

GOOD TIDINGS

A RELIGIOUS MESSAGE, PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY
THE REFORMED MENNONITE CHURCH, FOR THE
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EDITORIAL

We gratefully appreciate the encouragement given by comments on "Good Tidings," and by the number of subscriptions sent us. As the work of promoting interest in the spiritual cause is to be continuous, we wish the members to send regularly brief articles on scripture subjects for the benefit of the hundreds of readers, both members and friends. Each one who has the gift of writing may lay stone upon stone on the "good foundation against the time to come." We can have spiritual converse, and reach with spiritual messages, those whom we never meet, or who rarely hear a sermon.

Sound interpretations may be helpful to those who "halt between two opinions." To read these messages by snatches may be a morsel to refresh the weary energies. Those who wish to subscribe for themselves and friends should do so promptly that we may know the number wanted for the next issue.

Give us the address of friends to whom you wish us to send sample copies.

THANKSGIVING

The earliest Harvest Thanksgiving in America was held by the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth in 1621. Congress recommended a day of thanksgiving in 1784 for the return of peace after the Revolution. Washington appointed such a day in 1789 after the adoption of the Constitution, and in 1795 for the general benefits and welfare of the nation. Since 1863 the Presidents have always issued proclamations appointing the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.

King David was gladdened by the willingness shown by his subjects in offering means for the building of the Temple, and expressed the fullness of his heart in praise to God: "O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build Thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own." 1 Chron. 29: 16.

This is sentiment, agreeing with the understanding of us all that from one Source come all our blessings, and to Him our praise is due for all temporal and spiritual mercies. We say mercies, for in our unworthiness we "are by the grace of God what we are."

Children are closely allied with their parents by their sense of dependence. The sense of dependence on our Creator and the attractiveness of His works beget in us a reasonable love to Him, and a desire for association with Him.

The Old Testament is replete with evidence of thanksgiving in the God-fearing. The New Testament message rests on the love of God to an ungrateful race. If the function of our spiritual life were not disordered, all intelligent beings would conform to the divine laws, and holy virtues would abound more than sin and depravity.

Love is the noblest endowment leading us in nearness to God and to one another.

The Savior sanctified it as chief among all commandments. Our most earnest effort then should be to practice it. Its office is to bring us into communion with God and into loving fellowship with one another. It banishes all harm from the lives of the redeemed. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Rom. 13: 10.

The fact that this reasonable relation is not general is evidence to the Scripture testimony of the transgression of God's law. Pardon is offered to all who will accept the gift of God's love.

Thanksgiving for the Mediatorial Service will be the theme now, and forever, of those who have spiritual "peace."

WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?

This question probably has come to most of us, for it is universally asked. There seems to be an inborn impression that we must do something for God. Many endeavor to answer this question. From without and from within come many suggestions with which we are naturally inclined to compromise. Many are taught from the cradle some plan of salvation. Some read the Bible, but even this with some fails to answer the question—"What must we do to be saved?"

Would it seem too extreme to say: "We must do nothing to be saved?" We know that our salvation depends not upon what we do, but upon the spirit in which we do things. It is this spirit within us that responds to God's wishes. Oh! what a relief not to have a hard, cold life mapped out for us. Can it be true that the great God would have us do nothing for Him? This interpretation seems true to the writer. All he desires of us is to live to love. But this condition can

only exist when we have faith in God above all else. A faith to cause us to come to Him with our question—"What must we do to be saved?"

The New Testament answer is, "Believe in Jesus and live." Many people profess to believe in Jesus, but to believe means to try to live as He has taught us to live. We believe a thing only when we have sufficient faith to accept and to allow it to influence our lives, not *sometimes*, but *always*.

We can truly know only after Jesus tells us and shows us how, and then we can better understand His answer to our question—"What must we do to be saved?" We must learn to be faithful and obedient so that God may give us true knowledge. Then God becomes to us a loving Father.

Let us pray that His Spirit shall overshadow us, so that we may overcome all opposing influence, believing that His Spirit will guide our every step. Though we have but one step to take at a time we do not know which shall take us before the Bar of Judgment.

Lancaster, Pa.

M. H. B.

THE LAW

The law, given by Moses was the clearest revelation of God under the Old Testament covenant. It was revealed amidst thunder and lightning, terror and glory marking its divine and awful authority.

It is one law, but has three aspects, moral, civil and ceremonial.—The Moral law is contained in the ten commandments, (the number ten expresses completeness, perfection) and is the center of the whole law. It is a moral code defining duty to God and man, and as a standard of moral action it is continuous.

The civil law, founded on justice and equity was adapted to the state of the

people who lived under this dispensation—to "the hardness of heart"—and regulated their dealings and relations to one another. Its principles of justice continue for all time to men in their carnal state, and are the basis of civil law amongst the more enlightened nations. In the new Covenant it is supplanted by a higher principle.

The ceremonial law was figurative and suggestive. Its observance was a continual reminder of moral infirmity and the need of atonement. It pointed forward to the one perfect sacrifice of Christ which could take away sin, by which its intent was fulfilled, and with which it ended.

The law had two purposes. It maintained moral and civil order for the nation, and preserved the purity of their worship separate from the idolotry and false religions of their neighbors and kept alive the faith in the one true God and the hope in the promised Messiah.

The other was its eternal purpose. Paul says the law is spiritual and by the law is the knowledge of sin; it convicts of sin and proves our guilt, and is therefore "a ministration of condemnation and of death written and engraven on stones." It cannot remove transgressions although it is said it was added because of them; it brings them into clearer view and increases the sense or consciousness of sin, and indeed multiplies them through the opposition of corrupt heart. It was so in the Apostles' experience: "sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; for without the law sin was dead "and sin that it might appear sin working death in me by the commandment, that sin might become exceedingly sinful." This is the mission of the law in our personal experience; because of sin, it effects death in us, to our own righteousness,

and to self-will. It cannot justify or impart life, but as the promise to Abraham preceded the law so it brings the realization of the need of it and becomes a tutor to lead us to Christ, where it is met by the atonement. Its service is continuous to the believer through life as the standard of holiness; quickened by the spirit it keeps alive an active sense of sin and daily infirmity, and again it is met by the intercession and abiding High priesthood of Christ.

There is sublimity and grandeur about the moral law. "Two things," says Kant, "fill my soul with ever increasing wonder and delight, the starry heavens above and the moral law within." It is "pure, holy, just and good." Christ honored it; he interpreted the spirit of it; he set the summary of it: love to God, and love to man as the fulfillment of the whole will of God. Every Christian heart, though sensible of its own limitations, aspires to it.—It is awful to the sinner; a mirror of holiness, and a revelation of his sinfulness, it expresses the absolute and eternal justice which transgression merits.

It has a fixed character; it is unalterable because it is based upon and is an expression of the unchangeable character of God. It is therefore of everlasting continuance and obligation. Gethsemane and Calvary are witnesses.

The law is imperative and must needs be kept, it must be vindicated, justified, and God who gave it justified it; by sending His Son into the world who kept the law, fulfilled its righteousness, paid the penalty for its transgression and wrought eternal redemption. He declared His righteousness, remained just, and is the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. "God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." 1 Cor. 1: 30.

Lampeter, Pa.

M. H. M

THE NEW CREATURE

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. 2 Cor. 5: 17.

It follows that such an one was, previous to conversion, an old creature. In reproving the disorderly members in the Corinthian Church, Paul declared that they did not fully manifest the new life. Visioning mankind in their natural state, or as they show the old creature, we see them obeying their own wills. In this state their fruits are at variance with those of the New Creature. In the fifth Chapter of Galatians, Paul enumerates the fruits of the spirit born by the new Creature, and also the works of the flesh, shown by the old creature. While two antagonistic armies are arrayed against each other we do not expect peace. Such is the antagonism between the spirit and the flesh. Can any one love another and inflict on him harm? "Can sweet and bitter waters flow from the same fountain?" James 3: 11.

If we agree that this cannot be, where will we look for the new creature? Those who fulfill the scripture doctrines, in their every day life; not in those who say, and do not. Matt. 23: 3. Do we find those of the spirit who vie with each other to gain honor for themselves? We find them in the lives of those who try to provoke one another to love and to good works. Heb. 10: 24. If we love anything more than the doctrine of Christ we are not worthy of Him for we are not loyal citizens of His kingdom. If we do not seek to be at peace with others even with our enemies we are not new Creatures. We are taught to prove all things and to hold fast that which is good. We can prove what is good when we take the Divine counsel, as our standard. "Make the tree good and the fruit shall be good." Matt. 12: 33; Luke 6: 45.

Roherstown, Pa.

H. S. M.

THE RESURRECTION

Everlasting life is associated with the resurrection of Christ, because in Him we have evidence of dominion over death. The Savior said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whosoever believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." We learn from this scripture that through the resurrection comes the fullness of eternal life. The birth, life, death, resurrection, all pertains to the redemption.

We are to come from spiritual death to spiritual life. This is the first resurrection. Over them who have part in the first resurrection the second death hath no power. By the second death we understand the doom unto perdition. Those who have attained unto the first resurrection are called Kings and priests, who shall reign with Christ a thousand years. By the thousand years we understand the Gospel age. Christ will reign in His Saints from Pentecost until His second coming. The life they live, is the life that is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is their life, shall appear then shall they also appear with Him in glory.

Christ proves our bodily resurrection by his own bodily resurrection. Paul assures the Corinthians that Christ is risen, and that in His resurrection lies all hope of redemption.

Job says, "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet, in my flesh, shall I see God."

We then have an infinite interest in the resurrection of Christ. Our hope in the resurrection from death to a life of glory rests in the resurrection of Christ. Satan was permitted, through his wicked servants, to crucify the Savior. The third day He rose triumphantly from the grave in defiance of

death. He could exclaim, "Oh grave! where is thy victory!"

After he was risen, He revealed Himself to His disciples, showing them that He was the Master who loved them. The notable miracles displayed at the time of the crucifixion and resurrection attest His divinity.

If we entertain a hope in Him, then we must live the life that He sanctions. We cannot escape judgment. The time of judgment may soon come. It is to come as a thief in the night. How wishful that we may appear with Him in glory! Our preparation must be before that day. He will be a terror to those not ready to meet Him! They will wish the mountains and the rocks to fall on them to hide them from the presence of Him that sitteth on the throne.

Of those who are risen with Christ, it may be said, they are not dwelling on the earth, for their affections are strongly set on things above. They have entered the highway of the Lord, the way of holiness. "The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those, the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there."

Paradise, Pa.

J. W.

THE TWO KINGDOMS

When we read the Old Testament we are impressed with the dreadful wars and cruelties that were practiced. Innocent women and children were put to death in the most cruel ways, oft times with the sanction or command of God. How different are the gentle teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, where love and peace are the prevailing theme. In earlier times man was under a different dispensation. He was under hardness of heart. Rewards

for obedience to the commands of God were bestowed in temporal blessings. In the Old Testament there are many references to the promise of the woman's seed. The patriarchs, Moses, the prophets, the holy men of old, prophesied or foretold the coming of the Son of God, who would establish a new kingdom, different from all kingdoms that preceded it. The striking annunciation made to Mary of the coming of her infant son, the beautiful story of the star seen in the east, the wonderful proclamation of the birth of Christ by Angels to the lowly Shepherds on the plains of Judea, the finding of Jesus, the envy and wrath of Herod, the flight in to Egypt, all fulfill the prophecy. This is so sublime and yet so simple a narrative that we are filled with awe and reverence in reading it.

When Jesus began to teach of the New kingdom of "peace on earth, good will to men," choosing for His followers the most humble men, even fishermen, we can imagine the disappointment of the learned Rabbis. They were looking for a Prince and King, who would establish a kingdom on earth far exceeding in power and glory anything ever known. It is no wonder that even his lowly disciples were filled with a desire to be greatest in the coming kingdom.

We do not find that Jesus tried to change the world and its power. He left the law concerning justice (and the sword) as Moses had given it. That same law now controls the world, making it a desirable dwelling place for mankind. The law is for the punishment of the wicked, and the protection of the good. To a world steeped in sin and iniquity, Jesus came as a mediator between God and mankind. By the sacrifice of his own life He redeemed us and restored to us the divine favor. With the coming of Jesus we have a new dispensation. "Peace on earth,

good will to men," implies a new birth, a change of heart so that we can love all men even our enemies. We are chosen out of the world. We become willing followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, and we are desirous of manifesting the fruits of the Christ-life.

Since the advent of Christ there are two distinct kingdoms. If we are subjects in the worldly kingdom, it is our duty to take an interest in its good government, answer all calls for service, to carry out all the laws of that kingdom, even to the most extreme sacrifice. We should be faithful in helping to elect good officials, and we would be disloyal and inconsistent if we did not sustain them in office. But, Jesus by His convicting grace, calls us out of the worldly kingdom, into that of his dear Son, where He rules in our changed hearts. He bids us heed His commands, and seek a better and more enduring substance in heaven, that treasure which will remain when this earth and all therein shall pass away. We have plain gospel truth to be our guide and passport.

The way is now open for every soul to make choice. We are free agents. We can decide in which one of the two kingdoms we will serve. Christ said "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It is to-day that we may hear His voice. Will we accept, or will we refuse His call? May God help us make a wise choice.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

WATCHING

In the 5th Chapter of Paul to the Ephesians, 6th and 7th verses, we find

these words: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be ye not therefore partakers with them."

Since Christendom is in such a confused state, we felt constrained to present some thoughts upon the above text.

In a recent interview with a friend, who was apparently interested in the salvation of the soul, we found that he was perplexed concerning the separation of the church from all unfaithful worship. As this is no exceptional case, but is very general, we conclude that a ground for it should be presented.

The apostle, in addressing the Ephesians, was conscious of the fact that those existed who would deceive, hence the warning, "Let no man deceive you with vain words." The example, just cited, relative to the confused minds is the result of deception. How may it be avoided? Since man does not have the power to confer virtue or righteousness, we should heed the One who has, and humbly present ourselves at the throne of grace. When we attain to the state wherein we feel our absolute helplessness, our unsaved and hopeless condition, we will then be ready to hear and accept that beautiful and comforting invitation of the Savior, "Come unto me, etc."

As there is no salvation outside of Christ, and as there is no other doctrine than that which he established, and which was maintained by the disciples, we cannot be deceived if we allow ourselves to be taught and admonished by the counsel given. The Savior promised his followers to send a witness in the form of the Holy Spirit as a guide, and to comfort them upon the journey. Those who are in possession of this gift are God's children. All scripture is given for their encouragement and

spiritual uplift, and they love to read and act in obedience to its precepts.

We will notice that God in all ages exacted obedience of His people. We have numerous examples in Old Testament history of the wrath of God upon those who were disobedient. John says in his Epistle 2:4, "He that saith I know Him and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." The promptings of the spirit of all regenerated souls coincide with all New Testament teachings. We contend, therefore, that the Christian Religion does not consist in an attempt to conform our lives to the literal precepts only, but rather to their spiritual import. We are assured that redeemed souls will not discard any gospel precepts, as all precepts are expressive of their experience in their lives.

The apostle warned against deception, for he knew human fallibility, and the possibility of us to become negligent in watching. "Be ye not therefore partakers with them." If any one was to notice some poor being standing upon the edge of a precipice in danger of being dashed into the great abyss below, would he not make an effort to warn him of his danger? Most assuredly. Then how much more does it become our duty to warn of danger in the Spiritual life?

No enlightened person could bid Godspeed to those who are in darkness. Therefore, they could not be partakers with them in worship, as they would detect "the voice of the stranger, and would flee."

We hope that it may be seen that it is in the spirit of love, and for the welfare of souls, that this separation is made, for to bid Godspeed and encouragement to those void of the spiritual fruit, would be similar to give the one on the precipice a push, into the chasm of spiritual destruction.

We have endeavored, in this comment, to present the truth as it is revealed. The word of God is not opinionated. We are free to have our opinions only so far as they harmonize with truth.

My only motive in submitting this is that it may be an incentive for deep minded persons to consult the word of truth that they may keep watchful, and, "let no man deceive you with vain words:" but take the New Testament as "The man of counsel."

Mechanicsburg, Pa.

B. K. M.

HYMN

"Let not your heart be troubled." John 14: 1.

Hear those blessed words of Jesus
 "Let your heart ne'er troubled be;"
 We believe His promise gracious
 When His wondrous love we see.

Sometimes doubts and fears assail us,
 Hiding Jesus from our sight
 Comfortless He will not leave us;
 He will be our source of light.

And when sorrow overwhelms us—
 Death may call our loved away,
 Then will Jesus come to cheer us
 Tell of heaven and endless day.

Holy spirit, breath of heaven,
 Condescend to dwell with us;
 Gift of God so freely given,
 Comforter, abide with us.
 Waynesboro, Pa. A. F.

GROUND FOR EXCOMMUNICA- TION AND THE AVOIDANCE OR BANNING OF UNFAITH- FUL MEMBERS

Christ authorized both the excommunication and ban as found on record (Matt. 18: 15, 18): "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with

thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

In the above the Savior points to an example, which, those to whom He spoke, could not misunderstand, for they knew that Jews had no dealings, intercourse, or company with heathens and publicans, not even in the eating of social meals, which is verified by the instance that the Jews found fault with the Savior for eating with publicans and sinners, and by the remark of the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well: "How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4: 9); also by Peter's apology to the household of Cornelius; "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation." (Acts 10: 28.) The fact that the Savior ate with publicans and sinners has no bearing on the command given in Matthew 18: 17, for the latter (specifying a practice) was to go into effect when the church would be established after His death and resurrection.

It is plain that the disciples would understand that He referred to a natural avoidance which was to be practiced daily and not to the Lord's supper which at that time had not been instituted. The same Jews to whom He gave the instruction in Mathew 18, were the builders of the church afterwards; and they could not have forgotten the example He cited as it was

later written by Matthew. When Paul wrote "No not to eat" he had been in company with the other apostles and unquestionably knew their views on the regulation of the church as they had understood the Savior. For him to have meant not to eat the Lord's supper, instead of a common meal, does not accord with the way in which he expresses himself in 1 Cor. 10, "The cup of the Lord," "The Lord's table." In 1 Cor. 5 the Apostle is specific in his instructions on avoidance. He plainly teaches that if such avoidance were practiced towards sinners in the world it would cause such embarrassment that believers would be necessitated to go out of the world: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators, yet not together with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous or an idolater or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no, not to eat."

The manner of avoidance is so well defined that we cannot escape the conclusion that apostate members are to be avoided otherwise and not only at the Lord's supper. The terms "No company," "not to eat" have no exposition except in the example given by the Savior of 'heathens and publicans.' The no intercourse with them by the Jews is established by the previous references. We are necessitated through scripture testimony to accept as a fact, the social avoidance of excommunicated members. For additional scripture authority we quote the following: "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." (Rom. 16:

17.) "Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." (2 Thes. 3:16.) "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but busy bodies, now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread, and if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." (2 Thes. 3:11, 13.)

All members of the church are professedly members of the body of Christ and members one of another, without respect to sex or relation in life. A relation, such as husband and wife, or parent and child, does not absolve any one from keeping the commandments of Christ and the apostles. In Matt. 18:15, 18 Christ enjoined the duty of laboring for the recovery of erring brethren. No relation in life exempts any one from a faithful discharge of that duty. If the husband errs the wife owes the duty of love to tell him of his error; if he fails to accept the service, her duty is to tell one or two more; if these fail to make him sensible of his error she shall call the assistance of the church; if he refuses to hear the church she will unite with the church in holding him as Christ commanded. The husband will do the same in case the wife is separated; and also the parents will observe the command if their children fall away, and children likewise if their parents fall into a similar condition.

The church is not one member but many, and these are members one of another. Christ being the head, all the members are subject to Him. They owe allegiance to Him above all other considerations. All natural relations must yield to the higher spiritual re-

lation to Christ. Christ therefore, in Matt. 18:15, 18, does not recognize natural relations, but enjoins a duty to be observed without respect of person or relation in life. In 1 Cor. 5:11, 13, Paul makes no allowance for the family relation, "not to keep company, no not to eat." For example if one member of a family falls away from the church and all the members of the church, except those of the family, avoid him, how could such practice be reconciled with Matt. 18:15, 18, and 1 Cor. 5:11, 13? Again, if in a family one member falls away and the other believing members of the family do not avoid him, but avoid all other fallen members, they are respectors of person. Such practice plainly militates against the unity of the church and against plain scripture teaching. In Rom. 16:17, "Avoid them" and in 2 Thes. 3:6, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly," there is no intimation of any member being absolved from this duty on account of the family relation. 2 Thes. 2:14, "Have no company with him that he may be ashamed," is binding upon every member of the church.

God is not honored by His professed children unless they labor in one accord, according to his command. When He by written law began to direct worship He enjoined unity by requiring the worshipers to come to one altar. When worship, or suggested worship, aside from what He had instituted was accepted the penalty was death to the Israelites. Adultery paid the death penalty because it was a wrong to others; murder merited the same penalty when it was wilful. Thus by severe means the Lord guarded His law from violation under the old dispensation. God commanded the altar to be built of whole stones. No tool of iron was per-

mitted to be used to dress the stone. If man undertook to dress the stone he polluted the altar. So we must accept Christ and His word without interpreting it to suit our convenience.

For the preservation of true worship, God commanded severe reproof for enticers to idolatry. "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or thy wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul entice thee secretly, saying, Let us serve other Gods which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers, namely of the gods of the people which are around about you, nigh unto thee or afar off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth, thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him, but thou shalt surely kill him, thine hand shall be first upon him." (Deut. 13:6, 9.)

When Christ came to restore the principle of right or true love to God, and pure love among mankind, He built the church (or authorized it) for the preservation of that principle, and He directs that when any believer violates obedience to God by persistently doing so or by accepting heretical doctrines, or transgressing against others without making amends he is to be disowned for impenitence. The disowning or ban is to be practiced through love for the correction of the erring one, that contrition may follow a sense of shame before God for a broken vow. To this end of necessity there can be no respect of persons, for as a neglect to observe the avoidance on the part of anyone no matter how closely related to the erring one (those most nearly related) will destroy the designed effect of the avoidance.

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

For important events suitable preparation is made. John The Baptist is classed among the prophets, because he was a forerunner of Christ. "Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Malachi: 4, 5.

The plan of salvation requires different operations to fit the soul for the indwelling of the spirit of eternal life as was evidenced on Pentecost when God dedicated souls as living temples by the influx of His Spirit. Those who were so consecrated were first under the ministry of the law of Moses and of the doctrine commanding them to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance," which meant a cleansing. To cleanse a vessel means to fit it for use. The cleansing is not the actual use, but a fitting for use. So the preparation of repentance fits us for the spiritual service, into which the Holy Ghost, under Christ's ministry, directs us.

Had Christ not ascended, the Holy Ghost would not have come. We may come to repentance and not come to Christ, for after seeing our sinfulness we may satisfy ourselves with the observance of baptism and other church forms, and continue to live after the flesh as before. Such formal religion is popular and seduces many who are not willing to forsake all their fleshly desires.

Old Testament history recites the same conditions of perverseness. Then all the nations, except the Israelites, were idol worshipers. Even the Israelites were led into idolatry and lost their promises. The influence of a large number following a certain course has strong bearing upon us; nevertheless, the Savior warns us by saying, "Many are on the broad way of destruction." The Lord says, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his

arm." Jer. 17:5. Contrariwise it is said: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is."

Sorrow for sin opens the way for pardon, which is the avenue to Christ, through the ministry of John the Baptist. The way into God's kingdom is through the "Door," Jesus Christ, which means a full compliance with the spiritual laws revealed by the author of the Gospel. We can reserve no absolute rights to ourselves when we agree to be servants. We are then subjects to our chosen Master, and act under His bidding. We serve God or Mammon, and our reward is according to our service—Life or death.

Portland, Oregon.

I. H.

THE TWO WAYS

"Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it." Mat. 7:14 "For wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereat." Mat. 7:13. All mankind are on one of these ways. What seems remarkable is that the multitudes are traveling upon the broad way, which, according to scripture declaration, leads to destruction. Man was the crowning part of creation, endowed with faculties of mind and consciousness of right and wrong. These powers were weakened in our first parents through the fall which disability was transmitted to all their posterity. This accounts for the multitude choosing the broad way. It is not reasonable that mankind should choose the way of destruction, and they would not, were their reasoning powers not weakened or perverted. As we grow to years of discretion we all enter the broad way, for it is the carnal, natural way of the flesh.

We, like the prodigal, go away from our Father's house. We are free agents. We are given our inheritance or talents to either glorify God and accept salvation, or prostitute them to sinful and selfish ends. We go into "a far country," away from the good influences of the Father's house, and spurn the grace which He offers us. Being determined to gratify the desires of the flesh, we are open to many inducements and enticements. We may meet with reverses and disappointments, but they fail to impress us, and we continue upon the broad way.

Some, like the Prodigal, may become riotous and excessive and may waste their substance. They may come to want—the famine overtakes them. The grace of God checks their mad career and they realize that all is "vanity and vexation of spirit."

They become humbled and resolve to return to their Father. They forsake the broad way and strive to enter in at the strait gate to get on the narrow way of life. The Savior said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." Luke 13: 24.

We must strive lawfully. We must forsake all the attachments of the broad way—all selfish gratifications. We must realize that "We are wretched and miserable and poor and blind, and naked (Rev. 3: 17), and that we must be clothed upon by the righteousness of Christ—the garment of salvation. Christ guards the gate and we cannot enter until we have accepted the terms and through contrition of spirit have received through Him the qualifications—which is a sanctified and renewed heart ruled by peace and love.

Many, we have reason to believe, comfort themselves that they have forsaken the broad way and are upon the narrow way of life. Their fruits,

however, testify that they are deceived. In their delusion they have persuaded themselves that there is a *middle way*—not quite so broad and not quite so narrow, which leads to the Celestial City. Sad will be their fate unless they "come to themselves," like the Prodigal, and with humble hearts return to the Father's house. The Prophet says, "There is a way that seemeth right unto man but the end thereof is the way of death." How sad must be the reflection of Jesus who consecrated this narrow way to life by His perfect obedience, and sealed it on the Cross,—to behold how few are found upon it; how few are willing to make the sacrifice; how few are willing to suffer with Him! He lamented over Jerusalem that they were not willing to be gathered in. Well may He lament that the multitude in our day reject the gracious call, "Come unto me that ye may have life," and that they rather choose the way of death. We conclude that He suffered and died almost in vain. Thanks be to God, there are some who are willing to "deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him." Matt. 16: 24. Yet some testify to the glorious truth that "He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel," 2 Tim. 1: 10, and that He dispelled the spiritual darkness which reigned in many hearts to let in the Heavenly light. He makes the narrow way to them a "way of pleasantness and a path of peace," and gives them the blessed promise to "Sit with Him in His throne," (Rev. 3: 21,) and to share His immortal glory in Heaven. Thus ends the narrow way, but the broad way ends in outer darkness and eternal death. *Which way will we choose?* Wisdom dictates to choose the narrow way.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

COMMUNION OF INTEREST

In life there are influences which we call good and evil. The solace which comes to the soul is largely dependent upon the ability to discriminate between good and evil. The contrast of the good and evil influences in life is apparent on every hand. Very often the one is as opposite to the other as day is to night. The two blend into each other in the same way as day and night, but sometimes they blend into each other as twilight turns into night or as ebbing life passes into death. When the contrast is as apparent as in day and night, or in life and death, the mind can easily discriminate, but when there is a blending of the two then the mind may be taxed to discriminate.

Many of our experiences in life are analogous. We all have our well-being at heart, and are therefore often confronted with the same doubts and perplexities. We are glad to turn to Scripture for a solution and a guide in our varied experience.

First of all we are informed that unless a man is born again he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Here is a condition which is in direct contrast with our own selfish lives. In this experience there is much to think of which is worth-while. In regeneration all will be brought upon a common plane. The life is no longer ruled by its impulses, passions and desires, which have their origin in self, but instead it will be controlled by that Spirit which has its origin in Divinity. Here we find a potent influence to create a communion of interests.

This is not all, God having knowledge of the extent of human weakness and fallibility, made provision for our spiritual welfare. In our varied duties and activities incident to this life, we are constantly exposed to hurtful tempta-

tions. In view of this the Divine Teacher commanded that, "If thy brother trespass against thee, tell him his fault between thee and him alone. What a sacred command for the perpetuation of love and confidence! All the saints upon earth are associated inseparably—they have interests in common.

Our God is a God of order. Neglected duties bring about disorder. Therefore, we must cherish the command that, "Ye love one another," as "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Feelings of hate or envy create disorder. The idea then of approaching each other on account of misgivings is to remove every possibility for disorder to occur. A development in our lives along this line brings about a condition in contrast with that which is common in the world. There will be a manifestation of True Life.

Lima, Ohio.

P. S.

THE HOLY KISS

"Greet ye one another with a holy Kiss." 1 Cor. 16:20.

This salutation is commanded by Paul at the close of Romans, First and Second Corinthians, First Thessalonians, and by Peter at the close of his First Epistle. It was in Old Testament usage, but was not commanded. It is expressive of the pledge of peace and goodwill, and signifies love. It may be called a christian courtesy to guard against the manifest tendency to division of church.

Our Savior did not command this greeting. He left the organization and discipline of the church largely to the appointed builders. Experience, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, seems to have impressed the authors of this precept with its benefits. In principle it compares with the unity exemplified in the

Lord's Supper. "We being many, are one bread and one body." 1 Cor. 10: 17. The causes which divide in doctrine and discipline hinder this religious greeting among divided professors: "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Cal. 3: 14. "Let brotherly love continue." Heb. 13: 1.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

POEM

Jesus Wept.—John 11:35.

Jesus wept, and so may we
When our loved in death we see.
Earth to earth and dust to dust
Let them mingle for they must.

Jesus rested in the tomb;
Blest, and robbed it of its gloom.
All who sleep in him are blest,
Their's will be an endless rest.

Jesus is the life, the way;
He's the mourner's hope and stay.
Here, we part in sorrow's night—
There, we'll meet in heavenly light.

Leave the dead in Jesus' care,
With Him heaven's bliss to share.
May this now our comfort be
Jesus' love has made them free.
Waynesboro, Pa. S. S. F.

THE CROSS

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Matt. 16: 24.

In this loving admonition we are taught of Him who is "The Way, The Truth and The Life," to sincerely regard the "drawing" of our Heavenly Father, by agreeing quickly with our adversary (God), whilst we are in the way with Him, that by the power of His love, our life might be brought into harmony with and in conformity to the life of Jesus,—that having the same mind in us which was also in Him who became obedient unto death, even the

death of the cross, *we* might prove the good acceptable and perfect will of the Father in presenting *our* bodies "as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God."

In its carnal state the mind will scarcely dispute the literal truth of the declaration, "Vanity, Vanity, all is Vanity, except to love God and Him only to serve," yet when taught of "that still small voice within," that this supreme love has fruition alone in a dying life, it would vainly shun the cross in "seeking out many inventions" for its consolation in compromising with error and delusion, disregarding His loving injunction, "Strive to enter in at the Strait gate," yet confirming the truth of His declaration, "many shall seek to enter in but few shall be able." Thus multitudes seek the consolation of His cross but few are desirous of its tribulations, without which there is no salvation, no hope of eternal life. "It is through much tribulation that we must enter into the Kingdom of God," and it is only this sympathy in suffering with Him that inspires to perfect obedience: "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments."

It is not in harmony with the natural inclination of man to bear the cross, nor indeed is it within his power, but by an implicit faith in Him "with whom all things are possible," a "living faith,"—a "faith that worketh by love,"—things are possible," a "living faith," world and self are made subject to His command, exemplified in the "bearing about in his body, the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life of Jesus might be also manifest in his mortal flesh." It is manifest in the renunciation of self and carnal reason, giving place to humility and godly sorrow and in that deep sense of unworthiness whereby the heart cries out, "Be merciful to me a sinner." It is manifest in the resurrec-

tion from a dead state unto a life wherein the affections transcend all earthly affections,—a life of continuous and perfect obedience, (though in infirmity), to “every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.” It is manifest in a faith coordinating with good works, and in that communion or fellowship of saints which constitutes the church of Christ, peculiarly distinguished by its marks of unity, peace and purity, for the establishment and perpetuity of which He suffered the ignominy and death of the cross, ascending again to the Father, “that of God, He might be made unto us, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”

Jesus Christ and Him crucified! Herein is perfected sanctity,—the perfect triumph over self, “which is of God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

They that would sincerely desire the subjugation of their inordinate affections for things created, who would forsake all, even life, to follow where He would lead, are they who eagerly bear their cross, not by reason of the commandment, but of reciprocal love, as it is written, “We love Him because He first loved us;” to whom its burden becomes light in possession of that joy and peace of mind “which passeth understanding;” to whom the drinking of the cup of His passion is esteemed a light affliction, as but for a moment, working for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;”—to whom it is said, “that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.”

Lancaster, Pa.

O. H. M.

FELLOWSHIP

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” Amos 3:3.

This is an impressive question involving a sacred principle. Had we not

fallen away from our primitive state there would be no need of such a query. The question implies that to co-labor there must be agreement. The prophet was led to ask a number of other questions in connection with this one. The thought is intimated that the way Israel did they and God could not walk together. When there is no unity of sentiment there can be no fellowship in action, is a truth based on the doctrine that God will work out all His designed ends through passive human instrumentality.

We are sometimes asked why we separate in worship from persons who have the same Bible as we have for their criterion; who claim that they faithfully follow the command of the prophet: “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Isaiah 58:1.

Love in faithful worshipers will lead them to fellowship in worship, but we are warned to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” Eph. 5:11.

This injunction does not allow two to worship together who are not agreed. If all worshipers were faithful the entreaty were unnecessary: “Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them,” as there would be none to “mark.” Rom. 16:17. God’s word is replete with evidence that two cannot walk together, spiritually who are not under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

To check the evil of partiality, making its entrance into the church, we have the appeal, “I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same

judgment." Cor. 1: 10. This appeal was a warning against disputation. If disputation leads to envy and strife the condemnation is that it is a "lie against the truth." James 3: 14. Moral obligation violated tends to alienate fellowship, much more will spiritual disloyalty alienate. Fellowship with Christ is the love which unites His followers.

Lancaster, Pa.

B. F. M.

WOMAN'S HEAD COVER

"Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head." 1 Cor. 11: 5. The Apostles established and disciplined the churches. In the epistle we find the following references: "It hath been declared unto me of you, chap. 1: 11; it is reported commonly, 5: 1; concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me, 7: 1, I hear that there be divisions among you, 11: 18." These references are evidence that the churches were under the Apostle's care, and that he had occasion to give counsel, which he does at length on the head cover, no doubt to settle unrest. History teaches that at Corinth dwelt both Jews and Gentiles. The Jewish woman wore a veil, the Gentiles did not. This difference in custom seems to have raised a question in the church which led to the Apostle's argument. He cites the different order of beings in the creation—first God, then Christ, then the man, then the woman. As Christ is not now physically on the earth he uses the man, who is in the faith, in His stead, to show "The image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man." By the cover woman acknowledges her designed place in God's order whether she is single or married.

In our dependent state we are to "pray without ceasing"—we constantly need divine guidance in our many re-

sponsibilities. 2 Thes. 5: 17. The cover is called a "power," figuratively a sign of dependence on power, as woman seeks refuge. "Because of the angels," is admitted to be difficult of interpretation. As the angels are called "ministering spirits" it may mean woman is a ministering comfort in the place which she so ably fills. Her loving nature comports with the love in the angelic service. Her office is to minister rather than to rule. In the wisely organized church system she may need this reminding both in married and in single life.

In appealing to those believers whether it is comely for a woman to pray unto God uncovered he shows confidence in their knowledge of established custom. There must have been a question concerning long hair in man, upon which he puts the stamp of shame, but calls it a glory in woman, since it is natural to her as a covering, but this short argument on propriety is separate from his former argument demanding woman to wear a sign which man is not to wear. The profuse growth of woman's hair has nothing to do with her special sphere in life.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

CONTENTMENT

"Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not, and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Luke 12: 27.

The Savior encourages faith in God's care who has formed all things for our pleasure and use. He offers comfort to believers who may be anxious in their prospect of ill health on approaching age when they will be incapacitated for labor. Persons differ in their temperament and rearing. We may have put forth strong mental and physical effort and not have prospered. Infirmary in

our loved ones, and early death may have robbed the family of useful members, to crush ambition and hope in the unavoidable sacrifices entailed, and teaching us the lesson that "man proposes, but God disposes."

We should not mis-apply our Savior's restful words to excuse ourselves from being engaged in useful labor in some field, for labor is honorable, healthful, divinely appointed, and should be a pleasure to us.

Our time is a measure of grace, which we should employ for our use and that of others to whom we may do good. "Wisdom is justified of her children." Luke 7:35.

That is, God's wisdom is displayed in them who are "conformed to the image of His Son." Rom. 8:29 "Neither be ye of doubtful mind, . . . your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Luke 8:29, 30. Faith reconciles us to our state. The Savior's use of the lily to illustrate, surpassing perfection makes even Solomon's glory common. The pure life of childhood compares well with the beauty of the lily, and points to the life of "the little ones" in Christ.

Great comfort is found in the knowledge that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke 12:15. There is a nobler purpose centered in us than to devote all our energies to temporal ends, and when the state militant closes may our transition be into a state of triumphant glory!

Ephrata, Pa.

S. G. K.

AWAKE FROM SIN

"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.

The Creator, being good, it is reasonable that His creation should be good. We have a will that can be devoted to obedience or disobedience. The one service promises life, the other service threatens death. Rom. 6:23.

Spiritual death followed Adam's transgression, and his posterity were in spiritual death till they were delivered by the life sacrificed for them. "As by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Rom. 5:18. The promise was that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent. Gen. 3:15. This was effected by Christ bearing our curse. We, who were freed, incur sin by yielding to its lusts, and are called upon in loving appeal. "Awake thou that sleepeth and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. 5:14. Christ by His death, resurrection and ascension gives assurance that all may live. All who are willing to hear can obtain eternal life. When the Savior says, "they that hear," He apparently means those who obey His commands. John 15:14.

On the other hand, "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven. Matt. 7:24. When light was revealed to Paul his inquiry was, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" Acts. 9:6. He was open to counsel. Obedience will follow when there is an ear to hear. Christ and His disciples sought not the honor and friendship of the world; and true disciples ever will seek the favor of God for their refuge. The Christ-life is love, which brings fellowship. On the contrary, where there is envying and strife, there is confusion and every evil work. James 3:16. It is evident, that if we

live in strife, we have not the life promised in the text. It is attainable by all who hear with the inward ear of the soul. If we fail to secure this precious life we are of those to whom the Savior said, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate." Matt. 23: 37.

Camp Hill, Pa.

J. I. M.

THANKSGIVING DAY

This blessed day is set apart,
Dear Lord, to offer praise
To Thee. Let every grateful heart
Break forth in joyful lays.

How fit that man should praise Thee, Lord,
For boundless mercies given;
Hast blessed him with Thy holy word
Directing him to heaven.

When we Thy vast creation see,
How wonderful art Thou;
And man, Thy noblest work is he,
With soul Thou didst endow.

Each rising sun doth show thy power;
The moon and stars by night
The trees, the grass, the smallest flower,
Proclaim Thy wondrous might.

Thou gavest first and latter rains
Both dew and sunny skies;
And with Thy blessings precious grains
Give us our food supplies.

For all these blessings, God of love,
Our hearts with thanks o'erflow.
For us, Thou left the courts above
Thy pardoning grace to show.

The Christian knows no special day
In which to sound Thy praise.
There's in his heart a constant lay
Of thankfulness to raise.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.

ESTEEMING OTHERS

"Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." Rom. 14: 22. In this chapter the Apostle dwells upon the intimate and lovely relation that must exist amongst God's people. To preserve this relation, to promote fellowship and peace, he lays down precepts to govern them in their conduct toward one another. He impressed them with the danger of judging one another; "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or occasion to fall, in his brother's way." Rom. 14: 10, 13.

"Hast thou faith?" We all know that we must have faith, for, "without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. 11: 6. In the Christian faith we all are united in the essential and fundamental principles, for there is but one faith. Eph. 4: 5. The Apostle, however, wants to impress us that there are degrees of faith; for some are weak and some are strong. Some can take liberties in eating and drinking, or whatsoever it may be, with a good conscience; others of weak faith would be offended. These differences, at first sight may appear trifling, or not worthy of consideration, and we may conclude that the weak brother is too critical, and that he should encourage more faith and confidence.

It is, however, a serious matter to offend one of Christ's little ones. "For I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 18: 10. On the other hand it is a serious matter for the weak brother to judge the stronger brother and to ascribe to him improper motives. In trivial dif-

ferences it is necessary to practice forbearance and charity. It is necessary to submit one to the other in the fear of the Lord. A compromise must be effected or there will be a breach of fellowship. The strong brother should be willing to deny himself, and the weak brother should be willing to make concession.

"Hast thou faith?" have it to thyself before God. This is equivalent to saying if we have faith strong enough to entertain certain liberties which would offend others we should not display it, or try to force it upon others, but in meekness and fear have it to ourselves before God. We should not glory in it as though we possessed an especial talent, for we received it of God, and if we wish to glory we should humbly 'glory in the Lord,' 1 Cor. 1:31. If we have a good conscience in a certain liberty we should not practice it if we knew it to be offensive to our brother, unless we could reconcile him. We should be happy in making the small sacrifice for our brother for "whom Christ died." Rom. 14:15.

In taking any liberty not prohibited by Gospel teaching, we should examine ourselves, whether our motive is pure and unselfish. Our motives justify or condemn our actions. If through self-love or gratification of the flesh, we use a doubtful privilege we condemn ourselves and cannot be happy. Our "heart would condemn us," and the Apostle John says, "God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things." "We are called into the glorious liberty of the gospel of Jesus Christ." We are not justified in using a liberty that is not prompted by the 'faith that worketh by love.' In so doing we condemn ourselves, for 'Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.' Rom. 14:23.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

FALSE TEACHERS

"For false Christs and false prophets shall rise and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things." Mark 13:22, 23.

This warning the Savior applied especially to the conditions pending at the approaching destruction of Jerusalem. He speaks of signs that will be shown by deceivers. Persons who practice deception are artful in using means to gain the confidence of their dupes, or they would not ply their nefarious business.

Christ had become popular by His good works, and capital was made of His influence to impose upon the credulous, as there always have been ambitious persons ready for opportunities to gratify their vanity. It is not said that they preached, but likely their false signs were accomplished by false doctrines, as Paul says "Some from among the disciples will teach perverse things to draw disciples after them." Acts 20:30. Satan is active in his schemes, and rules the world, or the testimony would be incorrect that "the whole world lieth in wickedness." John 5:19. Satan has agents to work deception, for it is said his ministers transform themselves into ministers of righteousness. All error originates with satan. 2 Cor. 11:13-15. The rule of the Savior is that the tree is known by its fruit. Professors of the faith who do not obey true doctrines are evidently satan's disciples, and are under condemnation with him, and the warning to the faithful is, "Take ye heed." Taking part with unfaithful worshipers is declared to be defilement. 2 John 10:11. The converted and unconverted cannot work together in matters of faith.

God sends delusion to those not willing to obey His Spirit, for He will not dwell in a temple of sin, and sin's control is a delusion and perversion of the design of life. 2 Thes. 2: 10-12.

Spiritually minded persons deny the fleshly desires of vain conceit, of resisting evil, of envy, corrupt and foolish conversation, trifling amusement, trickery, over-reaching in business transactions, refusing aid to the needy, of deceiving and lying. The Master teaches, "Let your yea be yea, and your nay nay."

Every disposition not in agreement with loving our neighbor as ourselves is sin,—it is a violation of the relation intended by our Maker.

Fresno, Cal.

G. B. Z.

LOVE'S POWER

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Cor. 13: 13.

Throughout this whole chapter we are reminded of the contrast between moral works and the spiritual life; how we might do much good to others, and attain to great advancement ourselves, and still not possess the virtue of divine love. We might forget that the power by which we perform good works in this life is a natural talent, perhaps augmented by cultivation and practice. The enemy takes advantage of every opportunity to deceive us, and to make us satisfied with something short of the pure doctrine and the divine life. The ability to attain high positions in the worldly kingdom, and to excel others in good and commendable works, the knowledge which we can obtain, and the power which we may wield, might naturally prompt us to ask the question which was asked by the young man who came to Christ, "What lack I yet?" Matt. 19: 20.

Charity is described as an unobtrusive virtue, not advancing itself into prominence, yet founded on a principle by which it can bear all things. Those who are governed by charity are examples of kindness and forbearance to all with whom they associate. They are always willing to make allowance for the weakness of others, as the Heavenly Father manifests His love to a weak and fallen race. They do not seek commendation or applause for their good works, but consider themselves unprofitable, having done only that which was their duty. Luke 17: 10.

Spiritual charity must not be confused with natural charity which is as mentioned in the third verse, and which might be practiced for effect only, to gain a selfish end. It is evident that something higher is intended than can be attained by mankind; even though they might be enlightened and educated, they could never "bear all things," when persecution or adversity or disappointment meets them, nor "believe all things" with an unwavering faith, that the Lord will support them in every trial, deliver them in every emergency, as He sees fit, and trust that all things will work together for good to those that love the Lord, Rom. 8: 28; nor could they "endure all things" with patience, hoping for a more enduring substance and better things than this world can afford without divine charity.

"Charity never faileth." It draws together; it binds together, and lends a helping hand in time of distress and is a shelter and support in the trying hour. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, which is an evidence of the strongest love; and all who are born of the Spirit will manifest the same disposition of kindness and forbearance. They will not fail to render the fruits of gratitude and appreciation to their Lord and Savior for His wondrous love.

Faith and hope are commendable virtues, and with charity, shall abide. Faith sustains when the fruit of our efforts is not immediately manifest; it proves our confidence and loyalty to the Father. We believe that He sees and knows better what is for our good than we do ourselves; and if we are required to suffer He may have an object in view for our good, or He may want to impress others with His power, justice, goodness, and love. We should be vessels meet for the Master's use. Hope comforts and cheers in the darkest hour, and gives courage to meet the trials and bear the burdens of life, looking forward to a better and more enduring substance in the world to come.

While faith and hope sustain and comfort the pilgrim on his way, charity is broader and more far-reaching in its effects, as it reaches out and seeks opportunity to do good to others, to lift up the weak, the fallen and down-trodden, to assist the penitent to rise from a sinful and unrighteous life, and to encourage them in the way of truth and righteousness—the only source of lasting peace and comfort.

Silver Spring, Pa.

C. S. N.

LET US BE WISE

"A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke." Prov. 13: 1.

Who is the wise son? Christ is wisdom's Head. He is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person." He confessed, "I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." He commended Mary for having "chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10: 42. He comforted, with hope, the malefactor on the Cross, who in his extremity appealed to Him. He wit-

nessed to the spirit of true penitence in the circumstance of a Publican and a Pharisee praying. The former was broken-hearted in reflecting on his sins, the latter was exalted in contemplating his merits. The one was called justified, the other one was not, because in his case meekness was lacking.

In God's sight no one is pure enough to be called good. Good counsel is, "Children obey your parents in the Lord." Eph. 6: 1. To honor father and mother is the first commandment having a promise attached to it. Every one loves obedient children, and they are happy in the consciousness of doing right. We can be the children of God only by full obedience to His will.

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." James 3: 13. Good teaching is, "Be not wise in your own conceits." Rom. 12: 16. "The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." James 3: 17, 18. Wise persons are not bigoted or stubborn, yet they are firm in what is proved to be right. "Stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry," 1 Sam. 15: 23.

The wisdom reflected by the Scriptures is a lofty standard to fit us for usefulness and happiness here, and for felicity hereafter, and it wages the rule of safety, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," because of the frailty and uncertainty of life!

Baltimore, Md.

S. D. M.

THE OMNISCIENT GOD

Where can we look, not seeing
The great Creator wise?
We see Him all around us,
We see Him in the skies.

His glory strikes our vision
 With sights on every hand—
 The undulating ocean,
 The verdant stretch of land.

The changes of the season,
 The first and latter rain
 Which come and go in order,
 Throughout this blest domain.

The whirlwind's raging fury,
 The lightning's blinding glare,
 The rolling peals of thunder,
 Convict us he is there.

Yes, in our daily findings
 While looking here and there,
 We cannot but acknowledge
 We see him everywhere.

And by these many visions
 That reach from pole to pole,
 May we not fail to see Him
 With blessings to the soul.

Lancaster, Pa.

S. C.

SECTARIANISM NOT CONSISTENT

It is accepted that the church originated through Christ's sacrifice to restore man from the effect of the fall. He left a record of His counsel, for those who will accept Him as their Savior. The Kingdom foretold is His church, which was established after His ascension, when the promise was fulfilled, He will send His Spirit to all that believe in Him. Three thousand souls received the Spirit at Jerusalem, on the feast day. It is said, they were all of one heart and of one soul.

In obedience to Christ's command they were baptised into one body. This was the Church. Their lives were patterned after Christ's life, willing to suffer wrong, patient to bear insults, returning good for evil. In this early period of the Church, fellowship and brotherly love ruled, signifying, "On earth peace, good will toward men." God's will was established, the lost image was restored. Now the way is

open for all to accept the boon; "all that will come shall come."

God evidenced from the beginning justice and mercy. When man disobeyed He visited affliction on him, but when he repented He shewed mercy. Christ found some who had zeal, who worshiped according to their own mind. He told them they are of the devil, the author of sin. God changeth not; He is the same yesterday, today and forever. If He did not sanction worship according to man's ideas then, it must be offensive to Him now. "God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one." Persons blest with undivided love to Him are in unity. Can we believe that God will in this day countenance divisions? Using our own judgment, punishing those who intrude upon our rights, gratifying ourselves with worldly pastimes and entertainments which are condemned in the Gospel, claiming to be worshipers, and not having true works, such can justly be classed with sects; such are the sorrowful conditions in our enlightened age. It is declared, "disobedience is sin, sin is death." If we walk in the light, we shall be in fellowship, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7. Again verse six, "If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, (disobedience) we lie, and do not the truth."

This manifest error causes anxiety of mind to many. The enemy presents various suggestions to give relief; one hopes that God will not be so exacting; another one sees some that have more knowledge than they, and seem satisfied, why should not I; others who are more seriously impressed, conclude that if even some are not loyal, they will be true, thinking they must account for themselves and we for ourselves.

Paul clearly presents the inconsistency of faithful and unfaithful members

continuing in one body. 2 Cor. 6: 14, 16. What communion hath light with darkness, meaning faithful with unfaithful members; wherefore come out from among them and touch not the unclean thing. To remain a member of an unclean body or Church, would close the way of honestly taking the communion. Communion signifies fellowship. To commune and not be in fellowship would be practicing deceit, and, as Paul says, "eat damnation to your own soul not discerning the Lord's body." 1 Cor. 11: 29. The Lord's body means the church. It is better to be in fellowship with Christ, and to withdraw from the disorderly church. But if a true church is found it is the duty of the sincere person to seek baptism and union with the same, which is an evidence of love to Christ, enabling one to keep His commands, and to share the comfort of church fellowship.

The question is, Why are there so many churches? There is only one word of counsel. Some say, persons can not all see alike. Christ said, He will give us His Spirit; as He has overcome so shall ye overcome. A change of heart or new birth must effect a change of mind. To be of one mind, "Ye must be born again." Christ prayed, John 17, "that His followers may be one, as He and the Father are one that the world may know that Thou hast sent me." If such is the case no division or sect can arise. There may be difference of opinion in things where there is no plain command. Love would prompt reasoning together to reach agreement. Should any one be unwilling (Matthew 18 chap.) teaches patient labor to become united. Should any be obstinate, such shall be separated that unity may continue, and the Church be kept pure, worthy of being recognized as the true church. All churches that do not labor to keep pure according to gospel teaching

are unfaithful, and cannot be homes for faithful worshipers. Unless the faithful come out from among them they cannot glorify God, and they must suffer the plagues of the unfaithful. If all churches would obey the teachings of Christ they would all be in agreement. The effect would be ONE CHURCH in unity and peace.

May none of us abuse the mercy of God, and continue with unfaithful Babylon, for such must suffer God's wrath, an awful Eternity awaiting the soul.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. K.

SELF LOVE

Our first parents were created free agents, having power to resist the device of the serpent when he tempted them. They disregarded the plain command of God to gratify the selfish desire of their hearts. Their disobedience brought to the whole race a long train of evils. Cain loved himself better than his brother and slew him. He would have had power to rule over evil had he chosen the better way.

Abraham conferred not with flesh and blood (or self) when commanded to go into a far country. "He went out not knowing whither he went." By faith he offered up Isaac. He believed and is called "The friend of God."

Moses, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," the Lord had a great work for him to perform.

The children of Israel longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt and oft times murmured against Moses, even after their miraculous deliverance from Pharaoh.

We may cite many instances of failure to obey the Lord's word on account of yielding to the promptings of

self, and of obedience when self was subdued. The Jews, referring to our Savior, agreed, "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." John 11:48.

Oh, the bitter envy, hatred and selfishness which gave voice to the awful desire of their hard hearts, "Crucify him, crucify him." Pilate fearing the people and no doubt the security of his earthly power, washed his hands saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person," and left them crucify the Lord of Glory. What moral weakness and selfishness Pilate manifested!

In Jesus, the Blessed Savior, we have the example of perfect love and unselfishness. He came in to this sinful world to suffer and die that we may live in eternal peace and joy. He prayed that the bitter cup might pass from him; "nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." In his extremity on the cross, Jesus plead, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." St. Luke: 23, 24. He endured it all "for the joy that was set before him." Heb. 12:2.

The love of self has been manifest through all the ages of history; and we feel its baneful influence bearing upon us, though our desires have been changed. Are we truly "presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice?" Rom. 12:1. It requires grace to detect and resist the promptings of self which come to us in many ways. How good the Savior's words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." We may be tempted to shun the cross, to shirk our duty to our erring brother, or fail to confess our own faults and weaknesses, be too sensitive, may want a little honor, may "Let our left hand know what our right hand doeth," may retaliate some, "think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think." Rom. 12:3. Our

flesh covets the esteem of the world, but our spiritual vision causes us to shrink from any commendation, knowing we are not our own, but are "bought with a price," Paul saith "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" 1 Cor. 4:7. Self-pity causes much unhappiness. Our anxious thought then is, do we truly know ourselves?

Those things which gratify self are sin. They bring unhappiness and unrest, they do not nourish the hungry soul. The small sacrifices we make are the unsatisfying things of earth which shall soon pass away; if we love them, "the love of the Father is not in us." 1 John 2:15.

We should strive diligently against self and sin. Through Jesus, who will be our sure guide, comfort and strength; "we shall be more than conquerors through Him:" "Whom having not seen we love; in whom though now we see Him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls." 1 Peter: 8-9.

Lancaster, Pa.

M. M. W.

FAITHFULNESS HAS PROMISE

"Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:21.

This is a weighty declaration by our dear Savior. He says, plaintively, "Many, (not few,) will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? . . . and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7:22, 23.

Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, are good works, but we must also

obey all other commands to be acceptable. The expression is made, "I know I am a christian, I was converted at such a place and time; I know that not all of my church members are christians, for they do many wrong things." Such knowledge imposes a well defined duty upon those who are aware of those sins, and by neglect they become defiled too, as it is said, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 1 Cor. 5, 6. When we do not obey divine commands our profession is a lie. 1 John 2, 4. Christians love one another, and love constrains them to obey their Savior. They are taught to prove the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 1 John 4: 1.

Some deride the followers of Christ. Derision they had to suffer from the beginning. All the founders of the church were persecuted. How deplorable!

In the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon we read: "Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the faces of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labor when they saw it. They shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all they looked for, and they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, this was he whom we had sometimes in derision and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honor. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is amongst the saints!" Wis. of Sol. 5: 1.

Columbus Grove, O. J. W. B.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What is meant by the wheat and the tares? Matt. 13: 24.

A. The Savior says, The field is the world. In the world we find good and

evil people, which at the harvest or end shall be separated. He does not say that the evil ones when they are known shall be left in the church, but the command is, Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly. 2 Thes. 3: 6.

Q. What is meant by old and new bottles? Matt. 9: 17.

A. By the wine is meant the Holy Spirit. He will not dwell in the unconverted. A new, consecrated mind forms the temple for the Spirit. The bottles in our Savior's time were of leather and old bottles would not bear the strain of new wine, as our old nature is not adapted for the new spiritual life.

Q. What is meant by the great house and the different vessels? 2 Tim. 2: 20.

A. The house is this world. The vessels of gold and silver are they "who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." The other vessels of a perishable nature represent carnal persons "who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." 2 Thes. 1: 9.

PARAGRAPHS

The popular idea that Christian living is "evolved by gradually fashioning and conforming our lives as near as present day circumstances allow," to "the admirable and ideal doctrine of Christ," is fallacious and a perversion of the plan of salvation, as it ignores all that is implied in Christ's declaration to Nicodemus, who was amazed at the idea of "being born again." The birth which the Savior speaks of is distinct from outward religious service. It is the lost divine love again restored to the heart, as the ruling power, prompting us to the things that Christ taught, however unpopular they may be.

* * * *

The remark often made by many implies their idea that, no matter how,

they have lived, if they can somehow get to heaven, all will be well,—as though the place could bring the desired happiness. Heaven is not so much a place as a condition. The Savior said to his disciples, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." If we are not of the number who have the kingdom of God within us in this life, we must never expect to enter the kingdom of God,—heaven, hereafter. Heaven itself would only make us more miserable. We would be outside of our chosen sphere. After making our choice in this life, the consequence follows as effect follows cause.

* * * *

"He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him."—A condition long foreseen by the Prophet, as it is verified in the life of all who have not become willing to follow the Savior and bear his cross, while in this day of grace. And yet, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," and the testimony from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." His advent proclaimed by herald—angels, and finally "standing on mount Sion, with the multitude "redeemed from the earth," who have "his Father's name written on their foreheads," and who "sing as it were a new song, before the throne." Yet "he is despised and rejected of men," whom he came to save; "and we esteemed him not," though "he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

* * * *

In the Savior's parable of the rich man and Lazarus, father Abraham's reply to the rich man's entreaties for mercy, finally is, "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us who would come from thence." Today the entreaty is, "If

ye hear the voice of the Lord, harden not your hearts," and the declaration also is, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." The appeal is, for us to consider the consequence if we persist in "faring sumptuously every day," rather than allow God's grace to divest us of our own righteousness, and the indulgence of our worldly desires, represented in the "purple and fine linen and the sumptuous fare" of the rich man. If we hearken to the voice of the Lord, it will reveal to us our spiritual poverty and bring a realization of the fact that all we have and can attain is the gift of God's grace. Under this awakening of spiritual life we become willing to follow the Savior, and bear his cross, looking forward to that inconceivably great reward, and the enduring comforts that replace our temporary sufferings, when we shall be "carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." When we have passed out of the present life, then the "great gulf is fixed." "The rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." But the great gulf between. The portals of mercy closed. In view of the uncertainty of life our course today may determine on which side we will be when "*the great gulf is fixed!*"

Doylestown, Ohio.

C. W.

BIBLE NOTES

The book of Job is reported to be the oldest of all written books. It is believed to have been written by Job himself fifteen hundred and twenty years before Christ, and twenty-nine years before the Exodus. Job was an Arab prince.

The five Books of Moses were written by him whose name they bear at about one time. The Books of the Law were

to be laid up in the Ark of the Covenant, and were to be read to the people every seventh year at the year of release. But this was neglected for eight hundred years, from Moses till the reign of king Josiah. Deut. 31:10. Moses died before the time of Christ fourteen hundred and fifty-one years. Christ appeared fifteen hundred years after the Law was given.

Every seven years there was to have been a public reading of the Word at the feast of tabernacles, but Moses established a weekly Sabbath reading, (in the synagogues,) of portions of the Scriptures, accompanied by exhortations. Luke 4:16; Acts 13:15.

After the Jewish Captivity, which began about six hundred years before Christ, the Scriptures received more regard. Under the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus six learned Hebrews were selected from each of the twelve tribes to translate the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek. Their translation is called the Septuagint, meaning the work of seventy. This first of all translations was two hundred and eighty-five years before the time of Christ, and was only a part of the Old Testament; the remainder was translated about one hundred years later. Between the writing of the last of the Old Testament and the first of the New is a period of four hundred and sixty years. The Gospel of St. Matthew was written in about 39 A. D., in Hebrew, which the author afterward translated into Greek. St. Mark wrote about 63 A. D.; St. Luke in 64 A. D.; St. John in 98 A. D. The Acts of the Apostles cover a period of about thirty years beyond the crucifixion, and were written about 63 A. D. at Rome. The Epistles were written from about 52 A. D. to 90 A. D. Paul was beheaded at Rome in 66 A. D. and Peter was crucified there in the same year.

The first English New Testament was translated by Wiclif in 1380. The first printed Bible was in Latin, and was followed in the sixteenth century, by a number in different languages, until in 1611 our present St. James version in English appeared.

Now the Bible is printed in one hundred and sixty-nine different languages and dialects. One Bible Society alone has sent out over fifty million copies or parts. Twenty-two thousand clay tablets have been found of the library of Ninevah. They can be read by the aid of characters found on the "Rosetta Stone." Those tablets date history back to 3750 years before Christ. In the year 170 before Christ, Solomon's Temple was dedicated, by Antiochus to Jupiter, and idolatrous altars were set up in it.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

WORDS TO THE GOD-FEARING YOUTH

The experienced Child of God has many evidences of God's goodness and mercy and much encouragement to offer the beginner on Zion's way.

Divine help is so mysterious that we can truly say, with the apostle, "Great is the mystery of godliness." What a blessing! What a heritage God has given to the millions of people on this earth. To all he has offered Heaven-born peace and rest, priceless gifts amidst the strife and turmoil of this life. All may have a foretaste of eternal joy.

Moses, Joseph, and all those who in their time were faithful to the great Jehovah, should be an inspiration in our day to all youths who started on the spiritual journey. Those lives and characters and the great temptations that they overcame, do not impress us when only a glance, or a few passing

thoughts and reflections are given to them. When we read their history and reflect upon it as God intended we should, it is very impressive, and gives us much wholesome food for thought. Not only their trials and temptations, but the constant and unfailing presence and help of the Almighty, who comforted and guided them, should encourage all who have set out on the Heavenly way.

The youths of today have the same God to guide them and speak to them if their hearts are kept in readiness to hear the "still small voice." But they cannot hear this voice if their hearts are in the world with its tumult and confusion. The idolatry of today is as great as it was in Old Testament times. They must keep the Bible always near and dear, for there is only one Book that can teach a soul the true liberty and happiness. When they accept and obey, it they are no more in bondage, but have become free children of God. They realize that the world with all its follies spread before them in a bewildering, enticing panorama is nothing but vanity. They wish all their friends might join them in this peaceful life on the narrow way. They cannot take any part in this worldly amusement. They shun all foolishness, and are unhappy when in company with light-minded, frivolous persons, because such are not walking in the footsteps of the Savior, but are crucifying Him afresh. Neither can they spend their valuable time in any useless employment. Everything they do must be done to the glory and honor of God. They cannot spend their time reading volumes of fiction, or keep up with the times in reading worldly literature without suffering in their high calling. The time is too short.

David says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall he

shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand; I have been young but now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." What a comfort amidst life's changes when we can have faith to believe that the varied experiences, trials, and disasters come not blindly, but through God's providence. And when we fall, we shall not be cast down utterly because God's strong hand is upholding us. The bread, we understand is the spiritual manna which will never fail us, if we relish it as we should, and do not loathe it as the Children of Israel did, and longingly think of the flesh-pots in Egypt.

There is much to instruct us and warn us in the history of Israel. May Christians never forget this and become ungrateful to their kind Father as did God's people of old, but may they keep in the good old paths.

The following is an item which I read. I think it will give us all some serious thoughts. The writer took for her theme "Where there is no vision the people perish." "I've seen hard-hearted men of affairs shed tears, and have heard them sob unabashed, when the vision of the hair-cloth sofa, the homely rag rugs, the simple life, and daily worship was brought back to their lives. There is something away back in their lives that this age does not afford. There is something different about it. I've been in farm homes where the breakfast table was pushed back and the Bible was brought forth and the household from Patriarch to the smallest child, including the help, knelt on the yellow bare floor for devotion. There might be indication of rain and the hay might be endangered, work everywhere might be pressing, but in that house there was something more important than work. There were hours enough for labor. Toil was not the only and the supremest thing in

their lives. And that other thing more so, that supernal thing which in Holy Writ is called the vision."

It is well for us to remember the changes time brings with it and not forget the customs of years gone by. Were times then not better, sweeter, and filled with less care and worry than we find them today? May the blessed Lord be with us all, old, middle age, and youth and enable us to live in the Lord, and reach at last, "That happy land where tears are never known. To see the wondrous face of Him who sits upon the throne."

Camp Hill, Pa.

I. S. M.

THE STORY OF MOSES

My dear Children; Moses, when a little baby, was taken out of the ark on the water, by Pharaoh's daughter, and brought up as her son. He grew up and was taught much more than he could have learned among his own people; for there were many wise teachers among the Egyptians. No doubt he had a happy home and many friends while he was in the King's palace. But he loved his own people who were held as slaves, and made to work under cruel taskmasters. The Egyptians did not love nor serve the Lord, but worshiped idols and animals of different kinds. When Moses grew up to be a man, he chose rather to suffer with his people than to enjoy the pleasures of Egypt. He felt a call to help his people, but at that time he knew he could not do so, and the king knowing how he felt was not so friendly to him as before. He went to a land called Midian and became a shepherd. It was a great change from living in a palace to going into a wilderness to care for sheep.

The people of Israel, as the Hebrews were called, were put to work at making bricks and building houses and cities.

The king that had ruled when Moses was born died, and another Pharaoh ruled in his place but he was more cruel and gave the Hebrews still harder work.

Moses was very meek although he was one of the greatest men who ever lived. He was content to be a shepherd but he believed that God had some work for him to do, which was true, as God was preparing him for his work.

One day while watching his sheep on Mt. Horeb, or Mt. Sinai, as it is sometimes called, he saw a bush on fire but yet it did not burn. He went closer to see what it was when the Lord called to him from the bush, and said, "Moses, Moses." He replied, "Here am I." The voice said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. I have seen how cruelly my people are treated, and I have heard their cries and I will set them free and bring them into the land of Canaan, the land of promise." He told Moses to go to Pharaoh and ask him to let the people go on a three days' journey to worship in the wilderness. He told Moses that at first Pharaoh would not let them go but He would show his powers and wonders, and he would at last let them go. Moses felt this would be a great task. He knew Pharaoh would not let the people go, and he feared his Hebrew brethren would not believe him nor want to go with him. Moses wanted some sign to show his people that God had sent him. As all shepherds, he carried in his hand a rod or staff. The Lord told him to throw his rod on the ground, and it became a serpent; He told him to lift it by its tail and it became a rod again. God then told him to put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out it was white with a terrible disease called leprosy. He was told to put his hand in his bosom again and it was made clean and well. Moses was still fearful, as he was not a

good talker and felt timid in speaking to the king. The Lord told him to go, and said, "I will be with you and tell you what to say. Take your brother Aaron with you, he will speak for you." Moses then obeyed and went to Pharaoh. The children of Israel were pleased, for they felt God had not forsaken them. God will never forsake his children if they are obedient to Him, for this He has promised and his promises will never fail.

Pharaoh was very angry when Moses asked him to let the Hebrews go on a three days' journey, and said, "Who is the Lord? I do not know Him, neither will I let the people go." He thought Moses was making the Israelites discontented and they must have more work, so he made it much harder for them, and they complained to Moses and Aaron and thought it was their fault. Pharaoh wanted Moses to give him some sign to show that the Lord had sent him. Aaron then threw down his rod and it became a serpent. Pharaoh's magicians were called and they threw down their rods and they, by some trick or magic became serpents also, but Aaron's rod or serpent swallowed all those the magicians brought forth and then it became a rod again in Aaron's hand. The Lord then said Aaron should stretch his rod over the river Nile, and the water in Egypt was turned into blood, except in the land of Goshen where the Hebrews lived. For seven days this plague lasted. Then came frogs that covered the land and came into their houses and into their ovens where their bread was baked. Pharaoh asked Moses to pray to his God to take them away, and he would let the people go. But Pharaoh broke his promise and the plague of lice was sent upon them. Next a swarm of flies was sent which was so grievous that Pharaoh told Moses they may go and

sacrifice but stay in Egypt, which Moses said they could not do. Next a sickness was sent upon the cattle; and their horses, sheep, oxen and camels died, but Pharaoh was not willing they should go.

The Lord then told Aaron and Moses to throw handfuls of ashes from the furnace into the air, and a plague of boils came upon man and beast. Next came a storm of hail, thunder and lightning, such as had never been seen before. The Egyptians may never have seen such a storm, as it seldom rains there. The river Nile overflows at certain times and waters the ground.

The king was frightened and said, "It is enough." but when it was over he lost his fear of God, and would not let them go. Each plague troubled him greatly for he saw the Lord protected the Israelites, but he was like many persons are today, who return to their old ways again when the danger is past.

Next came a swarm of locusts that destroyed every green thing. Then came darkness, thick like a fog or mist that it could be felt. This lasted for three days. The king then was angry and told Moses not to come before him again or he would kill him. Moses replied, "You will see my face no more."

The Lord told Moses He would send one more plague, then Pharaoh will send you out hurriedly—compel you to go. He would send a destroying angel to pass through the land and slay the first born, or eldest one, of every family, and among the beasts also. Moses was to tell each Hebrew family to take a lamb and kill it at a certain time, and sprinkle its blood on the door posts of their houses. The lamb was to be roasted and eaten that same night, and they were all to be ready to start on their journey while the destroying angel went through the land and passed over those houses that were sprinkled

with blood. Where there was no blood seen the first born in every family was slain, from the king's own family to the captives in their cells. Then there was a great cry in the land and the king said, "Rise up, make haste and go; take your flocks, leave nothing behind." So Moses started with a great army of the Israelites, and immense herds of cattle. The Lord went before them by day in the pillar of a cloud to lead them in the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light. When the pillar of the cloud stood still they knew they were to stop and rest.

Soon Pharaoh was sorry he had let them go and went after them to bring them back. The Israelites were in great distress because the Red Sea was before them and Pharaoh's army coming behind them. The Lord moved the pillar of cloud behind the Israelites and it stood between the camp of the Israelites and the camp of the Egyptians. The Israelites cried unto the Lord, and Moses told them not to fear but to stand still and see how the Lord would save them—they would see the Egyptian army no more. The Lord told Moses to have his people move on and to stretch out his rod over the sea and divide it. He caused a strong wind to blow, and the waters divided and stood as a wall on both sides so that the children of Israel walked through the sea on dry ground. The Egyptian army followed and Moses again stretched forth his rod and the waters closed into their place and the Egyptians were utterly destroyed.

It is said the river Nile was an object of worship among the Egyptians. The flies too were sacred, as were most of the animals destroyed by sickness. It should have humbled Pharaoh to see that the plagues were sent on their objects of idolatry, to cease worshipping them.

We see that the Lord had a great work for Moses to do. As the son of Pharaoh's daughter he would have had great wealth and honor but he chose to suffer affliction with his people, rather than to enjoy the pleasure of Egypt. No wonder he was fearful of the task that was before him but he had proof of his divine mission, and the Lord's promise of help. When the Lord called him he obeyed. The Lord calls each one of us to come and serve Him. He has a work for all. All that our heavenly Father asks of us is to come and be obedient and he will lead us in the way. He would have us go. He has promised us many blessings, and if we obey we will be happy.

I now have told you how Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. In another chapter I may tell more of their journey toward the promised land—the land of Canaan.

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

CHILD'S STORY

THE STORY OF THE CREATION

My dear little children, I am sure you would like a story that tells how God made this beautiful world in which we live. The Bible tells us it was not always like it is now.

In the beginning there was no light, neither sun in the day, nor moon and stars at night. God said, "Let there be light;" and there was light. He called the light day and the darkness he called night. He made the sun to shine by day, and the moon and stars to shine by night. Then God said, "Let the waters be gathered together at one place, and let the dry land appear;" and it was so. He called the dry land earth; and the waters he called seas.

But the world was not beautiful like it is now; there was no grass, nor trees, nor flowers. There was no rain to make

the little seeds that were in the ground spring up and grow, but God made a soft warm mist to hang over the earth, and this mist made the ground soft and warm so that the little seeds could start to grow and make grass and flowers.

Then God made all the animals, such as great beasts, horses, cows, and dogs, and all that live and walk upon the earth. Then to make the earth still more beautiful, he made all the birds that fly in the air, and the whales, and all the fishes that swim or live in the waters. God blessed them and saw that it was good.

But now there was no one to take care of all the beautiful trees and flowers that God had made. So God took some of the dust of the ground and formed man, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. The man was God's dear child because he had breathed a soul into him, that is why every person has a soul, and we are all God's dear children.

I wonder if you can tell me the name of this first man? His name was Adam. Adam learned to know all the animals that God had made, and he gave them all names. He was very happy taking care of the trees and flowers. God made

a beautiful garden to be a home for Adam, and God would come there and walk and talk with him in the cool of the day.

Then God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make an helpmate for him." So it happened that one day God made Adam to fall into a sound sleep, so that he did not know what was happening, and he took a rib from Adam's side and made a woman of that rib.

When Adam awoke there was the woman that God had made to be with him. We can imagine how glad Adam was for a companion, for we all like to have some one with us to whom we can talk. He loved her very much and said, "She is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh."

Adam called the woman Eve and they lived together in that beautiful garden. They loved each other and they loved God.

Now I have told you how the world was made, how God made man, and all that is in the world. It would make this story too long to tell you all that happened after this, but I may tell you more about it at another time.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.