think that some of you at least would answer, "Freely you have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8)

The ocean, itself the source of all our springs and fountains, receives the streams from every land but takes to give; the mists ascending from its bosom fall in showers to water the earth, that it may bring forth and bud.--Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 21.

God does not give to anything a blessing for itself alone. The cloud which He loads with moisture is only a channel through which He may pour out the rain upon the earth. And the earth again receives God's blessing in the rain only that it may give it out in food, in fruit and flowers, in springs and brooks and rivers, to bless all the creatures that live upon it, and carry a fresh supply of water to the sea.

And God does not give any blessing to any of His children for them to keep to themselves, but He always wants through them to give it to someone else. Perhaps you will at first hardly think this can be true.

"Surely the food that I eat, the fresh air that I breathe, and the sunshine that makes me glad, are for me! How can I give these out to others?"

Let us see. How does the earth give out to you the life that it drinks in in the rain? It brings forth "seed to the sower, and bread to the eater." (Isaiah 55:10)

You eat the food that the earth brings forth, and what do you receive in it? Life,--the very life that the earth received in the rain.

But this life is not for yourself. You are a part of God's great plan, His "circle of blessing" about which we learned last week. He gives His life to you only that through you it may be given out in blessing to others. And giving your life for others does not mean dying for them, but living for others every day.

Jesus wants you to give out the life that He gives to you just in the same way that the earth does--in fruit. He says, "I am the True Vine, ... you are the branches; ... Herein is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit." (John 15:1,5,8)

The branch, you know, has no life of its own, but the life of the vine runs into it, and is given out in beautiful clusters of fruit. The vine gives its life, through the branches, in fruit.

And so you, the branches of Jesus, the true Vine, have no life of your own, but He is pouring His life into you all the time. He breathes it into you, as you have learned, in the air, gives it to you in the food that the earth brings forth, and sheds it upon you in the sweet life-giving sunlight. And why? That through you, His branches, He may give out that life in fruit to bring blessing to others.

If you do not know them already, you can read in the 5th chapter of Galatians the fruits that the branches of Jesus Christ, the true Vine, bear: "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance." (Galatians 5:22-23)

Every little deed of love, each kind and gentle word or action, is Jesus giving out through you in service for others, the life which He has given you in air and food. The joy that the bright sunshine brings into your hearts, He wants through you to shed upon others, making them happy too.

If we think that the life we have is our own, we shall keep it to ourselves, and it will not do any good to anybody. But if we know and remember that it is the life of Jesus, the true Vine, and we are only little branches that have no life of their own, we shall let Him do what He will with His life in us.

Then we shall "freely give" out in the fruits of love, joy, peace, and gentleness, that life which we have "freely received" from Him.-

-Present Truth, September 8, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 12, "The Air".

Chapter 89

The Gift of Speech

"The heavens declare the glory of God. ... There is no speech nor language." (Psalm 19:1,3)

Yet their words go out "to the end of the world." (Psalm 19:4)

We have been learning lately about the way in which the heavens and all the works of God are praising Him, by revealing,--making us able to see,--His power and His glory. And last week we learned how we may do the same thing, by giving out the life that He gives to us, in loving service for others, so making His goodness and beauty to be seen.

Each thing that God has made shows something of the character of God:

- The heavens declare His glory;

- The flowers His loveliness and fragrance;

- The mountains and the seas His power and fullness;

- And in His manifold works His infinite wisdom is shown.

But in man, His crowning work, all the fullness of His glory, His power and wisdom, were revealed. God made man in His own image, and filled him with His own Spirit, that He might fully reveal himself in him.

All the other works of God praise Him and declare His glory "without speech or language." (Psalm 19:3,RV)

But to man God gave the power like himself to speak out and put into words the thoughts that filled his mind. God did not teach man a language, and give him a lot of words to learn, but

He gave him the power to speak and make language. He did not teach him the names of the animals, and all the living things in the earth, but He brought them all before him "to see what he would call them; and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof." (Genesis 2:19)

As God brought each living thing to Adam, His Spirit which dwelt in him showed him its nature, and what was the lesson that God was teaching him by it. Then the same Spirit of God which showed him the truth, gave him utterance, and made him able to speak out what he saw. So the name that he gave showed the truth that each living thing revealed.

And then you know that man was only the house or temple of God, and all the powers that God gave him were for Him to use to do His own work through man. So man's mouth was made for the

Spirit of God to speak His own words through man, and there was power, the power of God, in the words that man spoke, so long as he was perfect.

And ever since man has fallen by sin, and lost the fullness of the power and glory and honor with which God crowned him in the beginning, the Spirit of God still speaks His own words of power through all those who will let Him use them. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21)

And this is how the Bible, the Word of God, was given to us. In the Bible we have a great many beautiful songs which we call psalms, and David, "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," (2 Samuel 23:1) who sang and wrote most of these, said, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue." (2 Samuel 23:1)

In one of these, which he calls "a song for the Sabbath," he says, "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto your name." (Psalm 92:1)

In another psalm he tells us how we may do this, and what the result will be: "He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." (Psalm 40:3)

When the Spirit of God is using your eyes and your ears and all your senses to reveal God to you, and to teach you of Him in all the things that He has made, your hearts will be filled "with wonder,

love and praise."--From the hymn, Love Divine, All Loves Excelling, by Charles Wesley, 1747. Then like David you will pray, "O Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may show forth your praise." (Psalm 51:15)

You will long to tell others of that which you have seen and heard of Him. And God has made your mouth so that you may do this.

When Isaiah "saw His glory," he "spoke of Him," (John 12:41) and so will all who really behold their God. And the Spirit of God who fills you with praise will also give you utterance, so that you may speak and sing of Him with power that shall lead others to "fear, and trust in the Lord."--Present Truth, September 15, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 13, "The Seas".

Chapter 90

The Real Seed

Where did all the flowers in your garden come from, and all the fruits that are now piled up in the fruiterers' shops, and hanging on the trees and bushes in orchards and gardens? Some of you perhaps will say that they grew "out of the ground," (Genesis 2:9) and that is true; but the earth can bring forth only what is first put into it. What do you have to put into the ground to get the sweet peas, nasturtiums, and mignonette, that delight you with their pretty blossoms and sweet fragrance? If you go back to the beginning of them all you will remember the little brown seeds, that you put into the ground in the spring, and watered and watched so eagerly, until the tiny green blades pushed themselves up through the ground, and grew greener and stronger each day, putting forth shoots and leaves and buds, until at last they were covered with blossoms.

But those seeds after all were not the beginning, for they came from other plants which sprang from other seeds, and so we could trace them right back to the real beginning when God said, "Let the earth bring forth." (Genesis 1:11)

So we see that "In the beginning was the Word." (John 1:1)

The Word of God was the beginning of everything in the earth. This is just what Jesus tells us when He says, "The seed is the Word of God." (Luke 8:11)

We said just now that the earth can only bring forth that which is first put into it, and now you will see that what was put into the earth in the beginning to make it bring forth and bud, was the Word of God. So all that you see springing up out of the earth, grass, flowers, the wheat and grains from which your bread and porridge are made, the nuts and fruits that you enjoy so much,--is the Word of God, put into all these different forms, so that you may see it, handle it, and taste it, and get life and strength from eating it every day.

The same verse in the 1st chapter of the Gospel of John which tells us that "in the beginning was the Word," says also, "the Word was God." (John 1:1)

When God said, "Let the earth bring forth," (Genesis 1:24) it was the life of Jesus going forth into the earth, and springing up in all these different beautiful forms to give pleasure and life to us. So when you eat of any of "the fruits of the ground," (Genesis 4:3) you are feeding upon the life of Jesus Christ. When you admire the grace and beauty of the flowers, it is the loveliness of Christ that you are delighting in.

All the leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruit that unfold and develop in the plant were wrapped up in the tiny seed that was put into the ground. They are only the showing forth of the riches of the life of God that was in the seed.

So you see that the seed is not only the beginning, but also the end of the whole plant, for there is nothing [unfolded in the end development of the plant, that was not already contained in the seed.

The seed of the Jesus is to grow] (The bracketed part represents some lines that are missing from the Pioneer Writings collection. I have reconstructed the approximate thoughts, but these are not Waggoner's exact words) in us also, and all the beauty of His life will be seen. We will talk more about this next week.--Present Truth, September 22, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 14, "Sowing the Seed".

Chapter 91

After Its Kind

"So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground." (Mark 4:26)

Let us think for a little while of some more of the lessons of the kingdom that the seed teaches us.

Do you get any flowers in your garden just by wishing they were there? No, you must put in the seed before anything will grow. And then you do not sow any kind of seed that you can get hold of, and expect to get from it the particular flowers that you want. You must sow the right kind of seed, the seed of just the flowers that you want, just where you want them, for everything is sure to spring up "after its kind." (Genesis 1:11)

If you should very much want some roses, and should sow poppy seeds, would you get any roses? Oh, no; all your wishes could never make roses grow from weeds, nor from anything but rose trees. You cannot "gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles." (Matthew 7:16)

And just so, nothing will grow in your hearts, either good or bad, without seed. Just as you can have in your garden the flowers that you want by putting in the right seed, so you can have your

lives just what you wish them to be by having the right kind of seed sown in your hearts.

If you want, and I am sure you do, to have the gentleness and kindness of Christ blossom and bring forth fruit in your lives, you must have the good seed of the Word of God sown in your hearts. When God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," (Genesis 1:11) in that Word He was putting into the ground the seed of all the grass and flowers that have ever sprung up. When He said, "Let the earth bring forth...the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind," (Genesis 1:11) that was the seed of all the fruit that there has ever been in the earth. He has made you from the dust of the ground, and you are His garden where He plants the seed of His Word, that you may bring forth just what He wishes. When He says to you, "Little children, ... love one another," (1 John 4:4,7) He is sowing in your hearts the seed of love, from which all loving words and actions will spring forth like sweetest blossoms.

And then Jesus says to you, "Be kind one to another," (Ephesians 4:32) and that is the seed of kindness that He puts into you. He says also, "Children, obey your parents,-–and this Word of God is the seed of obedience that He sows in your hearts. When you sow seed in the earth you do not have to try to make it grow; neither does the earth try to bring it forth, but it springs up of itself because the life of God is in it. Jesus says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." (John 6:63)

Listen, then, to the precious words of Jesus, and so receive them into your hearts as the earth receives the seed, and you will not have to try to love one another, to be kind and obedient and gentle, but these graces of the Spirit of Jesus will spring forth in your lives as naturally as the flowers spring from the seed that you sow in the ground.

But there is something we have not yet spoken of that must be done before the seed is sown. You know that the ground must be dug up and watered and made soft and ready to receive the seed. If it should only lie on the top of the hard ground, or he put just below the surface, it would be lost.

In the Parable of the Sower, which you may read in the 4th chapter of Mark, Jesus shows how important it is that the ground should be prepared to receive the good seed. It must sink deep into the soft ground, and then it will spring up and bring forth fruit.

So your hearts, which are the garden of the Lord, must be prepared by Him for the seed of the Word which He sows in them. If you ask Him, His Holy Spirit will work in you, and make your heart soft and tender and ready for the good seed. Do you remember what David said about this good seed? "Your Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against You." (Psalm 119:11)

Just as the seed is buried in the soil, so must the Word be hidden in our hearts and kept there. Then we shall be among those of whom Jesus says, "These are they which, having heard the Word, keep it,

and bring forth fruit unto perfection." (Luke 8:15) "Whoso keeps His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." (1 John 2:5)--Present Truth, September 29, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 15, "The Seed Quickened".

Chapter 92

God's Garden

"My Father is the Husbandman." (John 15:1)

This is what Jesus said, and we learned last week that we are His garden, or as the Apostle Paul tells us, "you are God's husbandry [margin: "tilled land"]." (1 Corinthians:9,RV)

We have been learning lately about the good seed,--the Word of God,--which He puts into our hearts, that we may bring forth just the blossoms and fruit that He loves to see, in His garden.

But if you have a garden you know that the sowing of the seed is not all that needs to be done in it. You must watch and water it; and besides this you will find springing up some plants that you have not sown, and that you do not want there. These you must pull up, because they are weeds that are not only useless themselves, but they will prevent the good seed from growing properly, and perhaps crowd it out altogether.

Now see how much care the Lord takes of His garden, how carefully and tenderly He watches over us, His "tilled land." He says, "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." (Isaiah 27:3)

"Lest any hurt it"! Who is it that is trying to hurt the Lord's garden, and how can he do this? Oh, you know already, it is His great enemy, Satan. He wants to destroy all the Lord's beautiful plants, and change His garden into a waste wilderness, bringing forth nothing but thorns and weeds and poisonous plants. And see how artfully he is working to do this. Jesus teaches us about it in one of His parables. He says that "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field. But ... his enemy came and sowed tares ... and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, arid brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? From whence then has it tares? He said unto them, An enemy has done this." (Matthew 13:24-28)

God in the beginning sowed only good seed in His field,--in this earth, and in the hearts of His children Adam and Eve. The earth brought forth only what was "pleasant to the sight and good for food." (Genesis 2:9)

And only love and all its pleasant and beautiful fruits appeared in the lives of God's children. But now, alas, the earth brings forth thorns and thistles, and many things not pleasant to the sight nor good for food, but things that will bring death instead of life. And there are hatred and quarreling, and other deadly weeds, growing up where only love should be. From whence has the Lord's land these tares? The words of Jesus give us the answer, "An enemy has done this." (Matthew 13:28)

How he did it, and is still doing it, we will learn next week, and also how the words of Jesus will be at last fulfilled, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up." (Matthew 15:13)--Present Truth, October 6, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 16, "All Flesh is Grass".

Chapter 93

The Enemy

We began to learn last week about the "enemy" who sowed tares--bad seed--in the Lord's field, where He had put only the good seed of His own Word. Jesus said that this parable in the 13th chapter of Matthew is about the kingdom of God, and explained it to His disciples to teach us also, when He said, "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil." (Matthew 13:38-39)

You all know when and how Satan began to cast his bad seed into the Lord's field. Into the beautiful garden of Eden he came with his heart filled with hatred, to try to destroy the work of God. He began by whispering lies into the ear of Eve, telling her that the Word of God was not true, so that she might let him pluck it from her heart, and put his bad seed in its place.

If only Eve had trusted in God and believed His word, she would have kept it in her heart and been safe. For we learned last week how carefully our Heavenly Father watches over His plants, and keeps them "night and day," (Isaiah 27:3) lest any hurt them. But, oh, she listened to Satan until she really believed that what he said was true, and so his bad seed got right into her heart, and choked the good seed and destroyed it.

And how quickly this bad seed sprang up and brought forth its bitter fruit of sinful actions, disobedience and shame and sorrow. Instead of "the children of the kingdom," (Matthew 13:38) which come from the good seed of God's Word, Adam and Eve became "the children of the wicked one." (Matthew 13:38)

They were just tares or weeds in God's garden, instead of His precious and fruitful plants. And since, as we have learned, every plant must bring forth "after its kind," (Genesis 1:11) and can only multiply itself, but not bring forth any other kind of plant, all their children must be like themselves, "the children of the wicked one." (Matthew 13:38)

So the whole world would be filled with weeds. How sad for the Lord to see His beautiful garden that He loved and watched so eagerly bringing forth only weeds. But He did not become discouraged and leave the field to Satan. He says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," (Isaiah 46:10) and, "My word ... shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11)

No enemy can really hinder the work of the Lord, or keep Him from carrying out His purpose.

God did not pull the weeds out of His garden and destroy them at once; He loved His children so much that He longed to save them. He wanted to put the good seed back into their hearts, and undo all the work of the enemy. So He gave to the woman in her sorrow the

promise of a most precious Seed (Genesis 3:15) that He would plant in His field, through whom they might again become "the children of the kingdom," (Matthew 13:38) and the whole world be filled with the precious fruit of it. Read the sixteenth verse of the 3rd chapter of Galatians, (Galatians 3:16; Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is Christ) which will tell you who this precious Seed is, and then we will talk more about this next week.--Present Truth, October 13, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 17, "The Power of Growth".

Chapter 94

The Promised Seed

Who is the Seed--the precious Seed--that God promised to send into the world to save it from perishing? Have you read the text which tells us, of which we spoke last week? "your Seed, which is Christ." (Galatians 3:16)

Yes, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Jesus is the Seed that God promised should bruise the serpent's head, (Genesis 3:15) should cast Satan out of this earth (John 12:31) and destroy him, (Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8) and make it again God's kingdom where only His own plants should bloom forever.

From the very beginning, when the promise was first made, those who believed it watched eagerly for the coming of the promised Seed. When Cain, the first little baby, was born, and his mother Eve said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord," (Genesis 4:1) she earnestly hoped that she held in her arms the One who was to be her Saviour. But, alas, how sadly disappointed she must have been when, as he grew up, his pride and jealousy and hatred of his brother showed all too plainly that he "was of that wicked one." (1 John 3:12)

Instead of the Son of God, they had got a son in their own image; for we learned how they themselves became "the children of the wicked one," (Matthew 13:38) through receiving his word in the place of the Word of God. Many years passed before the promise of God was fulfilled, and no doubt many a mother, like Eve, longed that the precious Seed might he given to her care.

So that His people should not lose hope, God often repeated through His prophets the promise of the Seed. And at last, "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman." (Galatians 4:4,RV)

You all know the story, how the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, and told her that she should have a son: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

Think of the wonder of His love, not only that God should give His only begotten son, but that Jesus, who was "in the form of God," (Philippians 2:6) and had all the riches and glory of heaven, should give it all up for our sakes, and come into this world of sorrow and take the form of sinful man. You will remember one lesson that we learned from the seed was that each thing must grow "after its kind." (Genesis 1:11)

And so Jesus, the son of God, although He no longer had the form of God, but "was made in the likeness of men," (Philippians

2:7) grew up in this earth just as perfect, pure and holy, as He was in heaven. And as "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him," (Luke 2:40) His loving mother and those who watched Him knew that He was indeed the Son of God, so God-like was He, so loving, gentle, kind, and obedient.

But oh, it will not do us any good to know that Jesus once came and lived in this earth, unless this precious Seed be sown in our own hearts. Jesus, the Word of God "was made flesh and dwelt among us;" (John 1:14) He lived here as a little child like you, just to show what you may be, what sort of plant you will become, if you let Him,--the Word of God, the good seed,--dwell in your heart. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John 1:12)

The Spirit of life, the Spirit of Jesus, is in the precious seed of the Word, just as it is in the seed that is sown in the earth. And so when you listen to the Word of God, and believe it, and receive it into your heart, the power which makes the seed spring up out of the earth, each "after its kind," will "form Christ within you," (Galatians 4:19) and fill you with His pure and holy life, just as naturally as roses grow on rose trees, and apples on apple trees, and grapes on the vine.--Present Truth, October 20, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 18, "Intelligent Action in Plants".

Chapter 95

Light-Bearers

"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; He made the stars also." (Genesis 1:16) "[God] gives the sun for a light by day, and the moon to shine by night." (Jeremiah 31:35)

But you know that the bright moon which lights up the dark night and makes it beautiful with its clear beams, has really no light of its own. All the glory that shines from it is the borrowed light of the sun; it shines by reflecting the sun's rays. So when the sun sets, and passes for a time out of our sight, we know that it is still shining somewhere, although we cannot see it, because the moon catches its rays and sends them down to us.

But did you ever think that the sun has really no light of its own any more than the moon has? All its light is borrowed also; it is the reflection of a greater light, of the Light, the only Light, "in whom is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5)

When we studied our lessons on the light we learned that Jesus is the true Light of the world, and all the glory of the sunlight is the reflection of the light of His face, the shining forth of His glory which He puts upon it.

And so, although we cannot see the face of God, we know that He lives and that His glory is still shining, because we can see its beams in the glorious sunlight by day and the soft beautiful moonlight by night. God makes the sun and moon and stars to be "great lights," (Genesis 1:16; Psalm 136:7) just by letting His own glory shine upon them. And this is how He makes His children to be, as Christ called them, "the light of the world." (Matthew 5:14) "[They] shine as lights in the world," (Philippians 2:15) only because He shines upon them and they reflect His light to others just as the sun and moon do. As we see what the sun is to our world, how there would be no light, no heat, no beauty, no growth, and so no life without it, we see how all things come to us from God just through the shining of His face upon us. Then let us pray the prayer of the Psalmist, "God be merciful unto us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us." (Psalm 67:1)

How dependent our world and all who live in it are upon the sun! But remember that it is not the sun that is doing all these things for us, but He whose glory lights up the sun, whose hand guides it in its path through the heavens, and who is working through it to give life and blessing to us all.--Present Truth, October 27, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 19, "The Glory of the Heavens".

Chapter 96

Animal Life

We have been learning for some weeks about the plants, the flowers, fruits, and seeds, which spring out of the earth in obedience to the Word of God, "Let the earth bring forth grass." (Genesis 1:11)

This week we will learn about some other kinds of plants, some of which swim in the sea, some fly in the air, and some move about over the face of the earth. "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that has life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind. ... And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so." (Genesis 1:20-21,24)

"But," you will perhaps say, "surely these are not plants!"

Well, let us see what the Word of God says about this. In the 15th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians we read, that: "All flesh is not the same flesh; for there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. But in the 40th chapter of Isaiah we are told that "all flesh is grass." (Isaiah 40:6)

And then if you will think for a little while you will see that the animals all come from the ground, the same as the plants do that remain rooted in the soil. For just as God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," (Genesis 1:11) so He said also, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing." (Genesis 1:24)

So the plants and the animals were all brought forth by the earth, and all came from exactly the same seed,--the Word of God,--and they all share one life, the life of God, for He is the Life, and there is no other.

And then again we have been learning how the plants which spring from the earth draw their food from it, and live by the nourishment that their roots suck up out of the ground. But we shall see that these moving plants also get all their food from the ground, for "God causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that He may bring forth food out of the earth." (Psalm 104:14)

All the living beings in this earth are dependent on the earth from which they come to supply them with food to sustain their lives.

We have seen that in all the beauty, fragrance and usefulness of the plants, and in all the glory of the sun, moon and stars, God is revealing himself to us. But this is true of all the things that He has made. So learn all that you can about the animals, the birds, the

fishes, and creeping things, for each one, even the tiniest, holds some wonderful secret of God's love and power which He has put there for you, and if you ask Him, His Holy Spirit will teach you what it is.

In another part of this paper you will find some facts about the animals, the bees, the ants, and the birds, which will show you how wonderful are the wisdom and skill which are seen in their actions. It is God's own life in them which gives them such wisdom.

- It is His life in the bird which teaches it how and where to build its nest;

- His life in the bee which teaches it where and how to gather honey and store it in the wonderful comb of wax which it makes;

- His life in the spider which teaches it how to weave its silken web and fasten it securely;

- His life in the ant which gives it such wisdom that the wisest man who lived tells us to "consider her ways, and be wise." (Proverbs 6:6)

Solomon himself learned wisdom from studying these works of God, and "he spoke of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes." (1 Kings 4:33)

Try to find out what the Word of God tells you about the different animals with which you are familiar. Read the 39th and 40th chapters of Job, and see how many animals are mentioned there, and how much we are told about them. And over all these works of His hands God gave man dominion; but how differently men often treat the animals from what God himself does, for "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." (Psalm 145:9)

We see cruel men, and sometimes thoughtless little children, illtreating God's creatures whom He has given them to love and protect. But the time is soon coming when all the suffering and sorrow that has come upon the animals through man's sin will be over; and "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain says the Lord." (Isaiah 11:9)

In the new earth which God will make, men will no longer hurt and destroy the animals, nor hunt them and use them for food; and the animals will not hurt nor destroy each other or man, but "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." (Isaiah 11:6)--Present Truth, November 3, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 20, "The Animal Creation".

More About Animals

We were talking last week about how we may learn to know God by studying the things that He has made. How wise, how loving, how merciful is our great Creator you will find out more and more as you think upon the wondrous works of His hands.

Here is a little picture of some of the wonderful things that His powerful Word made from the dust of the ground, when God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature." (Genesis 1:24)

The largest animal in the picture is the kangaroo. It does not go along on its four legs like most quadrupeds, but upright as you see it here, and instead of running along the ground, it takes the most astonishing long, high leaps.

So that the mother kangaroo can carry her little ones safely with her in these flying leaps, God has made a little cradle in her body, a small pouch or pocket where her babies are stowed away, safe and warm. Here they are kept by the mother until they are old enough to leave it, and even then they run to her and jump in when anything frightens them. You can see the tiny head of one of the babies peeping out from its cosy cradle.

In the next picture is a little hedgehog. You will know him by the sharp spines, or prickles, sticking out all over his body. This little creature has nothing else to defend it from the attacks of its enemies--it cannot run swiftly and get away from them, and it has

no strength or skill with which to meet them. But God has covered it with this armour, and when it sees an enemy--a cat, or weasel, that is unfriendly to it--it draws in all the soft parts of its body and rolls itself up so that nothing can be seen but a ball of sharp prickles. Then anything that touches it only pricks itself without hurting the hedgehog, who waits until its enemy goes away and gives it an opportunity to escape.

In the following picture, making its way to the water, you will see a strange looking little animal that you have never seen before. But did you ever see anything at all like it? Look closely, and you will see that it has a bill exactly like a duck, and webbed feet also.

It swims in the water and feeds in the mud just like a duck, but its body is like that of a mole, and it burrows like the mole in the ground, in the river banks, and makes its nest under the ground. It is so wonderfully formed that it is as much at home in the water as a duck, and in the land as a mole. It is called the duckbilled watermole. (Or, Platypus)

This little creature's home is in Australia, and when one was first sent to Europe people thought that somebody must have made it up by fastening a duck's beak on to the body of a small animal. But they have since found that this is really the way that God made it, though they have not ceased to wonder at it.

Another time we will talk about some more of these wonderful works of God. If you will read through the 104th Psalm, you will

see how He who made them is all the time caring for each one of the smallest of His creatures. He says, "I know all the fowls of the mountain, and the wild beasts of the field are mine." (Psalm 50:11)

He knows them all, He thinks of all, He feeds all, and He loves all. "Fear not, therefore," (Matthew 10:31) for Jesus tells you that you "are of much more value" to Him than all "the fowls of the mountains" or "beasts of the forest," (Psalm 104:20) so "how much more" (Matthew 7:11) will He think of you, and take loving care of you all the time.--Present Truth, November 10, 1898--This article was written a week after the one above (although not a part of the official series), so I have included it without chapter numbering so as to keep the numbering correspondence of the other articles with The Everlasting Gospel book.

Chapter 97

God's Way

When you saw the picture that we showed you last week, and thought of the beautiful New Earth which God will make, where there will be no "sickness nor sorrow nor crying," (Paraphrase of Revelation 21:4) where all will be love and peace, and you will be able to play with the lions and leopards and wolves and serpents, without any fear or danger,--did you not long for that happy time to come? But that is what this earth would have been now and always if it had not been for sin.

We have found how in the beginning everything that God made obeyed His Word.

• The flowers and trees obeyed His Word, and grew just where and how He wanted them to,--they grew in His way.

• The sun, moon, and stars obeyed His Word, and His hand guided them in His own way through the heavens.

• The animals and birds and fishes obeyed His Word, and each one lived and worked in just the way that He wanted it to.

But God's most noble and beautiful work, those whom He had made in His own image to rule over all the rest of His creation, disobeyed His Word, and chose to go in their own way instead of in

His way. This brought sad disorder and trouble into God's beautiful world; for death came upon the plants and the animals and everything in the earth through man's sin.

And as they watched the fading flowers and falling leaves, as they saw the animals grow wild and fierce and fight and kill each other, as they wept over their dead, and felt their own strength going from them, they knew indeed that "There is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12) "Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death." (James 1:15)

God's loving heart grieved over the sorrows of His children, over the pain that His creatures were suffering; for not one sparrow falls to the ground without His notice, and He even numbers the hairs of our heads, and sees every tear that we shed. But He cannot save us from the bitter fruits of choosing our own way, unless we are willing to give up our own way, and take God's way instead.

So that everyone may know how good and pleasant and beautiful His way is, He came himself into the world to live out that way right in our midst. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 14:6)

Man's way is sin and death. God's way is truth and life. So God cannot give us life, eternal life, in His new earth where everything will he just in His way, unless we will give up our own way of sin, and take His way of truth. We must have Jesus, who is God's Way,

to live in us, so that we shall always choose to do just what God would have us.

He showed to us just what God is, and what we all may be if we will but let God have His own way in us just as He did. Then if you will choose God's way all the time, instead of your way, and ask Jesus to live that way in you, you will find that His way is life, for He says, "He that does the will of God abides for ever." (1 John 2:17)

And though you may have to sleep in the grave for a little while before He comes, His Word which brought the plants, the animals, and man from the ground in the beginning, will call you again from the dust of the earth, and will make "all things new," (Revelation 21:5; And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new) as they were in the beginning.

Come, Lord, and wipe away
The curse, the sin, the stain,
And make this blighted world of ours
Your own fair world again.
--Horatius Bonar (1808-1889), Hymn: The Church Has Waited Long.

--Present Truth, November 10, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 21, "The Dust of the Earth".

Chapter 98

Children of God

Through all our lessons on the creation, we have seen how His eternal power and Divinity are seen in the things that God has made. The light, the air, the sky, the grass and trees, the sun, moon and stars, the birds, beasts and fishes, all are telling us of God.

All things that on earth I see
Seem to have a voice for me;
Ceaselessly, by night and day,
"Learn the truth we teach," they say.
--A. G. Stantiall, "Little Teachers," from Model Third Reader, 1875.

The voice that they all have is the voice of God speaking, for they are His living Word in all these different forms. But in God's crowning work He meant to make himself the most clearly to be seen, "So God created man in His own image." (Genesis 1:27)

Adam was the son of God, a perfect likeness of God his Father. He was a king, for he ruled over the whole earth and everything in it; but he did not have a crown of gold to put on, and robes of state to wear, like the kings and queens of the earth wear now. His royal robe was a garment of light, and his crown was a crown of glory, for God "crowned him with glory and honor." (Psalm 8:5)

He did not have to put on any glory, but it shone right out from him, because he was the son of God and his character was like the character of God. Think how this beautiful light shining about Adam and Eve would light up everything that they came near, and how they would "shine as lights in the world." (Philippians 2:15)

But when they listened to the voice of Satan and fell into sin, they lost their holy character, and the light all faded away. Their beautiful crowns, their royal robes of light, were gone. But we have been learning lately how God is going to "restore all things," (Matthew 17:11) to bring back to man everything he has lost through sin. It was for this that Jesus, the Son of God, became man, to make men again the sons of God, kings of the earth, and light-bearers. For we read that: "As many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John 1:12)

When the Son of God, the Light of the world, is received into our hearts, and dwells there, we become the children of God and shine as lights in this dark world. (2 Peter 1:19) Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

His light will now shine forth in our actions, which will show us to be the children of our Heavenly Father. And if we become like Him now in character, by and by He will change our bodies, and make them just like His own glorious body. (Philippians 3:21) "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear

what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." (1 John 3:2) "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," (Matthew 13:43)--the beautiful new earth about which we have been learning,--and, "shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away." (1 Peter 5:4)--Present Truth, November 17, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 22, "Man's Dominion".

Chapter 99

Our Food

All the lessons that we have had on the creation have taught us that all God's works, and especially man, whom He made in His own image, are the temple or dwelling-place for His own Holy Spirit.

And we have found, too, that all God's works in this earth are made of the dust of the earth itself, and what gives form, beauty, wisdom, and power to anything, is God's own Spirit of life, for when this is taken away the dust returns to the earth, "as it was." (Ecclesiastes 12:7)

Have you ever thought how God is still carrying on His great creative work? Let us see how He is still taking the dust of the earth, and forming from it beautiful temples for himself to dwell in.

Your body is made up of the food that you eat. If you were kept without food for a time, you would not only stop growing, but you would become thin and wasted. So you see that besides the food you need to build up your body and make you grow, there is a certain amount of waste which has to be made up by the food that you take.

But did you know that no matter what kind of food you are eating you are really feeding upon the dust of the ground, and your body is being made up of just that out of which God formed man in

the beginning? "[God] makes grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth," (Psalm 104:14,RV) from which he comes. The plants and trees, which spring out of the ground, take the dust of the ground, and prepare it for food for us and the animals. What we call the "vegetable kingdom" makes all the food that is necessary for the "animal kingdom," to which we ourselves belong. Different animals require different kinds of food, but each one can find growing out of the ground just the food that it needs.

As you take the food that God has provided, His creative power works in you, taking this material and building up your body from it. Learn what you can of the different organs of your wonderful body through which He works to do this, and see how "fearfully and wonderfully" (Psalm 139:14) He has made you.

Even what are called beasts of prey,--carnivorous animals-those which like lions and tigers feed upon the flesh of other animals, do not really get any food but what these animals have got from the plants. It was not God's plan that the animals should feed upon each other, for in the beginning He said to man, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, ... and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so." (Genesis 1:29-30)

The animals fed only upon that which God meant for their food, and man ate the grains, fruit, and nuts which his Heavenly Father had provided for him. And as it was in the beginning, so it will be again when everything in the earth is brought back to purity and perfection. For then, God's Word tells us, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." (Isaiah 65:25,RV)

And men shall "plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them," (Isaiah 65:21,RV) and eat of the fruit of "the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God." (Revelation 2:7)

Jesus in His temple holy,
Where sweet angel anthems ring,
Dwelleth, too, in temples lowly,
Heareth, too, when children sing.
--F. E. Belden (1858-1945), Hymn: Hallelujah! Answer We.

--Present Truth, November 24, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 23, "Food Out of the Earth".

Chapter 100

Telescope and Microscope

Have you ever looked through a telescope at the stars? If not, take the first opportunity that you get to do this, and you will be astonished and delighted at the wonders that you will see.

The telescope is an instrument made to aid our sight by making objects that are really far away seem to be much nearer, so that they can be better seen. Things so far off that they cannot be seen at all with the naked eye, can be looked at through the telescope.

By the help of the telescope astronomers have discovered that the stars, which seem like tiny points of light because they are so far away from us, are many of them suns much larger than our sun, with worlds moving round them as our world moves round the sun.

And besides this they have found that these suns and worlds that can be seen, are only a very small part of God's great universe. For as men are able to invent more and more powerful telescopes, they see millions of stars that were invisible before. And yet there are as many more beyond, and there is really no end to the universe of God.

Yet God is lighting up each one of these countless suns with His own glory, and upholding and guiding all the worlds that move round them. All this shows us the greatness of our God, greatness

that our minds are too small to understand, even as our eyes, with all the help that men are able to invent, can see only a small part of His works.

As we think of these things, and "consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have ordained," (Psalm 8:3) how it brings to our minds the words of the Psalmist, "What is man, that You are mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4)

But there is another instrument which aids our sight in a different way from what the telescope does, and helps us to see how mindful God is, not of man only, but of even the tiniest of His works. This is the microscope.

With the telescope we can look away off from our world, and see something of the great works of God, and the immensity of His universe. With the microscope we can look into the works of God that are round about us everywhere upon the earth, and see the perfection and beauty of the very smallest thing that our eyes are thus enabled to see.

With the telescope we see that our world, which seems to us so great, is but an atom, like a little grain of sand, compared with the great universe; and all the waters of the ocean are like "a drop of a bucket." (Isaiah 40:15)

But when we take the microscope and examine the tiny grains of sand and the little drops of water that make up our world, we find that each is in itself a little world of wonders.

A drop of water magnified (you may have seen one, or the picture of it), is full of tiny living creatures as perfect, as wonderful, as the stars of heaven. And into whatever of the works of God we look in this way, we find that the more they are magnified the more wonders they show.

But here, again, our sight is limited, and when we have seen all that can be seen with the most powerful microscope, there is still hidden from us as much of the wonderful working of God's power, His infinite perfection and skill revealed in the most minute atoms, as there is of His greatness in the heavens beyond the power of the telescope to reveal to us.

So while the use of the telescope might lead us to look upon our world as insignificant and unimportant, because it seems such a little speck in the universe, the microscope shows us the importance not of the world only, but of every little particle that forms it, and of the smallest and lowest living creatures that inhabit it. Therefore while the telescope leads us to exclaim, "What is man that You are mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4) the microscope, showing how "fearfully and wonderfully" (Psalm 139:14) not we only, but all the works of God are made, puts into our mouths these words of the same Psalmist, "How precious also are your thoughts unto me, O

God! How great is the sum of them! ... they are more than can be numbered." (Psalm 139:17-18,RV)

The God of nature and of grace
In all His works appears
His goodness through the earth we trace,
His grandeur in the spheres.
--James Montgomery, Hymn: Glory of God in Creation, 1819.

--Present Truth, December 1, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 24, "His Commandment is Life Everlasting".

Chapter 101

Man the Masterpiece

More wonderful than all the glories of the heavens, or any of the perfect and beautiful works of God that can be seen through the telescope and microscope, about which we were talking last week, is man, His last and crowning work.

Think for a little while of some of the wonders of this beautiful world, the things that God made in those first six days of time, and what we have been learning about them lately.

Think of the great sun, which, lighted up by the glory of God, enlightens and gladdens the whole world with its beams; of the air which is carrying the breath of God's own life to all His creatures. How beautiful is the blue sky, with the white, fleecy clouds sailing over it by day, and the silvery moon and bright stars by night.

Think, too, of the fresh, green grass, which makes such a soft, velvety carpet for the earth, and provides food for the creatures that live on it; of the lovely flowers, with their exquisite shapes, brilliant colours and sweet fragrance. Think of the lofty trees, with their thousands of leaves purifying the air, giving pleasant shade, and catching and storing up the sunbeams for the future use of man.

Think of the birds, their wonderful plumage, and sweet, glad songs, the grace and freedom with which they rise and soar in "the

open firmament of heaven;" (Genesis 1:20) of the bees, butterflies, and ants, and the millions of tiny insects which fly among the grass and flowers, and creep upon the ground beneath our feet.

And what marvels are found in the waters, not of "the great deep" (Genesis 7:11; Isaiah 51:10) only, but of every little rippling stream that "runs among the hills." (Psalm 104:10)

Then there are the animals, the majestic lion, lordly elephant, and patient and useful camel, and many more, each teaching us something of their Creator.

And now that you have thought upon all these things, remember that God's noblest, highest work, His crowning work, is man, whom only He made in the Divine image. You will then understand something of our value in the eyes of God, who meant us to be more glorious than the sun, more beautiful than the flowers, more free than the birds, more wise and skillful than any living creature.

God's work was not complete, there was something wanting in it all, He was not satisfied with it, until He had "formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." (Genesis 2:7)

Then, "[He] saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good," (Genesis 1:31) and, "He rested, and was refreshed." (Exodus 31:17)

So the work in which God takes the greatest satisfaction is man. You will remember that when Jesus spoke of the lilies, and how God clothes them with beauty, He said, "shall He not much more clothe you?" (Matthew 6:30,RV)

And when He told us to "Behold the birds" which God has made He said, "You are of much more value than they." (Matthew 6:26,RV)

God's most wonderful work, His masterpiece of skill, wisdom, and love, is the human body; all its organs are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14) to do the work He has appointed them. Do you not want to learn more of His masterpiece the wonderful body that He has prepared for you?

If I were to tell you of a very strong man, like Samson, and I wanted to make you understand how strong he was, I could only do it by telling you of the wonderful things he had done. Or if I should tell of one who was very wise, or very kind and loving, I should have to tell you of his wise acts, or kind and loving ways and deeds, to make you understand something about him. We learn what people are by what they do.

And this is how we learn of God,--by the things He has made, by the work that He does. We can know what He is, only by seeing what He does. And as His greatest work in this earth is man, we can learn more of Him by studying ourselves, our own wonderful

bodies, than by studying any of the things that are round about us, no matter how great and glorious they may be.

So find out all you can about the wonderful temple of your body, and we will try to help you by telling you more about it from time to time.--Present Truth, December 8, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 25, "God's Rest".

Chapter 102

Our Hands

Think what a wonderful little instrument your hand is, how many things you can do with it, and how helpless you would be without it.

To everyone of His creatures God has given just the organs that it needs to express itself with, to put its thoughts into action. But we do not find any of the animals with a hand, like the perfect hand of man, because God has not given them the wisdom to use it.

The elephant, one of the most intelligent of creatures, has a long trunk which it uses skillfully, as you may have seen, in something the way that we use our hands. It can pick up things with its trunk, and by bending it into different shapes can do many different things with it. God has put the different members in the bodies of all the animals according to the power and wisdom that they have to use them.

But when we come to man, the highest and most intelligent of all living creatures, we find that God has given him this perfect little instrument, able to meet all the needs of his mind which directs them, in any kind of motion or work.

This gives man great superiority over all other animals; he has been called "the animal with the thumb." (Or, "the animal with

thumbs") You will perhaps at first think it strange that so much notice should be taken of this little member; but see how few things you could do well without your thumb, and how many you could not do at all. Try it for a little while, and you will learn something of the wisdom of Him who has "set the members in the body, everyone as it has pleased Him." (1 Corinthians 12:18)

In the hand and arm there are thirty bones and fifty muscles all connected by nerves with the brain, which sends messages along them to tell the hand just what to do. If these nerves are injured the hand is quite useless, for it can do nothing of itself; it is only the servant of the mind which moves and works through it. The number and wonderful arrangement of these bones and muscles make it possible for the hand to be put into any position, and to do whatever work the mind wants it to.

Besides the many different kinds of work that you can do with your hands, think how dependent you are upon them for feeling. The hand is the principal organ of touch or feeling. Some of the nerves that we spoke of send messages from the brain to the hand, telling it what to do, and others send back message from the hand to the brain about the things that it touches. So the brain feels things with the hand, and a great deal of knowledge can get into your mind through your fingers.

When the nerves connecting the brain with the eyes are destroyed or injured, as in blind people, the brain makes the hands do the work of the eyes. You know that if you go into a very dark

room where you can see nothing, by feeling with your hands you can find what you want, and move about without getting hurt or doing any damage. And then, too, you may have seen blind people using their fingers to read with, by feeling the raised letters in the books specially prepared for them, so making their fingers do the work of their eyes.

When one is deaf and dumb, he makes his hands do the work of his tongue, and by making different signs with them he can make people understand what he wants to say.

When we are separated from each other we can still talk together by using our hands to write with. You will think of many other ways in which we use our hands, and see how much you have to thank God for, for putting these most useful members in your body.

But although we may all have hands just alike, just as perfect and beautiful in shape and structure, how much more skillfully some are able to use their hands than others. This will show you that the hand needs training to make it the perfect servant of the mind, able to do exactly what the mind wants done.

You have, I am sure, already found this out in your writing, drawing, and other hand-work. What your hand puts onto the paper is often very different from the beautiful copy that you have in your mind, is it not? But the more the hand is used in useful work, the more skillful and able will it become.

Remember what we have learned about our bodies being the temple of God, and all our members for His use and glory, not ours. Then let your hands be trained for His use, for the more skillful they are, the better He can use them in His service.

Let Him have your hands, that He has made for His own use. Ask Him to take them and use them to do kind, helpful, loving deeds, and to keep them so that Satan cannot use them to do naughty, unkind actions with.

Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of your love.
--Frances Ridley Havergal, Hymn: Take My Life and Let It Be, 1874.

--Present Truth, December 15, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 26, "The Beauty of the Lord".

Chapter 103

Bottled Sunshine

George Stephenson said that fire from a piece of coal is "bottled sunshine" of long ages past.

The coal that glows in the grate, giving out so much warmth and comfort, was once part of a living tree, drinking in the sunbeams and storing them away just like the trees do now. These old trees were buried beneath the ground, and gradually turned to coal, but the sunbeams were still there, only waiting for heat to set them free again.

And now when the days are cold and dull, and we have not the bright sunshine to warm and cheer us, we let out some of this "bottled sunshine," and are made comfortable and happy with its bright beams.

But do not forget what we have learned about the sunshine,--that all the light that shines in this world is the glory of God which the sun reflects, the light of His own glorious face.--See Article 7 "Light and Sight". The thought is also repeated in a few articles following that one. Then you will learn to see in the fire something of the brightness of the Lord himself, just "a gleam from the shining of His glory."--Ellen White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 96. You will know that all the blessing and comfort that the fire gives, come straight from Him.

And as the trees catch the sunbeams when the bright sun is shining on them, and keep them to give out again when and where they are needed, so may you when the light of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, shines upon you, catch His bright beams and shed them forth in dark places to warm and gladden and comfort those who are in gloom and sadness.--Present Truth, December 22, 1898--A children's companion to: The Everlasting Gospel, Chapter 27, "The Fullness of God".

Appendix A

Pantheism

There have, from time to time, been accusations in more recent times, that E.J. Waggoner taught "Pantheism", a particular spiritualistic doctrine that J.H. Kellogg espoused in the book The Living Temple, published in the year 1903. Wikipedia states: "Pantheism is the belief that all of reality is identical with divinity, or that everything composes an all-encompassing, immanent god."

The danger of the theory is that if God is already in all things, then there is no need for atonement, redemption, or salvation. Even the value of the Bible comes into question, for if God is already within you, why do you need an outward guide? Why not just follow your own inbuilt "holy" impressions?

Lucifer, during the rebellion in heaven, taught a similar error, proclaiming that the angels were "holy" and did not need an "external law":

"Leaving his place in the immediate presence of the Father, Lucifer went forth to diffuse the spirit of discontent among the angels. He worked with mysterious secrecy, and for a time concealed his real purpose under an appearance of reverence for God. He began to insinuate doubts concerning the laws that governed heavenly beings, intimating that though laws might be necessary for the inhabitants of the worlds, angels, being more

exalted, needed no such restraint, for their own wisdom was a sufficient guide. They were not beings that could bring dishonor to God; all their thoughts were holy; it was no more possible for them than for God himself to err."--Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 37.

A similar error was met by Ellen White in the early days of the Advent movement. She writes: "In New Hampshire [in the year 1850] there were those who were active in disseminating false ideas in regard to God. Light was given me that these men were making the truth of no effect by their ideas, some of which led to free-lovism. I was shown that these men were seducing souls by presenting speculative theories regarding God. ...

Among other views, they held that those once sanctified could not sin, and this they were presenting as gospel food. Their false theories, with their burden of deceptive influence, were working great harm to themselves and to others. They were gaining a spiritualistic power over those who could not see the evil of these beautifully clothed theories.

Great evils had already resulted. The doctrine that all were holy had led to the belief that the affections of the sanctified were never in danger of leading astray. The result of this belief was the fulfillment of the evil desires of hearts which, though professedly sanctified, were far from purity of thought and practice.

This is only one of the instances in which I was called upon to rebuke those who were presenting the doctrine of an impersonal god

diffused through nature, and the doctrine of holy flesh."--The Review and Herald, Jan. 21, 1904.

Especially in countries such as India and China, where Pantheistic teaching is more widespread, branches of healing philosophy have emerged wherein it is taught that the power to heal is within man, and that disease is simply a blockage or disruption of the flow of the life energy. Therefore, healing is accomplished by attempting to "unblock" the human agency, so that the "power of god within" can work properly again. This is contrary to the Christian idea, where true healing power flows from an external God, through Christ, and into the needy human agent.

Ellen White warned about "Pantheistic Theories" in 1905: "Today there are coming into educational institutions and into the churches everywhere spiritualistic teachings that undermine faith in God and in His word. The theory that God is an essence pervading all nature is received by many who profess to believe the Scriptures; but, however beautifully clothed, this theory is a most dangerous deception. It misrepresents God and is a dishonor to His greatness and majesty. And it surely tends not only to mislead, but to debase men. Darkness is its element, sensuality its sphere. The result of accepting it is separation from God. And to fallen human nature this means ruin.

Our condition through sin is unnatural, and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men,

and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ. Only through the blood of the Crucified One is there cleansing from sin. His grace alone can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature. The spiritualistic theories concerning God make His grace of no effect. If God is an essence pervading all nature, then He dwells in all men; and in order to attain holiness, man has only to develop the power within him.

These theories, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They do away with the necessity for the atonement and make man his own savior. These theories regarding God make His word of no effect, and those who accept them are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction.

They may regard virtue as better than vice; but, having shut out God from His rightful position of sovereignty, they place their dependence upon human power, which, without God, is worthless. The unaided human will has no real power to resist and overcome evil. The defenses of the soul are broken down. Man has no barrier against sin. When once the restraints of God's word and His Spirit are rejected, we know not to what depths one may sink."--The Ministry of Healing, p. 428-429.

"God's handiwork in nature is not God himself in nature. The things of nature are an expression of God's character and power; but we are not to regard nature as God. The artistic skill of human beings produces very beautiful workmanship, things that delight the

eye, and these things reveal to us something of the thought of the designer; but the thing made is not the maker. It is not the work, but the workman, that is counted worthy of honor. So while nature is an expression of God's thought, it is not nature, but the God of nature, that is to be exalted."--The Ministry of Healing, p. 413.

Apart from these Pantheistic ideas, there is a cardinal Christian doctrine about God's nature, that teaches of His "omnipresence". This is, obviously, not Pantheism, but just a recognition of the nature of the Holy Spirit to be in all places and situations. It is comforting to the Christian to know that, wherever he may find himself, in whatever solitary place or remote dungeon, the Holy Spirit cannot be shut out or excluded.

In this work on the "Everlasting Gospel," Waggoner does indeed make some statements that sound like Pantheism, especially when he refers to the "personal presence" of God in nature. For example: "Thus all the power in heaven and in earth is His. There is no manifestation of power, force, or energy, as men call it, in the universe, except the personal presence of the living Christ, by the Spirit of power. His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in all things."--Chapter 3, "Power and Wisdom".

Waggoner explains later that he is referring to the Holy Spirit's omnipresence: "Read the texts that tell plainly that the Holy Spirit is the direct Representative, the personal Presence of God, both Father and Son. So God is present in every place by His Spirit. "Do not I

fill heaven and earth? says the Lord." (Jeremiah 23:21)--Chapter 5, "The Spirit's Work".

At the same time, he is careful to uphold the Bible and faith in Christ, as the only source of holiness and purity. As far as I know, Waggoner was never rebuked by the servant of the Lord (Ellen White) for teaching the error of Pantheism, and he himself denied believing it on a number of occasions, including twice in the "Everlasting Gospel" series: "There is a worldwide difference between this truth and pantheism. The truth is that every created thing reveals God's power; the men of old "changed the truth of God into a lie" by saying that every created thing is God. So they worshiped and served the creature instead of the Creator."--Article 2, "The Beginning".

And: "Remember that the worker is not the thing worked. There is an infinite difference between the Creator and the thing created. The power that is seen in anything must not be confounded with the thing itself. Neither men nor any of the lower orders of creation are God, but His everlasting power and Divinity are seen in everything from highest to lowest. Nothing but sin cherished hinders its perfect manifestation."--Article 20, "The Animal Creation".

Therefore, I am happy to release these articles, since I think there is much light and valuable truth in them. On going through some of the rich truths contained in Waggoner's articles, I am deeply impressed by the closeness and clarity with which he saw the spiritual things in the natural world. If, therefore, he made some

statements that could be misunderstood, "what is the chaff to the wheat?" (Jeremiah 23:28)

We should remember that Waggoner is not here to explain exactly what he meant, and therefore should not jump on phrases that may not have been intended to mean what we might think they mean. Take up these studies in the spirit of love, which "thinks no evil," (1 Corinthians 13:5) and assume that if Waggoner made some seemingly difficult statements, they were intended to be understood within the framework of standard Christian truth.

He had a special message from God (as testified by Ellen White), a message which, had we already understood it, the Lord would not have sent it. We should rather fear that it is we who are liable to misunderstand that message, and therefore we should walk carefully. "Who can understand his errors? cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." (Psalm 19:12-14)

Frank Zimmerman, September 2016.

Appendix B

Letter from E. J. Waggoner, 1905

Battle Creek, Oct. 8, 1905

My Dear Little Pearl,

I was very glad to get your little note, and thought to reply at once; but I keep very busy, and when I have finished my study for the next day I feel much like going to bed. They have been having operations all day Sunday; but today there are none; so I am taking the opportunity to write some letters.

I have not been lecturing since the school opened, but I have had some speaking to do. You see Dr. E. was away and I was asked to talk to the patients twice a week till she came back. Now she takes the time. I have to speak in the tabernacle to night and next Sunday night.

I am working now in the Pathological Laboratory. It takes quite a bit of time, but I have learned a great deal from it. At 7 in the morning there is Chapel and Bible Study. Then we have two classes from 7:30 to 9:30. From then till 12 I study and do Laboratory work–mostly the latter–-and from 12 to 1 we have another class. Then we have two classes, covering from 2 to 6 p.m. so you see there is not much time left vacant.

It is such beautiful weather now, that I wish I could be where you are, among the trees.

I don't think that Edith understands the matter that she writes about very well herself. I know that she does not understand about the subject under consideration at Minneapolis, and the result. It would take a long while to write all about it, but I think that I can give you a few ideas in a few minutes, that may help you. I haven't see any complete, connected statements of Bro. Ballenger's ideas, so I cannot judge how far he is right or whether he has anything that is really new.

I might say, first, that I don't think that the denomination has ever "acknowledged that alongside with the heavenly sanctuary there was a new covenant." That, of course, they always believed, but what they did not and do not now believe, as far as I know, is that there was any heavenly sanctuary or priesthood dating from creation. Indeed, I think that very few have even thought about it at all; and I think that it is now very much as it was fifteen years ago and more, when scarcely any two, even among the ministers had the same views, or any definitely connected views at all, about the covenants.

I have never troubled myself to inquire what anybody else believed, but have simply taken what I found in the Bible; and here is a brief summary of the truth as it appears in the Bible: Sanctuary means holy place, and that is wherever God is--His dwelling place. No place built by hands, either in heaven or on earth, can contain

God, and be His dwelling place. Yet God has a localized place (not necessarily the same spot all the time) where He specially manifests himself. This place is composed of living creatures, not made with hands, just the same as His throne. (See Ezekiel 1) This dwelling place and throne are from before the creation of the world--as early as there were any living creatures in the universe.

As long as, or, ever since there have been created beings, there has been worship of God, and a priesthood, and this will be so as long as there are created beings in existence--throughout eternity Christ is the Mediator, that is, the means of communication and connection between men (and all other living creatures, for that matter) and God. While there was no sacrifice for sin before sin existed, and will not be after sin is blotted out, there was and will be just as much need of the Mediator as there is now; for no created being can live without God.

As suggested by the living throne of God and the living temple, not made with hands, God's creatures are His real temple. Christ was the perfect representation of this and He so declared. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, it was for the purpose of bringing them at once to His Sanctuary, (Exodus 15) and dwelling in them. They were not submissive, and that plan could not be carried out then; and since they would not allow God to dwell in them (His proper dwelling place), He had them build Him a sanctuary that He might dwell among them.

But all the prophets knew that this was not the real temple, even for this earth, and that the sacrifices offered in connection with it amounted to nothing. The building of that sanctuary, and the making of that old covenant at that time did not in the least affect the reality--the real priesthood of God's everlasting covenant. That covenant was made known to Adam, and was specially confirmed to Abraham, who is the father of all who believe. Consequently we came in under the covenant to Abraham.

Everything that could ever be promised to anybody was promised to Abraham, and he had all the blessings of the Gospel that anybody has ever had. The new covenant, which will be made when the Lord comes, is new only in the sense that it is new to the whole house of Israel--i.e. the second covenant made with the people as a whole; but in detail it differs in no respect from that made with Abraham. It simply confirms to "the whole house of Israel" the blessings promised to Abraham and to his descendants as individuals, and it is made at the resurrection, the only time--the first time it could possibly be made with the whole house of Israel. (Ezekiel 37)

Of course this is but a brief outline, but it covers everything and every question that can possibly arise can be answered by what is here suggested. Perhaps it may help you somewhat. I have not a single copy of Everlasting Covenant now, but I am sending to London for some and when they come I will send you one. I could make things a good deal plainer now than when I wrote that book; but there is nothing that needs to be changed otherwise.

I was out to Ruby's two or three weeks ago, and grandma was there. She gave me a cushion cover that she wanted you to have particularly, and as I do not see any other way of getting it to you, I will send it by post.

Take good care of yourself and keep well. With much love,
Your own loving Papa

E.J. Waggoner

Note:

This letter from E. J. Waggoner to his daughter Pearl, is of interest as it shows that Waggoner did believe in a literal Sanctuary in heaven, which some have accused him of denying.

Appendix C

A Letter of Clarification

I am Ellis P. Howard, 86, son-in-law of Dr. E. J. Waggoner. I am writing this and I speak with considerable authority. So listen, please, for there have been so many false accusations.

He was called doctor because he was a medical doctor. He graduated as a surgeon from New York City Medical School. He practiced some, but his heart was in the ministry. One day at one of our California Camp meetings (Healdsburg), God revealed his Son, Jesus, to him as it were a television scene. He saw Jesus dying on the cross, an atonement, complete, for the human race. That picture never faded. It is the golden thread seen through all his writing.

Pearl, my wife, Dr. Waggoner's younger daughter, attended Washington Missionary College the winter of 1915-1916. We were under appointment to the mission field, by the General Conference. We were married at the close of the school term.

Pearl wanted to visit her father before going to Peru. So by train we went to Battle Creek, Michigan. Dr. Waggoner was serving as registrar in the large Battle Creek Sanitarium. He also served as Chaplain a great deal of the time. Pearl and I were most welcome in the Waggoner home. The doctor was married again, but Pearl knew his wife as she had worked in the publishing house when they lived in London and the Doctor was editor.

Our visit with Pearl's father was shortened by his sudden death, heart failure. He had had warning so submitted to a physical examination that very day by one of the best heart specialists in the world. He [Waggoner] was preparing a funeral sermon for a young person, for the next day. Then we ate a light supper and went to bed a little later. Just as he lay down his heart fluttered until it stopped. Edith called me to come quickly, but he was already gone. He was a great student. In London he had bought cheaply a great number of second hand books. I believe he had all of the "Fathers of the Catholic Church," and hundreds of histories. It took a joining house, with shelves to the ceiling to hold all his books. The above is just a little side light.

Now let us go to the large parlor of the Battle Creek Sanitarium. For several weeks, in May of 1916, Dr. Waggoner had been holding studies on "Righteousness by Faith." One morning I stepped in to listen. What wonderful truth from the lips of a wonderful preacher. Right up to the day of his funeral his favorite Bible theme was "Christ and His Righteousness."

All through his several books it is the theme of "Christ and His Righteousness." Pearl and I have loaned to Elder L. E. Froom, permanently several of Dr. Waggoner's books. They were to be passed on by him finally to the James White Library. Elder Froom has some important secret letters in his files. Dr. J. H. Kellogg was a close family friend. He became mixed up in Pantheism. He tried to persuade Dr. Waggoner. The Lord warned the Doctor through Sister

White. He heeded the warning. I will tell you about it and about a personal letter in the files of L.E. Froom.

Now Dr. Waggoner wrote a letter to Dr. Kellogg, trying to persuade him against Pantheism, but Dr. Kellogg would not listen. It is this letter that Elder Froom has.

Now a small writing of several pages, savoring of a tinge of Pantheism, was on the writing desk at Dr. Waggoner's when Pearl and I arrived from Washington D. C. for our visit. On the back of this pad was written, "not for print." Yet months later it was printed locally. Dr. E. J. Waggoner's name was typewritten to end it. Now listen. I have good reason to believe that Edith wrote it and not the doctor.

Why, partly? Dr. Waggoner was a very strong believer in the atonement through Christ on the cross. It permeates all his books except Fathers of the Catholic Church which consists mainly of quotations from "Church Fathers." A person who accepts the atonement through Christ cannot be a Pantheist. See Ministry of Healing, Chapter "A True Knowledge of God."

Dr. E.J. Waggoner could not have been dropped from the church for apostasy because he never left the truth. He taught the truth to the day of his death.

Let us look briefly at his marriage. It was his wife, Jessie, who obtained the divorce right here in the states while he was on a trip to

London. Now I am going to reveal a family secret--I am the only person still living at 86 who can reveal this secret. I do it only to clear Dr. E.J. Waggoner's name, as I hope.

One day many years back Pearl, my wonderful wife, received a letter from her mother which made her very sad. Her mother had become engaged to a young Englishman from London. At this same time she applied for a divorce in California. Now this divorce was granted. And thus Jessie F. Moser Waggoner became a divorcee with the full intention of marrying this young Englishman. But something happened and she never did marry this young man. I had met him but Pearl and I opposed the move, very strongly.

At this very time Dr. E.J. Waggoner was in London. Of course he knew about it and had it been left to him there would never have been a divorce. Yet Doctor Waggoner was blamed for the divorce, and also because he remarried. It was only well after the divorce that he remarried. And before he remarried he consulted with several of his very best friends, ministers, editors etc., both in England and the USA.

And his two very best friends here in the USA were Elders W.A. Spicer and M.C. Wilcox, editor of the Review and Herald. Elder Spicer told me he had learned more from Dr. E.J. Waggoner than from anyone living on this earth. I knew and loved the Spicer's, all the family except I only knew of a son. The same with M.C. Wilcox and brother. Wonderful men and wonderful SDA's and they were

loyal, completely, to Dr. Waggoner. During the years of great trial for Dr. Waggoner these men stood by him.

Doctor Waggoner never criticized or showed any anger. He never opposed the truth, but always taught it. Pearl, my wife, says he was the finest Christian who lived. He never criticized the General Conference. He was happy that Pearl and I had been called to the mission field by the General Conference. He prayed for our success and for the Lord's work. I fully expect to see Dr. E.J. Waggoner and A.T. Jones in the kingdom. God will take care of the past, the present and the future.

Now a word about Jessie F. Moser Waggoner. She was sorry for some things she did, but she could not undo what she had done. She dropped Waggoner from her name. Dr. E.J. Waggoner was dropped from the church but Jessie F. Moser was not dropped. Now all this took place during a time of physical weakness in her life. Now there is never an excuse for sin, but God knows all the circumstances and He loves to receive the one who has made a mistake.

This is only one of dozens of similar quotations. We read: "Christ looks at the spirit, and when He sees us carrying our burden with faith, His perfect holiness atones for our shortcomings. When we do our best, He becomes our righteousness."--Selected Messages, No.1, page 368.

Jessie F. Moser, Pennsylvania Dutch, was very, very bright, and a thorough going Christian SDA. She settled down in Glendale,

California. Her elder daughter, Bessie I. Harrower, who was considered wealthy, provided her with a nice home on East Broadway across from the Harrower Laboratory. She became a member of the large Glendale Church. They constantly called upon her brilliant mind and talent to help out in the Sabbath School Department. She died in Glendale at the age of 84, heart failure, while sitting in an old fashioned rocker. She was not sick, same as Dr. E.J. Waggoner. I expect to meet her in the kingdom and also Dr. E.J. Waggoner.

While Pearl and I were in Battle Creek for a short time in 1916, part of May, June and July, A. T. Jones was in Kalamazoo, Michigan, holding an old fashioned SDA public effort, and what did he preach? It was plain Seventh-day Adventist teaching. Jones was famous for his maps, and knowledge of history. He had been dropped from the church. I ask why? Please don't even try to answer. Leave it in the hands of God. A. T. was an old family friend. Pearl, when little, used to sit on his lap and listen to Bible stories. She loved Elder Jones and so did I. I expect to meet A. T. Jones in the Kingdom so soon to come.

I feel like writing much more. However, I have given enough for you to understand the reasons for some things. And how wonderful is our Heavenly Father and the wonderful message He has committed to us, the Remnant Church.

Ellis P. Howard (son-in-law of Dr. E. J. Waggoner), 1972

Note:

This letter from E. J. Waggoner's son-in-law gives some interesting details and testimony. He denies that Waggoner was involved in Pantheism.

Ellis P. Howard

May 1, 1972

How I spend my sustentation years. Because of bad amoebic dysentery and ten years of malaria I was limited in my capacity to do things. Yet I won many to the truth,--one university graduate couple and five children, very bitter against the truth. And several more. An angel presence, beautiful light floods my spirit of prophecy books by my side one night.

It must have been an angel which one day, I was about to have a real terrible collision. I must have been as close as an inch from the next auto ahead of me, and going at 20 miles per hour, and it must have been an angel who literally picked up my car and set it down in the next lane. Wonderful. But there is another similar.

My deepest and most interesting and absorbing spiritual thought for study has been "God's Love for a Lost Race." I divide this in about five thoughts not studies. They would consist of Bible texts, and spirit of prophecy quotations

I have felt so sorry through the years that Dr. Kellogg accepted Pantheism. I am sure the brethren tried to show him how wrong is Pantheism. It is a very subtle form of Pantheism. It is all through India. The giant banyan tree, hundreds, of years old, having withstood winds of one hundred miles an hour. It is beautiful and its shade is very welcome to scores of animals or man. The very long

limbs have roots that drop down to the ground and support the limbs. Anyone can admire it. Certainly the unseen power of God is manifest in this beautiful tree. But hidden in the admiration of God's beautiful creation there is danger lest we worship the tree and not the Creator.

Here are the beautiful flowers and God's power is manifest, but we must not worship the flower. To make out that nature is God is Pantheism. It can be a very subtle and deceptive form of spiritualism.

Dr. Kellogg removed a large internal tumor from my grandmother, free, in 1894.

P.S. I have still some for the future if acceptable.